

**Source Analysis Project**

**Race and Society**

**Keith Cox, ed.**

**Rev. 4/25’**

Table of Contents

[**Video Clip – 13th** 3](#_Toc195686807)

[**Document Set** 4](#_Toc195686808)

[Demystifying Racism: Race as a Means of Social Domination 4](#_Toc195686809)

[Bacon's Rebellion 1675 - 1676 9](#_Toc195686810)

[Timothy Breen 10](#_Toc195686811)

[Margaret Washington 10](#_Toc195686812)

[Southern Tenant Farmer's Union 11](#_Toc195686813)

[DuBois Selections from The Souls of Black Folks 13](#_Toc195686814)

['We Are Not Cured': Obama Discusses Racism in America 51](#_Toc195686815)

[**Discussion Questions** 54](#_Toc195686816)

Watch the short video at the following link. Read the attached documents and answer the questions at the end. After you have submitted your analysis you may proceed to participate in the discussion.

# **Video Clip – 13th**

**[Click to watch short viudeo clip from the documentary "13th".
](https://vimeo.com/891211979?share=copy)**

# **Document Set**

## Demystifying Racism: Race as a Means of Social Domination

*Keith W. Cox, Ph.D.*

If it may be said of the slavery era that the white man took the world and gave the Negro Jesus, then it may be said of the Reconstruction era that the southern aristocracy took the world and gave the poor white man Jim Crow. He gave him Jim Crow. And when his wrinkled stomach cried out for the food that his empty pockets could not provide, he ate Jim Crow, a psychological bird that told him that no matter how bad off he was, at least he was a white man, better than the black man. And he ate Jim Crow. And when his undernourished children cried out for the necessities that his low wages could not provide, he showed them the Jim Crow signs on the buses and in the stores, on the streets and in the public buildings. And his children, too, learned to feed upon Jim Crow, their last outpost of psychological oblivion.[[1]](#footnote-1)

Racism is so deeply embedded in American life and culture that it has become in some ways hidden from sight. Especially since the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 Americans have been content to believe that problems of racial discrimination and race controversy are in inevitable decline. Yes, we acknowledge, there are still some stubborn holdouts against the tide who cling to ignorant racial attitudes, but they are in a diminishing minority that is increasingly powerless, and they will inevitably be swept into the dustbin of history. The election of Barack Obama as President of the United States in 2008 seemed to seal the deal. America is on the march to a post-racial future.

Yet events in the last decade have served to arouse Americans from this comforting illusion. Riots in Ferguson and Baltimore, racial assassination in South Carolina, reports of police brutality and the rise of the #BlackLivesMatter movement tell a very different story. Americans must once again consciously grapple with the issue of race. I believe there are few who do not desire racial justice and reconciliation. But at the same time I think as a society we are baffled about how to achieve it.

Racial injustice exists and is measurable today, but within the lifetime of many still living conditions have been much worse. There are many alive who suffered the indignities and brutality of Jim Crow. Historical memory enflames those living today with a wariness and mistrust not easily overcome by lukewarm displays of goodwill. Historical memory is essential to the reconciliation we seek, but at the same time historical memory can become a burden. And worse, historical memory can be deliberately used to keep past atrocities alive and insurmountable.

Education is proposed as a means of bringing reason and objectivity to our vision of the past so that we can squarely confront it and move on. But too often education becomes a rehashing of grievances and a rekindling of emotions. “How could your people have done this to my people?” And then, because we often fail to differentiate ourselves from historical actors, “How could you do this to me?” This kind of education is not a recipe for healing.

Yet, like much else of interest in the public arena, objective information is rarely consulted, even by those passionate about achieving change and reconciliation. Too many allow too much public thinking to be accomplished by too few partisan hacks. When we look to historical memory to seek a way to heal, we must lay aside much that is untrue in order to assess and process what is. This is not as easily said as done, because our perception of reality is rooted in knowledge we may not even know we possess, and that knowledge might be, and often is, wrong.

In an insightful essay entitled “An Unthinkable History” historian Michel-Rolph Trouillot considers the question of how an event that is outside of the realm of common consciousness can be assessed historically. In 1793 the French colony of Saint Domingue was rocked by the world's first successful slave revolution. White colonists were faced with an event that in their minds was impossible -- that African slaves could imagine liberty and organize to gain it. In describing how the incomprehensibility of the events now encapsulated within the framework of the Haitian Revolution were inconceivable to the colonists who were its target he writes, “Indeed, the contention that enslaved Africans and their descendants could not envision freedom – let alone formulate strategies for gaining and securing such freedom – was based not so much on empirical evidence as on ontology, an implicit organization of the world and its inhabitants.”[[2]](#footnote-2)

Let’s wrestle for a moment with what that last phrase. To grasp its meaning we have to consider the word *implicit*. What does it mean? The word brings to mind something that is implied, but not stated. It this case it is, in effect, something that is known without empirical (observed and recorded) evidence. One definition of implicit is “with no qualification or question; absolute,” as in “an implicit faith in God.” One does not need empirical evidence of God to believe in God. Though the ancillary explanations are multitude the answer to faith in God always resolves on a practical level to the circular argument “I believe because I believe.” That doesn’t make it wrong, untrue, or incorrect, but neither does it allow for rational proof.

So when Trouillot tells us that the colonists’ knowledge of slaves’ desires and capabilities was based on ontology, he is proposing a worldview shaped by a fundamental belief in an organization of people based on faith rather than evidence. In other words, if you were to ask La Barre, Trouillot’s white colonist, why he was confident slaves could not imagine freedom, he might reply, “Well, everybody knows that.” (In French, of course.) So really, and I know this is a little sticky, it may be possible to know something is true without knowing that you know it. It’s just there: fundamental. And, as the particular case Trouillot discusses demonstrates, we may be motivated by fundamental knowledge that is entirely untrue. Because it is so deeply ingrained, we don’t question it – until some event, like the arrival at your home of a slave with a machete driven by the historical injustice of slavery, calls our implicit knowledge into question, and forces us to consider its validity.

I propose that our attitudes about race and racism are ontological. We proceed from assumptions we may not even know we have. And I will further propose that the assumptions we hold are flawed. One of these is most probably that there is such a fundamental category as race. Few scholars today acknowledge any real biological difference between groups of people that might go by the term race. Another false assumption is that racism has always existed, at least among white Americans. So it may be informative to consider when race actually became a distinguishing factor in American life. And interestingly, we can point to a particular event that leads to the beginning of deliberate segregation of white and black. That event is what is known in history as Bacon’s Rebellion, a class uprising that occurred in the Virginia Colony in 1676.

The rebellion was a rising of working class blacks and whites against the planter class in Colonial Virginia. It demonstrates a number of things about slavery and race during the first few decades of the Virginia Colony. The first is that there was no practical separation of whites and blacks based on race. There are recorded instances of black and white indentured servants joining together in opposition to their common oppression by the planter elite. Blacks and whites recognized the differences between the two groups but were able to unite to oppose a common threat. But while that was possible at the end of the seventeenth century it was unthinkable by the end of the eighteenth, at the time of the founding of the United States.

Nathaniel Bacon, a white man who felt alienated from the elite and who professed concern about Governor Berkeley’s perceived inaction in protecting the colonists from Native Americans, led a group of approximately 1000 white and black colonists against the Berkeley administration. Bacon died of disease and the rebellion was eventually put down by loyalists and British troops, but our concern here is the consequence. In the aftermath the British colonial authorities began to pass laws that separated blacks from whites, a process which would eventually lead to the Black Codes, the creation of a legally separate enslaved class based on race, and ultimately Jim Crow. You can read about the rebellion [here](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part1/1p274.html). The response to the unity of poor blacks and poor whites by white elites in Virginia was to erect barriers of segregation between blacks and whites.

It would be a mistake to propose that racism can be traced solely to this incident. In fact, the causes and history of racism are quite complex. White/black racism more likely developed as a justification for European use of Africans as slaves from the fifteenth to the nineteenth centuries. Although not as rigidly defined as in British North America, privilege in all American societies came to be associated with whiteness. The more “pure” white one was, the more privilege was afforded. “Pure” blacks and natives were at the bottom of the socio-economic ladder, the place associated with peonage and slavery. In North America the British invented the “one drop rule,” defining as non-white anyone who had “one drop” of non-white blood. Thus, one was either white or not white, with all privilege reserved to whites.[[3]](#footnote-3)

Yet it is significant that the first traceable instance of racial segregation in what was to become the United States occurred as a strategy to prevent whites and blacks from presenting a unified front against the dominant class. It is significant because that has been the practical consequence of segregation in America since. Poor whites, who are little better off or not better off economically than their black counterparts, can claim at least the status of not being black. It is interesting to note that in the United States, racism is rampant among lower class whites and blacks even while the ruling class is thoroughly integrated.[[4]](#footnote-4)

The tragedy here consists in the fact that the false perception of privilege on the part of poor whites leads them to act in ways that are detrimental to their own interests. It convinces them to support a status quo that keeps them at the bottom: excluded from wealth and power. They trade the benefits they might receive from common cause with their economic peers to maintain an illusion of privilege. Who benefits from this are those in the dominant class.

This isn’t exactly new. When the writers of the Constitution affirmed the will of “We the People” they meant “we the wealthy, property owning people.” Familiarity with US history will reveal that most people were excluded from the franchise either by race, gender, or property ownership until the 1820s. Even then “Universal Manhood Suffrage” indicated only white men. In the model of the Greek democracies it was thought that only those who had a material stake in the polity would act for the benefit of the polity. It was acknowledged that everyone acted in their own interests, and so it was assumed that only if one’s interests coincided with the state’s would people act in a virtuous way. Thomas Jefferson, perhaps the most radical of the founders, promoted middle class property ownership as a way of expanding democracy and creating a “republic of virtue.”

The elitism of the Constitution as it was originally understood was very much in keeping with the liberalism of the day, which, if it considered popular participation in government at all, assumed that only the wealthy would be able to make good decisions about the common welfare. The founders, along with liberals in Europe and later in Latin America, had an aversion to and a fear of the masses. It goes almost without saying that the assumption that the wealthy could and would govern for the benefit of all rather than their own interests was as flawed as the also common assumption that Kings would protect the people rather than exploit them. It was sometimes true, but more rarely than not.

The story we like to tell ourselves about American history is a continuous progress away from this seminal elitism toward ever expanding democracy. And it is true that as time passed more and more groups who had once been excluded: poor people, blacks and other ethnicities, and women, were enfranchised. But early on, beginning with the creation of machine politics in Jackson’s Democratic Party of the 1820s, it was known that the way to make the popular vote count was to create voting blocks. In other words, the solidarity of the masses was the only way to promote the welfare of the masses.

Creating voting coalitions based on class interest can be successful in promoting those class interests but it tends toward corruption. Voters in the voting blocks become convinced that their welfare depends on the election and continuation in office of their preferred candidate. But history shows us that the candidate rarely has the welfare of his constituents uppermost in his mind. The organization of the vote into political machines serves to create an alternative elite, who often has more in common with the original dominant class than with their own constituency. The unity of Democrats and Republicans against Civil Service reform in the Progressive era provides a telling example. Reforming an antiquated Civil Service system based on patronage would make government services more efficient and less prone to corruption, but because the political careers of both Democrats and Republicans were furthered by that very corruption, reforms that would benefit the people were resisted by stalwarts in both parties.

So it remains a truism in American politics that the interests of those who rule are separated from and often at odds with the interests of the masses. This difference, as seen going as far back as Bacon’s Rebellion, is caused by class interests. But, also demonstrated by the same event, race has been the primary instrument by which the elite maintain their hold on power. The ruling elites of Colonial Virginia deliberately used false prestige to drive a wedge between lower class blacks and whites, and were spectacularly successful. Since then racism, along with justifying a brutal system of chattel slavery, has provided different groups of the lower classes with the illusion of privilege. In the South, whites who should have had common cause with blacks aligned themselves with the planter elite because of an imagined solidarity based on whiteness. In the industrializing North and West white workers focused their discontent and fear on Irish, Eastern and Southern Europeans, Hispanics, or Asians, when uniting with them would have been more favorable to their interests.

When viewed in this light, I think, race and racism become less mysterious. What perpetuates a racist system is the interest of dominant elites abetted by the complicity of the false consciousness of the working classes. While the working classes are arrayed against each other they are not able to focus their anger, nor their creative power, on the real problem of their dispossession. In the end, race, which is itself an imagined category, becomes a way of distracting the masses and maintaining the status quo, for the benefit of the dominant elite.

## Bacon's Rebellion 1675 - 1676

"[We must defend ourselves] against all Indians in generall, for that they were all Enemies." This was the unequivocal view of Nathaniel Bacon, a young, wealthy Englishman who had recently settled in the backcountry of Virginia. The opinion that all Indians were enemies was also shared by a many other Virginians, especially those who lived in the interior. It was not the view, however, of the governor of the colony, William Berkeley.

Berkeley was not opposed to fighting Indians who were considered enemies, but attacking friendly Indians, he thought, could lead to what everyone wanted to avoid: a war with "all the Indians against us." Berkeley also didn't trust Bacon's intentions, believing that the upstart's true aim was to stir up trouble among settlers, who were already discontent with the colony's government.

Bacon attracted a large following who, like him, wanted to kill or drive out every Indian in Virginia. In 1675, when Berkeley denied Bacon a commission (the authority to lead soldiers), Bacon took it upon himself to lead his followers in a crusade against the "enemy." They marched to a fort held by a friendly tribe, the Occaneechees, and convinced them to capture warriors from an unfriendly tribe. The Occaneechees returned with captives. Bacon's men killed the captives They then turned to their "allies" and opened fire.

Berkeley declared Bacon a rebel and charged him with treason. Just to be safe, the next time Bacon returned to Jamestown, he brought along fifty armed men. Bacon was still arrested, but Berkeley pardoned him instead of sentencing him to death, the usual punishment for treason.

Still without the commission he felt he deserved, Bacon returned to Jamestown later the same month, but this time accompanied by five hundred men. Berkeley was forced to give Bacon the commision, only to later declare that it was void. Bacon, in the meantime, had continued his fight against Indians. When he learned of the Govenor's declaration, he headed back to Jamestown. The governor immediately fled, along with a few of his supporters, to Virginia's eastern shore.

Each leader tried to muster support. Each promised freedom to slaves and servants who would join their cause. But Bacon's following was much greater than Berkeley's. In September of 1676, Bacon and his men set Jamestown on fire.

The rebellion ended after British authorities sent a royal force to assist in quelling the uprising and arresting scores of committed rebels, white and black. When Bacon suddenly died in October, probably of dysentery, Bacon's Rebellion fizzled out.

Bacon's Rebellion demonstrated that poor whites and poor blacks could be united in a cause. This was a great fear of the ruling class -- what would prevent the poor from uniting to fight them? This fear hastened the transition to racial slavery.[[5]](#footnote-5)

### Timothy Breen

**On the relationship between black slaves and white indentured servants**

Q: Given that there is a situation of black and white indentured servants, how did they begin to interact or deal with one another? Is there any sense of a commonality that crosses over differences of race or ethnicity?

A: There are many ways that human beings divide themselves up. Class is one, [and] gender, race, ethnicity. There's a number of ways that people divide themselves up. And in early Virginia, race was a category that people recognized. Black people recognized difference, and sometimes, I would even argue, celebrated difference. But in this highly competitive, depressingly abusive world, poorer whites and poorer blacks -- people who were marginalized in this system of dependent labor -- oftentimes reached out to each other in ways that suggest that, at least in the first 50 or 60 years of Virginia, ...people of African background and English background were able to work together in ways that, again, in later period of American history, were impossible.[[6]](#footnote-6)

Timothy H. Breen, William Smith Mason Professor of American History, Northwestern University

### Margaret Washington

**On Virginians' concerns about white and black servants**

Q: Given the conditions and the sense of isolation in a colony like Virginia, was there a real concern around this emerging class of white and black workers who begin to become a threat? Do you feel that that has anything to do with why it begins to start shifting towards an enslaved class?

A: You can't discount the notion that black and white servants and slaves were going to unite over their common oppression. We have evidence of them running away together. We have evidence of them rising against their masters together. They lived together. They slept together. So yes, there was a possibility of a lower class surge against the elites. So that's a very important consideration for the Virginians, in terms of wanting to create one kind of labor force.[[7]](#footnote-7)

Margaret Washington, Associate Professor of History, Cornell Universiy

## Southern Tenant Farmer's Union

The Southern Tenant Farmer's Union (STFU) was an interracial organization founded in Arkansas on July 11, 1935, by sharecroppers with the help of the Socialist party. Its intention was to seek relief from the federal government for sharecroppers and tenant farmers, two groups that had clearly not benefitted from New Deal agricultural policies and that were growing more desperate as the depression worsened.

The organization grew rapidly. It organized strikes aimed at increasing daily wages, sent delegates to lobby in Washington, and by 1936 had over 25,000 members across several southern states. As enrollment continued to increase, land owners began to harass and evict their tenants. By late winter, the conflict became very tense, as bellicose planters and impoverished sharecroppers began resorting to violence against each other.  Government officials did little to alleviate the needs of the tenant farmers, until [Rexford Tugwell](https://www.gwu.edu/%7Eerpapers/teachinger/glossary/tugwell-rexford.cfm) brought the problem to FDR's attention in 1935. FDR created a new agency called the Resettlement Administration (RA) to aid the problem by improving cultivation techniques and resettling destitute farmers. Unfortunately, many of the RA's programs were long term and therefore had very little effect on the circumstances.

The STFU began to take more action and a strike was planned for late August 1935. Thousands of sharecroppers struck against their planter landlords. At first, the owners responded violently, but pressed by the peak of picking season, they eventually agreed to a seventy-five-cent wage increase. The union called off the strike, workers went back to work, and the organization's national recognition grew. Although tensions temporarily abated, the violence between farmers and owners remained a persistent problem. Congress responded with the creation of the Farm Security Administration (FSA) in the fall of 1936. As part of the FSA, the Farm Security Corporation was established, which provided loans to poor farmers in an effort to enable them to purchase their own land. Unfortunately, these programs did little to alleviate the sharecroppers' burden, and with few notable successes after the 1935 strike, the organization faded from importance by the [Second World War](https://www.gwu.edu/%7Eerpapers/teachinger/glossary/world-war-2.cfm).

Despite the support it received from Eleanor Roosevelt and other prominent liberals, the STFU could not dismantle the lock the planters held on federal farm aid and eviction and displacement of tenant farmers continued at a rapid pace. Organizers complained that the New Dealer "too often . . . talked like a cropper but acted like a planter."[[8]](#footnote-8) However, the sheer ability of their organization to maintain interracial solidarity (if not ideological) against an unsympathetic federal government and a bellicose planter class was a remarkable development for an American South that otherwise remained segregated.

Sources:

Boyer, Paul S., et al. The Enduring Vision: A History of the American People. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 719.

Buhle, Mary Jo, et al., ed. Encyclopedia of the American Left. New York: Garland Press, 1990, 739-740.

Cook, Blanche Wiesen. Eleanor Roosevelt: Volume Two, 1933-1938. New York: Viking Press, 1999, 4, 412.

Lash, Joseph P. Dealers and Dreamers. New York: Doubleday, 1988, 222-223.

MacElvaine, Robert. The Great Depression. New York: Times Books, 1984, 262.

Watkins, T. H. The Hungry Years. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1999, 384-39

## DuBois Selections from The Souls of Black Folks

'We Are Not Cured': Obama Discusses Racism in America

With Marc Maron[[9]](#footnote-9)

[BILL CHAPPELL](https://www.npr.org/people/14562108/bill-chappell)

[](https://twitter.com/WhiteHouse/status/612976816223989760/photo/1)

President Obama talks about his own life, America's race relations and the trouble with politics during the much-anticipated new episode of the [WTF with Marc Maron podcast](http://www.wtfpod.com/podcast/episodes/episode_613_-_president_barack_obama), in an interview that is making headlines for its candid discussion of race.

Like other episodes of Maron's popular podcast, the conversation between the commander-in-chief and a comedian took place in Maron's Los Angeles garage. Recorded Friday, the topics ranged from [the shootings in Charleston, S.C.](http://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2015/06/19/415689170/in-charleston-a-city-gathers-to-mourn-try-to-understand-mass-shooting), to the character of the American people.

As Maron [told member station KPCC](http://www.scpr.org/programs/the-frame/2015/06/19/43360/marc-maron-tells-us-what-the-f-is-with-him-intervi/), in the wake of last week's violence, "I didn't know if he was going to come, which would have been completely understandable."

Maron also said that Obama had remarked on how they had simply dived into the conversation.

"He was concerned about my experience. I think maybe he thought it would be more fun," Maron said.

We've highlighted some portions below. If you want to listen to the [full podcast](http://www.wtfpod.com/podcast/episodes/episode_613_-_president_barack_obama), we'll tell you that President Obama enters Maron's garage/studio around the 4:20 mark. He first discusses the Charleston attack around 15:00 — and then discusses racism and America in comments that start around 45:00.

*Language advisory: Quotes in this story contain potentially offensive language.*

Maron asked Obama to discuss race in America in the wake of last week's killing of nine black church members in Charleston and after several recent instances of police officers killing unarmed black men.

Where are we, Maron asked, when it comes to race relations?

**Obama**: I always tell young people in particular: 'Do not say that nothing's changed when it comes to race in America — unless you've lived through being a black man in the 1950s, or '60s, or '70s. It is incontrovertible that race relations have improved significantly during my lifetime and yours, and that opportunities have opened up, and that attitudes have changed. That is a fact.

What is also true is that the legacy of slavery, Jim Crow, discrimination in almost every institution of our lives — you know, that casts a long shadow. And that's still part of our DNA that's passed on. We're not cured of it.

**Maron**: Racism.

**Obama**: Racism. We are not cured of it. And it's not just a matter of it not being polite to say 'nigger' in public. That's not the measure of whether racism still exists or not. It's not just a matter of overt discrimination. Societies don't overnight completely erase everything that happened 200-300 years prior.

So what I tried to describe in the Selma speech that I gave, commemorating the march there, was, again, a notion that progress is real, and we have to take hope from that progress. But what is also real is that the march isn't over, and the work is not yet completed. And then our job is to try in very concrete ways to figure out, what more can we do?"

Obama went on to discuss the challenges faced by police, and the need to improve relationships between communities and law enforcement. He also stressed the importance of early education in closing the poverty gap.

The president said:

"What is required is a sense on the part of all of us that what happens to those kids matters to me — even if I never meet them. Because my society is going to be better off. I'm going to feel better about the America I live in. And over time, I'm confident that my children and my grandchildren are going to live a better life if those kids also have opportunity.

"That's where we have to feel hopeful, rather than just say that nothing's changed — we have to say, 'Wow, we've actually made significant progress over the last 50 years.'

"If we made as much progress over the next 10 years as we have over the last 50, things would be better. And that's within our grasp, it's available to us. And this is where, again, you want to get to those decent, well-meaning Americans who would agree with that — but when it gets translated into politics, it gets all confused."

The hourlong interview also includes Obama discussing how he views the person he was when he was 20 — a subject that arose early in their talk, because Obama went to Occidental College in Pasadena, Calif., not far from Maron's house.

**Obama**: "I love conversations like this, because if I thought to myself that — when I was in college — that I'd be in a garage a couple miles away from where I was living, doing an interview —"

**Maron**: " — as president."

**Obama**: "As president — with a comedian. I think that's a pretty hard scenario to ...

**Maron**: "You couldn't imagine it."

**Obama**: "It is not possible to imagine. Nobody could imagine it."

As Maron [tells NPR's Fresh Air](http://www.npr.org/sections/itsallpolitics/2015/06/22/416481081/obama-visits-marc-marons-garage-cats-annoyed-they-were-shut-in-bedroom), talking to the president brought many new logistical concerns. There was the sniper on the roof nearby, for instance. Also, his cats weren't happy.

Maron tells Terry Gross that after it was all over, "A crew of people came and they started disassembling the tents that were on my driveway and then all the Secret Service got their stuff and they just were gone, it was all gone. I let my cats out of the bedroom ... and they were like, 'Can we have our house back, please?' "

# **Discussion Questions**

1. What does the discussion about what is ontological in the Cox article have to do with the topic of racism?
2. How and why did the unity of black and white settlers in the Virginia colony during Bacon’s Rebellion lead to the creation of race segregation? How might race segregation lead to racism? What does this tell us about the nature of racism (i.e., is it a “natural” human response, or is it a social construct)?
3. How does learning about Bacon’s Rebellion and the STFU affect your own ideas about race and racism? Does it call into question any of your own underlying (ontological) assumptions about race?
4. Explain how Dr. King’s remarks quoted at the beginning of the article address the practical effects of race segregation, especially as indicated in the article about the STFU.
5. DuBois writes in the chapter “Of Our Spiritual Strivings” about “double consciousness”. What does this mean, and what does it have to do with “the veil” (Forethought)?
6. DuBois writes in the chapter “Of Our Spiritual Strivings” that it is impossible to be both black and American. Explain what you think he means by that.
7. Analyze the DuBois chapter “Of Mr. Booker T. Washington and Others.” What, according to DuBois, was Washington’s basic approach, i.e., what three things did DuBois claim Washington wanted to forego? How did Washington think foregoing these things would benefit Black people? What three outcomes did DuBois say really happened?
8. What does President Obama mean when he says that racism is “still part of our DNA that's passed on?”
9. Whose interests does the perpetuation of racism serve? Who is hurt by racism?
10. Comment on this observation by one of the presenters on the clip form 13th. "History is not just stuff that happens by accident. We are the products of the history that our ancestors chose, if we're white. If we are black we are products of the history that our ancestors most likely did not choose. Yet here we all are together, the products of that set of choices."

1. Martin Luther King, Jr., “Address at the Conclusion of the Selma to Montgomery March” (speech, State Capitol, Montgomery, Al., March 25, 1965), accessed July 15, 2015, <http://kingencyclopedia.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/documentsentry/doc_address_at_the_conclusion_of_selma_march/> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Michel-Rolph Trouillot, Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History (Boston, Mass.: Beacon Press, ©1995), 73. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The Color of Money: Colonialism and the Slave Trade, (BBC, 2007). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. “Bacon's Rebellion 1675 - 1676,” Africans in America, accessed February 18, 2016, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part1/1p274.html> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Timothy Breen, “Modern Voices: Timothy Breen On the Relationship between Black Slaves and White Indentured Servants,” Africans in America, accessed February 18, 2016, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part1/1i3025.html>. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Margaret Washington, “Modern Voices: Margaret Washington On Virginians' Concerns About White and Black Servants,” Africans in America, accessed February 18, 2016, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part1/1i3028.html>. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Quoted in Robert MacElvaine, The Great Depression. (New York: Times Books, 1984), 262. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Bill Chapell, “'We Are Not Cured': Obama Discusses Racism in America With Marc Maron,” *the two-way breaking news fom NPR* (June 22, 2015), <https://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2015/06/22/416476377/we-are-not-cured-obama-discusses-racism-in-america-with-marc-maron>(accessed April 25, 2018). [↑](#footnote-ref-9)