

Government Policy Has Enabled White Wealth To Compound While Extracting Black Wealth

Timeline of select key events

1600s - 1800s Colonial Migration

White immigrant families arrive in colonial United States from Europe and settle in the south of modern-day United States.

Early 1800s: Land Lotteries

Land lottery policies (which offered land that had been taken from Indigenous peoples to white males) drive wealth and property accumulation for white families, and the second generation moves up in social strata.

Mid-1800s: Gains in White Wealth

Wealth of white families increases with the ongoing institution of slavery. By **1850**, the Mississippi River valley had more millionaires per capita than any other region in the United States. **1862**: Former slaveholders receive reparations through the compensation clause after President Lincoln signs a bill emancipating enslaved people.

Early-to-Mid-1900s: New and Fair Deal Policies

The two-century generational wealth gap expands even more as new federal policies like New Deal and Fair Deal policies (National Housing Acts, Social Security Act) and the GI Bill transfer more than \$120 billion to predominantly white families through low-interest mortgages, stipends for tuition programs, and federal guarantees on loans.

More than 98 percent of \$120 billion in federally backed mortgages goes to white homeowners from 1934 to 1962.



INTERGENERATIONAL WEALTH TRANSFER

Over time, the white family accumulates inheritances and other in-vivo transfer (e.g., down payments, tuition payments), which drive the racial wealth gap more than any other indicator

White Wealth

Black Wealth

1619 - 1865 Atlantic Slave Trade

In **1619**, the first ship carrying enslaved Africans lands at the English colony of Virginia. Over the course of 246 years, the Atlantic Slave Trade would bring approximately 400,000 enslaved people to the United States.



Mid-1800s Losses in Black Wealth

By **1860**, the US population of enslaved peoples grows to approximately 4 million (13 percent of the population).

By **1865**, formerly enslaved people are promised approximately 400,000 acres of land that General William Sherman reallocated to them following the Civil War. The promise is rescinded by President Andrew Jackson who returns land to former plantation owners.

1870s: Sharecropping era of indentured servitude.

1872-1874: Freedmen's Bureau and Savings Bank is dismantled. Black families lose most of the greater than \$1 million deposited into the bank.

1881: Insurance companies practice explicit discrimination by declaring that policies held by Black customers are worth one-third of the value of equivalent policies held by white customers.

Late 1800s - Mid 1900s Jim Crow Era

Descendants of formerly enslaved families are subject to destruction and appropriation of property as white rioters kill residents and loot Black towns and neighborhoods throughout the 1900s (i.e., Tulsa Massacre, Wilmington Massacre, Rosewood Massacre, etc.).

This is worsened by de jure racial segregation (e.g., discriminatory lending and redlining practices that withhold opportunities for Black wealth accumulation).

1935: The Social Security Act excludes occupations predominantly filled by Black workers and other minorities. The National Labor Relations Act permits unions to exclude people of color from collective bargaining.

1944: The GI Bill excludes 1.2 million Black World War II veterans from receiving benefits.

Post Civil Rights Mid-1900s - present: Ongoing Atrocities

Mass incarceration; the War on Drugs; police executions of unarmed Black people; ongoing credit, housing, and employment discrimination; and more.

1970s: The War on Drugs begins, imprisoning millions of Black Americans over the course of 50 years, creating a crisis of mass incarceration, and extending America's legacy of slavery.

2020: The COVID-19 pandemic exposes the longstanding structural drivers of health inequities, affecting Black communities in particular. At the height of the pandemic, [Black people died from COVID](#) at twice the rate of white people.