Racism in American Society

I. The Problem of Race in America

A. No Racism

1. National Opinion Research Center Survey

a. no racism in America

b. lazy and prefer to live on welfare

2. US Supreme Court

a. Affirmative Action is unconstitutional

b. violates basis of American society

"equality is the law of the land"

3. Pres Clinton

a. apologize for slavery

b. only glitch in race relations in America

B. Race as a social category

1. racism emerged as a category of thought with

late colonialism and neo-colonialism

a. colonial pseudo- scientists established the using biased criteria invented the idea of race

1. shared physical characteristics that are

deemed significant

2. common biological/genetic heritag

b. concept of race and racial ideology is tied to

power - justification for oppression and exploitation

2. race as social category

a. using shared trait

1. significance - who decides?

2. characteristics - crosses so-called racial

lines, Tutsis and Hutus, Aborigines, Haitian

b. using biological criteria, depending on criteria

chosen, 3 to 200+ races

c. recent genetic studies show that so called

races share 95-99% of all genetic material

relative to race

d. no pure races

1. intermarrying

2. countries define race

i. Brazil "some" White ancestry is classified as White

ii. LA 1/32 black is black

2. it is justification of colonialism

3. ethnicity is another way of categorizing or classifying

peoples

a. share language, religion, and social and cultural

practices

b. ethnocentrism

c. ethnic cleansing

4. both racism and ethnocentrism are ideologies that

define the the "other" , the group or person who is

different as less than human as less than human which justifies his oppression

C.. The Constellation of racism

1. racial hatred and violence, personal and group

2. racial discrimination in housing, jobs, and health care

3. institutionalized racism, embedded in the society's

very structures

a. place in economy

b. education and health

4. walls of institutional racism are virtually invisible

C. Institutionalized racism in America in the 21st Century

1. poverty and class - income

a. disproportionately represented in the poor

b. Blacks and Hispanics make more or less 60% of what whites make, since the middle 1960s

c. even college education does not eqal playing

field

2. poverty and class - wealth

a.The wealth of the avg black family is $4000 compared to that of the avg white family which is $40,000

3. education is tied to class

a. US schools are highly segregated

b. depended on local taxes

4. health and health care

a. is a commodity

b. blacks without health care or inferior health

care

i. infant mortality

ii. bith defects, low birth rate

c. even with health coverage blacks receive

less treatment and less life saving treatment

d. lower life expectancy and declining

5. poor nutrition

6. living conditions -- from substandard housing (electricity, plumbing, lead paint) to heating

7. urban renewal, gentrification, wharehousing and slumlording

8. loss of jobs because of deindusrialization and globalization, or minimum wage jobs

9. decaying infrastructure and transportation systems

federal abandonment, revenue to suburbs

10. no economic growth, disinvestment and redlining

by insurance companies and banks

11. environmental racism

II. Blacks in American Society - three systems of institutionalized racism: slavery, segregation, modern urban ghetto

A. Slavery

1. Thomas Jefferson, Patrick Henry, George Washington

were slave owners, as were half the signers of the

Declaration of Independence

a. Jefferson and Henry knew it was wrong

b. Jefferson not a reluctant slave owner

i. whipped his slaves

ii. separated families

iii. only freed 5, his blood relatives

2. Declaration of Independence

3. legally sanctioned in Constitution, Article 4 Sec 2

4. only part of Fifth Amendment applied to slaves

5. not just in south, Mass was first colony to legalize

slavery

6. First slaves as early 1526 with Spanish, settlement

perished slaves joined Native Americans

B. Between 1790 and 1860 from 500,000 to 4,000,000

C. The condition of the slave - complete oppression and

dehumanization

1. no political or legal rights,

a. no autonomy

b. no constraints on abuses

2. no economic rights

3. no moral standing

a. inferior - uncivilized then race

b. ignorant, lazy, insensitive to pain

4. confederate flag - symbol of a social system

based on the total oppression of type of persons

D. South developed powerful system of control backed by

laws, courts, racial ideology and a armed force equal to

1/10th the population

E. Created animosity between poor whites and blacks by

paying the whites as overseers -- divide and conquer

F. By 1808 importation was illegal but unenforced, majority

of slave ships flew under US flag

G. Texas, cotton, and the war for independence 1835-6 from

Mexico which had outlawed slavery, glorified in the Alamo

H. Resistance of slaves

a. Nat Turner 1831

b. slow downs, sabotage, kill overseers and

masters, burn buildings

c. by 1850s 1000 slaves running away a month

I. Reason to remove Indians and establish new states as

slaveholding

a. running to Indians

b. to Florida

c. to unsettled territories

III. The end of slavery -- not the political system -- but the result of popular movements

A. From the early 1830s to the civil war an anti-slavery movement call the Abolitionist movement

1. William Lloyd Garrison The Liberator - 25 to 100,000

2. Frederick Douglas North Star

3. John Brown

a. portrayed historically as insane

b. moved the boundary of acceptable thoughts and

deeds regarding slavery

c. prior to Brown it was considered the extreme of

radical thought to talk about ending slavery

d. after Brown activism was no longer deviant (L174)

B. Underground railway - Harriet Tubman 19 trips, 300 slaves

C. "Inequality is the law of the land"

1. Dred Scott declared non-person and the Court

declared that a negro had no rights that a white man

was bound to respect

a. "property" rather than citizens

b. "beings of an inferior order

2. Fugitive Slave Law of 1850

a. blacks in north had to prove they were not

escaped

b. slave owner needed only afadavit from friendly white, 300 returned

D. Popular reaction -- Civil disobedience

1. Vigilance committees to protect blacks

2. juries refused to convict

IV. Civil war and slavery

A. Lincoln -- the great Emancipator or the great equivocator

1. save the union

2. use resources of south for newly emerging

industrializing economy

B. March 1861, I have no intention to interfere with the

institution of slavery -- Innaugural Address

C.Greely to Lincoln -- you are not even following the laws

D. Lincoln -- if I could save the Union without freeing a single

slave I would do so

E.. Emancipation Proclamation, Jan 1, 1863, freed the slaves in

the south, but not the border states on the side of the Union,

finally after popular uproar

F. 200,000 blacks fought in Civil War,

1. 38,000 died, worst duties, like WWII and Vietnam, paid less

2. captured northern black soldiers were crucified and

burned alive

V. Free at last, the Black Experience in the south and north after the

war

A. Thirteenth Amendmen banned slavery, but economic

realities kept them in serfdom

1. Blacks were free, but who got the land that they had

worke 250 years on, plantation owners and wealthy

speculators from the north, system of "share wages"

2. Sherman gave 40,000 ex-slaves land on the coast of

Georgia, Andrew Johnson took it back

3. at the mercy of the whites, tenant farmers, land

contracts, or farm hands, legally free, but economically

dependent, basically "share-cropping" (p45 contract,

Who Built America?

a.cycle of debt -- had to buy seed, supplies, and food from landowner

b. in addition to paying land owner about one-half

had to pay for supplies

c. effected the great majority of blacks, 90% of

whom lived in the South and 80% of those were

in rural areas

B. Fourteenth Amendment was passed in 1868 intended to

keep states from discriminating against blacks 'no state

shall abridge . . . rights

1. not interpreted that way, Supreme court ruled that

it did not do what it was supposed to do "restrict the

authority of states to define rights of their citizens

a. excluded from juries

2. Supreme Court ruled that Civil Rights Act of 1875

was unconstitutional

3. violence directed at them, "lynching"became a practice in both the north and the south and was not a crime

4. after Compromise of 1877 violence continued to increase with Ku Klux Klan, raids, beatins, lynchings, burnings D.W. Griffith Birth of a Nation

a. 6000 blacks lynched

b. no member of KKK tried for lynching until 1980

c. state of LA 1081 blacks and Republicans killed

by Democrats in 1868

d. during Reconstruction in one county in Miss

Hinds, 1 black killed per day

e. burned black churches, schools, flogged and murdered teachers

C. Fifteenth Amendment

1. Jim Crow laws

2. from 1879-1965 no branch of representative govt did anything to enforce the right to vote

D. 1890s to 1920s low point in race relations in US

1. President Wilson was a white supremacist, when

Pres of Princeton only major northern university that

didn't admit blacks

a. He segregated the federal government in

1913 and entered upon a policy to eliminate

colored citizens representation in the federal

government

b. tried to curtail the civil rights of blacks but

rejected by Congress

c. vetoed clause on racial equality in Covenant of

the League of Nations

d. closed Democratic Party to blacks for two

decades

e. private White House showing of *Birth of a*

*Nation* "it is all so true"

2. Reemergence of Ku Klux Klan

a. dominated political parties in many southern

states plus Indian, Ok, and Oregon

b. blacks lynched as far north as Minnesota

c. lynching is public crime, people posed for it

3. Plessy vs Ferguson 1896 defined blacks as inferior and

whites as superior

4.in the North, 1855 -1905 blacks driven out of skilled

occupations that were dominated by segregated unions

5. white race riots, over 100 during Wilson and Harding

a. Harding initiated into Ku Klux Klan in ceremony

at the White House

b. 1919 Chicago riot, E. St. Louis

c. 1921 Tulsa whites dropped dynamite from

planes killin 75 and destroying over 1100 homes

d. wiped out or terrorized towns, "sundown towns"

5. in 1920s Supreme Court upheld forced sterilization of

blacks in Virginia

6. Cultural milie,

a. writers described blacks as "hyenas in a cage, reptiles, species of worm, a wild beast.

b. D. W. Griffith *Birth of a Nation*, formerly *The Clansmen*

c. minstrel shows

8. As late a 1932 there were justifications of slavery,

necessary transition to become civilized.

9. blacks and the Spanish-American War

L. WWII and racism --

1. segregated

2. worst duties,

3. Queen Mary,

III. The modern urban ghetto

A. After WWII

1. since turn of century blacks had been migrating to

northern industrial cities for jobs

2. improvement for blacks in industrial north

3. however, more blacks out of work from automation

of agriculture than could find jobs in the north

4. unemployment and poverty and the emergence of

the modern ghetto

B. Post-war 50s policies both public and private were

racist

1. suburbanization directed resources away

from city

2. blacks excluded from the newly emerging

suburbia

3. left an urban ghetto with invisible walls

4. few resources, education, health, jobs

5. civil rights movement help lessen these problems,

War on Poverty

B. In the 70s and 80s deindustrialization and globalization

hit black males the hardest

1. in one period over 1/2 of all black males lost jobs

in industrial America

2. by 1986 the avg wage of unskilled black male

worker was 61% of what it had been in 1973

3. Flint

4. South Central LA

a. one four year period 75,000 jobs lost, GM,

Behtlehem Steel, Goodyear, Firestone

C. Getto Infrastructure deteriorates

a. roads, bridges, sewage

b. hospitals and education

c. stores, supermarkets, and banks

d. slumlording

e. environmental racism

D. Invisible walls

a. discrimination in jobs and housing

b. no mass transit

c. discrimination in education and health

O. Cities put low income housing, prisons, homeles shelters,

methadone clinics, battered women's sheltes, and drug

treatment cents in poor neighborhoods, "not in my back yard"

VI. Civil Rights, success and failure, a popular movement

A. Brown vs Board of Education of Topeka 1954, all "deliberate

speed, 11 years later 75% of schools still segregated

1) not like the supreme court all of a sudden saw the

injustice

2) WEB Dubois and the "Niagra movement:" from the

beginning of the century

B. Rosa Parks and the Montgomery Bus boyott, city retaliated

by arresting leaders

C. Lunch counter sit-ins, 1960 four college students, to

50,000 3600 in jail, most desegregated by late 1960s

D. Voter registration drives, Freedom summer, Civil Rights

Act of 1964 and Voting Act of 1965, Mississippi Burning

E. No help from Justice Dept or President until violence

was shown on TV

F. What the civil rights movement revealed

1) de facto segregation in the north was a larger

problem, and it has gotten worse< MLK on black

urban violence

2) political rights without economic rights are

insignificant

I. Main points

A. Historical view demonstrates that racism was just not

a glitch in an otherwise non-racist society

B. Political institutions that supposedly embodied the highest

ideals of our society resisted to the last, with violence, indifference 1830s Abolitionist movement

1. Supreme Court - Dred Scott

a. blacks are non-persons, less than human

b. "property" that can be taken into new

territory

2. Congress - Fugitive Slave Law- 1850

a. bs had to prove they were not escaped

b. slave owner only needed afadavit from

friend

3. Lincoln

C. Racism is not just personal racism, racial hatred, stereotyping, but institutionalized,

1. denying people their rights

2. differential access to social resources

3. institutionalized poverty is the main way racism

takes shape in our society

II. Post-civil war to the 1960s a different form of racial oppression took shape in American society: economic, political, violent

A. Economic - free at last - south

1. 9/10ths of blacks lived in south which was still

an agrarian economy with emerging mining and mills

2. Bs excluded from new jobs, and given no land

after the war except Sherman

3. land given to slave owners, or sold in large sections

to land speculators

4. bs were contract labor, or tenant farmers

B. Economic - north -

1. discriminatory hiring practices, kept blacks in

specific low wage sectors

2. unions excluded bs, last hired first fired, scabs

3. bs were displace by newly arriving white immigrants

C. political -south

1. after 1877 Great Compromise 15Th not enforced

2. bs disenfranchised, no pres, congr, or sup ct 1965

3. 14th not enforced, Supreme Court ruled Civil Rights

Act of 1875 unconstitutional, states can define the

rights of their citizens

4. 1913 segregation in federal buildings

5. Plessy vs Ferguson 1896 "inequality is the law of the land

6. 1920s forced sterilzation of bs

D. violence

1. after 1877 increased violence

2. thousands of bs hanged and burned from late

nineteenth to middle of 20th century

3. lynching not a crime, no pres, no congress

4. kkk not one person convicted of lynching until 80s

5. white race riots, E. St. Louis, Chicago, Detroit, LA

III. De facto segregation and poverty

A. US is highly segregated, minorites in pockets of poverty

in inner city urban areas, also in suburbs, when an area

gets to be more than 8% bs ws move out

1. 86% of whites live in suburbs that are less than

1% black

2. In Chicago 71% of bs live in areas 9/10th black

In Detroit 61%, in Philadelphia, same in most

major cities and becoming more concentrated 80s

to 90s

2. 3 out of 5 poor bls and lat live urban areas

3. bs and lts in "high poverty" 40%

4. increase in poor-poor

B. Power and poverty - social construction of the urban ghetto

1. not just wealth 3x thrifty diet = $15,000 for 4

2. excludes from social resources and opportunities

C. policies and programs send resources elsewhere, exclude

minorities and other poor, and show no regard for their

effect

1. black migration - white flite

a. govt subsidy of white flig

b. despite law loans outside of urban areas to

suburbs - no reinvestment

2. deindustrialization - 1992

a. South Central LA and neighborhoods adjacent

75,000 high paying manufacturing jobs in one

four year period 1978-1982, GM, Bethlehem

Steel, Goodyear, and Firestone

b. 20,000 jobs lost in year prior to riot

c. only growth in jobs, sweatshops, unsafe, unhealthy, and illegal conditions and wages

d. unemployment rate is 50%

e. few banks and declining supermarkets in

minority communities

3. federal abandonment

a. govt spending lost 3/4 trillion from

1980-1995

b. continue to fund suburbanization

c. urban renewl

4. state and local tax abatements for urban renewal

a. ball parks and high rises

b. business exclusion

D. Declining quality of life

1. poverty

a. high poverty areas 40% increased total from

1970 3.7 million to 1990 10.4 million

b. Increase in poor-poor 39% of those in poverty

c. Children in poverty and minority children

a. 20% in poverty 1972-3.4 million to

1993 15.7 million

b. minority 1 in 2 under 3

4. decaying infrastructure

a. Germany and Japan spend 3 to 4x

the amount the US does on infrastructure

b. 7200 public works projects on hold because

of lack of funds

c. doing these projects would create 420,000

jobs in one year

d. 40% of bridges need to be reworked

5. Housing crisis - slumlording, gentrification, wharehousing, so-called urban renewal

a. half of all tenants pay more than 30% of

their income for rent, that is above the

definition for affordable housing

b. since 1970 rents have 3x and incomes have

2x

c. 50s 2/3 could afford a hous on less than one

quarter of their income, 90s 1/10

d. 19 million face threat of homelessness, 1/5

families

6. schools - property tax

7. health and health care

a. Disease - 5xto 6x the chance of dying of infectious

disease

b. Immunization - % is below some third world

countries, El Salvador, Uganda, North Korea, Cuba

i. NYc 40% compared to other Industrial

nations 100%

ii. tuberculosis coming back with resistant

strains

c. Infant Mortality rate - Bed Stuy same as Chile and Malaysia

d. hospitals shutting down, refusing treatment

e. 43 million uninsured

f. backroom clinics for treatment

g. doctors disproportionate

8. environmental racism

a. Chicago 162 toxic hot spots 60 % are in areas

predominantly African American

b. highest industrial toxic releases in minority area

c. same with illegal dumping and led poisoning

9. auto dependencey and inadequate public transportation

a. freeways, garages, highways destroy inner

city areas

b. take up space air pollution - 86 million in areas

that don't meet standards

10. crimes, drugs, and gangs

D. continued discrimination

1. housing and insurance

2. police and violence

3. health care

IV. why institutionalized racism?

A. someone to blame for the ills of society - don't look at the unequal distribution of wealth, income, or resources, find

a straw man

B. source of low wage labor, welfare reform created a pool of mostly women at the mercy of min wage or below

C. high profit slumlording, high prices 8% grocieries, interest

D. workers for social control, criminal justice - social workers