**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

# Name Class

**For use with the article on p. 8 of the magazine**

# TWO

**COVER STORY**

### The kind of world you grow up and live in is still too often determined by your race. A look at inequality in five key areas of American life. BY JOE BUBAR

**Protesters in Chicago** rally against police violence and racism in June.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

**As highlighted by the protests this summer,** there are longstanding inequalities in policing. Federal statistics show that, nationwide, Black drivers are 31 percent more likely to be pulled over than white drivers for minor infractions, such

AMERICAS

as speeding. And a recent study by researchers at Northeastern University and Harvard University found that Black people

are three times as likely as white

Black people people to be shot and killed by

the police during interactions

are locked up

where the victim appears to pose

at more than little or no threat to officers.

five times Research also shows that Black and Latinx people are

the rate of

more likely than white people

white people. to be arrested, convicted, and

given longer sentences for similar offenses. Experts say that’s a big reason why Black and Latinx Americans are imprisoned at disproportionate rates. They make up 56 percent of the incarcerated population, despite accounting for only 32 percent of the U.S. population.

#### WATCH A VIDEO explaining systemic racism in the U.S. at UPFRONTMAGAZINE.COM

**Imprisonment Rates by Race and Ethnicity**

**(Prisoners per 100,000 adults, 2018)**

**1,501**

**797**

**268**

**Black Latinx White**

SOURCE: BUREAU OF JUSTICE STATISTICS

**13**

**4**

**Black Latinx White Other**

SOURCE: *WASHINGTON POST* AS OF 9/5/2020

**24**

**32 (per million, 2015–20)**

**Rate of Police Killings**

disproportionately affected Black and Latinx communities

Racist sentencing policies have also contributed to high by requiring much longer sentences for offenses involving numbers of Black and Latinx people in prison. For example, crack cocaine—which was more common in Black and Latinx the U.S. prison population exploded in the 1980s, when neighborhoods—than for cocaine—which was more common President Ronald Reagan declared a “war on drugs.” He in white areas. Today, nearly 80 percent of people in federal signed laws requiring lengthy prison terms for drug offenses. prison for drug offenses are Black or Latinx even though studies Those laws, supported by many Republicans and Democrats, show that people of all races use and sell drugs at similar rates.

## HOUSING

**Homeownership Rate** suburbs, which often had rules barring

#### To understand why America is so

**76%**

#### (2020)

**61%**

Black people from living there. Although housing discrimination,

including redlining, was outlawed

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**unequal,** experts say it’s helpful to

**Asian/ 51% 47%** in 1968, its effects remain. Only 47

look at housing.

“Housing is the key to determining

#### Pacific Islander/ Native

percent of Black people own a home today, compared with 76 percent of

people’s life outcomes to such a large **White Hawaiian Latinx** degree,” says Hasan Kwame Jeffries, SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU; JULY 28, 2020 a history professor at The Ohio State

**Black**

white people. And Black Americans are five times as likely to live in high- poverty neighborhoods as white

attention to enormous racial disparities in St. Thomas in St. Paul, Minnesota. wealth and access to quality health care. Many experts point out that these

University. “Neighborhoods determine ‘Housing is the key to Americans.

access to opportunity, access to quality determining people’s “When you look at how we have

NAM Y. HUH/AP IMAGES (DEMONSTRATION)

**This year, *Upfront* is publishing a** Together, these historic events have inequalities are rooted in systemic racism.

**in the U.S. and efforts to combat it.**

**series of articles highlighting racism** sparked national discussions about Systemic racism refers to laws, customs,

health care, decent schools, quality playgrounds, and all these other things.”

life outcomes.’ segregated our neighborhoods and

that this was done purposefully,” says

the ways in which many Black and and practices built into society over time

**Recent events** have shone a spotlight white Americans continue to live in two that have disadvantaged people of color. on racial inequality in American society. different—and very unequal—worlds. Even though many of these laws have The protests following the police killings “Every one of our systems in changed, their effects can still be felt.

of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and America has been impacted—infected, Here’s a look at five ways that other Black Americans, have highlighted in fact—in some significant way by racial inequality persists in American the racial discrimination that persists in these racial disparities and these racial life—and how Black Americans policing and the criminal justice system. inequalities,” says Yohuru Williams, a have persevered in the face of this

But today, neighborhoods across the color lived were marked red on maps Jeffries, “you see why neighborhoods

country are heavily divided by race— and deemed unsuitable for financial are the way they are, why poverty is and unequal. Experts say that’s not a investment. Banks used the maps to concentrated in certain neighborhoods.” coincidence. For example, beginning in deny loans to Black Americans looking Many experts say discrimination in the 1930s, the federal government used to buy homes. Few businesses invested housing hasn’t gone away either. Black

a process called redlining to rate urban in redlined areas, leading to decay and a Americans are still more than twice as areas across the U.S. for investment. scarcity of job opportunities. And many likely as white Americans to be denied

And the Covid-19 pandemic has called civil rights scholar at the University of inequality for centuries.

Neighborhoods where people of

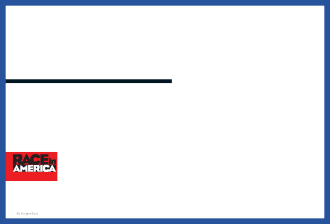
middle-class white families fled to the home loans, according to a federal report. ▶

**TWO AMERICAS**

Analyze the Article

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**OC T OBER 12, 2 0 2 0 9**



1. What role does neighborhood segregation play

in perpetuating inequality in education, healthcare, and wealth?

1. According to the article, what are some reasons

for the disproportionate number of Black and Latinx Americans in prison?

1. What are some ways Black Americans have overcome the inequalities presented in the article?
2. What fact from the article do you find most surprising? Why?

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