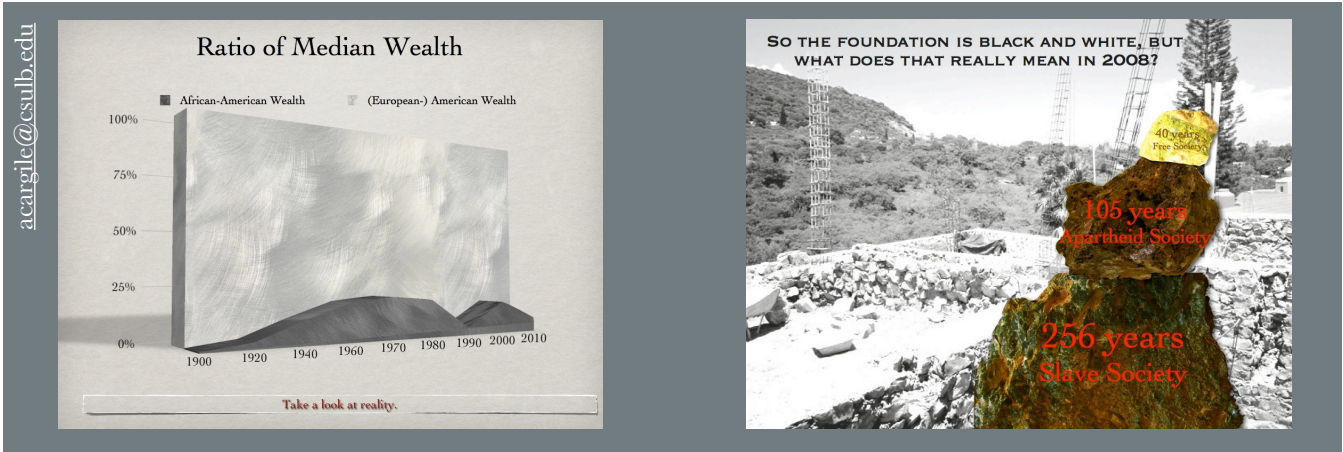


THE ECONOMICS OF RACE

Dr. Aaron Castelan Cargile



Whiteness as property has carried and produced a heavy legacy. It is a ghost that has haunted the political and legal domains in which claims for justice have been inadequately addressed for far too long. Only rarely declaring its presence, it has warped efforts to remediate racial exploitation. It has blinded society to the systems of domination that work against so many... It is long past time to put the property interest in whiteness to rest. Affirmative action can assist in that task. Affirmative action, if properly conceived and implemented, is not only consistent with norms of equality, but is essential to shedding the legacy of oppression.

-Cheryl I. Harris (June, 1993). *Whiteness as Property*. *Harvard Law Review*.

African American Wealth

- Hornsby (1989, p. 12) discusses five different estimates for the amount of wealth African Americans had amassed; the average of these estimates is 630 million, approximately 0.5% of the national wealth total in 1904.
- In “1990 black Americans owned only a meager 1 percent of total wealth” in the United States (Conley, 1999, p. 25).

Median Wealth Ratios

- The ratio in 1880: .02 (Higgs, 1982).
- The ratio in 1976: .18 (Blau & Graham, 1990).
- The ratio in 1989: .03 (Wolff, 1998).
- The ratio in 1999: .16 (Kennickell, 1999).
- The ratio in 2002: .07 (Kochhar, 2004).
- The ratio in 2010: .10 (Dillahunt et al., 2010)

References

- Blau, F. D., & Graham, J. W. (1990). Black-White differences in wealth and asset composition. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 105(2), 321-339.
- Conley, D. (1999). *Being Black, Living in the Red: Race, Wealth, and Social Policy in America*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- ★ Dillahunt, A., Miller, B., Prokosch, M., Huezco, J., & Muhammad, D. (2010). State of the Dream 2010: Drained. United for a Fair Economy. Available at www.faireconomy.org
- Higgs, R. (1982). Accumulation of Property by Southern Blacks before World War I. *American Economic Review*, 72(4), 725-737.
- Hornsby, A. R. (1989). The accumulation of wealth by Black Georgians, 1890-1915. *The Journal of Negro History*, 74(1), pp. 11-30.
- Kennickell, A. B. (1999). “Revisions to the SCF Weighting Methodology: Accounting for Race/ Ethnicity and Homeownership”. Federal Reserve Board of Governors Working Paper. Available at www.federalreserve.gov/pubs/oss/oss2/method.html
- Kochhar, R. (2004). The Wealth of Hispanic Households: 1996 to 2002. Pew Hispanic Center. Available at www.pewhispanic.org/files/reports/34.pdf
- Wolff, E. N. (1998). Recent trends in the size distribution of household wealth. *The Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 12(3), pp. 131-150.