In the autobiographical speech by Chimamanda Adiche and the in Maya Angelou's autobiography they both talk about their experiences of how the culture behind being black has affected their life. Throughout each of these peoples texts there are many points raised about American and white people's belief about black people (African Americans and blacks in general). I will be looking at how people in poverty are believed to live and the value placed on racial equality in both texts and comparing how they have changed over time.

Throughout both texts there was a reoccurring false belief that if someone is in a low social class then they are unskilled and uneducated. In Maya Angelou's autobiography 'I know why the caged bird sing' this false belief is demonstrated towards African American's. During the time of segregation laws in America the majority of white people believed African Americans were in a lower class. This lead to white Americans believing all African Americans were incompetent and incapable of holding a respected position in society. 'Momma knocked on the back door and a young white girl opened it to show surprise at seeing us. … The girl closed the door firmly' (Angelou, 1969) This quote highlights the disrespect white people had for African Americans, when the young girl firmly closes the door it is a sign that Maya and her grandmother (Annie) are unwanted. (QUOTE 'Talking to dentist') During this time period African Americans had to conform to the stereotypes of white people (i.e. uneducated). ‘I know, Dentist Lincoln. But this here is my little grandbaby, and she ain’t gone be no trouble to you … Stand up when you see a lady, you contemptuous scoundrel.’ The first part of the quote is when Annie is ‘Politely’ talking to the dentist how he would expect her to speak, then the second part of the quote she’s angry at the dentist and is trying to confront dentist Lincoln. This quote clearly displays how white people have forced African Americans to conform with their stereotypes.

In Chimamanda’s speech she talks about when she was little and her family got a new house boy. His name was Fide and all that Chimamanda was told about him was that his family was very poor. Her family would send old clothes to his family. One day her family went to the village and she was very surprised when his mother produced a beautifully patterned basket that his brother had made (QUOTE 'Basket'). She was very shocked because all Chimamanda had heard about them was how poor they were and she could not think of them as anything but poor (QUOTE 'Impression'). By comparing the two sources we can see both texts highlight the false belief of lower class people being unskilled and uneducated throughout each time period.