Omar Wasow
Department of African and African American Studies
Department of Government
Harvard University
Proposed Syllabus

Post-Civil Rights Black America, 1965-2006

Originally submitted for Gov 2392, May 22, 2006 Revised September, 18th, 2011

This course attempts to address three interrelated questions. First, what factors explain the rise and fall of the mid-1960s civil rights movement? Second, how has the post-1965 black freedom struggle affected African Americans, particularly those who are poor? Third, what role has American political thought, particularly ideas of the American Creed and the American dream, had on bolstering or undermining the long black freedom struggle? Additionally, this course introduces students to interdisciplinary methods for investigating social science questions.

Week 1: The American Creed and the American Dream

- Declaration of Independence, http://www.law.indiana.edu/uslawdocs/declaration.html
- Frederick Douglas, "Independence Day Speech at Rochester, 1841," http://www.libertynet.org/edcivic/freddoug.html
- Booker T. Washington, "The Atlanta Exposition Address," http://xroads.virginia.edu/~Hyper/WASHINGTON/ch14.html
- W.E.B. DuBois. *Dusk of Dawn.* 304-321.
- Gunnar Myrdal, An American Dilemma, Introduction and Chapter 1
- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., "I Have a Dream," http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/Ihaveadream.htm

- Malcolm X, "The Ballot or the Bullet", http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/malcolmxballot.htm
- Stokely Carmichael, "Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee Position Paper: The Basis of Black Power," http://www3.iath.virginia.edu/sixties/HTML_docs/Resources/Primary/Manifestos/SNCC_black_power.html
- Jennifer Hochschild. 1995. Facing Up to the American Dream, Chapter 1
- Clint Bolick. 1996. Affirmative Action Fraud. Chapters 2 & 3.

This week begins with an overview of the "natural rights" principles that underlie much of American political thought and the black freedom struggle. In addition, the tensions between these various traditions are drawn out. Finally, the concept of the American Creed is identified, its relation to the American dream is explored and the role of both in mobilizing white support or antipathy to black concerns is suggested.

The African American relationship to the American Creed has always been troubled. Gunnar Myrdal, in *The American Dilemma*, summarized the Creed as, "These ideals of the essential dignity of the individual human being, of the fundamental equality of all men, and of certain inalienable rights to freedom, justice, and a fair opportunity" (4). Throughout American history blacks have both summoned its moral power to assert their own aspirations and scoffed at the hypocrisy of a nation founded upon simultaneous commitments to freedom and slavery. Invoking the Creed, Martin Luther King Jr., at the March on Washington, grounded his argument for the rights of African Americans in the notion that "all men are created equal."

For King, the black freedom struggle was profoundly in concordance with the principles enumerated in the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights and parts of the Constitution (Bolick). Thus, King argued, his dream was "deeply rooted in the American dream." David Walker, in his *Appeal* written in 1829, cites the Declaration approvingly but then decries white America's failure to honor its principles. "Compare your own language above, extracted from your Declaration of Independence," he writes "with your cruelties and murders inflicted by your cruel and unmerciful fathers and yourselves on our fathers on us" (75). Similarly, Frederick Douglas, in 1841, asked "Are the great principles of political freedom and of natural justice, embodied in that Declaration of Independence, extended to us?" (1). Answering his own question, Douglas declared:

What, to the American slave, is your Fourth of July? I answer: a day that reveals

to him, more than all other days in the year, the gross injustice and cruelty to which he is the constant victim. To him, your celebration is a sham; your boasted liberty, an unholy license; your national greatness, swelling vanity; your sounds of rejoicing are empty and heartless; your denunciation of tyrants, brass-fronted impudence; your shouts of liberty and equality, hollow mockery; your prayers and hymns, your sermons and thanksgivings, with all your religious parade and solemnity, are, to Him, mere bombast, fraud, deception, impiety, and hypocrisy-a thin veil to cover up crimes which would disgrace a nation of savages (3).

Other black leaders like Booker T. Washington and Marcus Garvey, though taking a different tack with their self-help and black nationalist agendas, also called upon variations of the American Creed and American dream to assert their beliefs. Washington argued passionately that, "Merit, no matter under what skin found, is in the long run recognized and rewarded." (50). Further, Washington suggested that slavery and racism were as corrosive to whites as blacks because they undermined white's work ethic. Washington posited, "The slave system on our place, in a large measure, took the spirit of self-reliance and self-help out of the white people" (38).

With the rise of the Black Power movement in the late 1960s, however, the black freedom struggle's reliance on American ideals was increasingly called into question. Stokely Carmichael, in the position paper "The Basis of Black Power," wrote "We reject the American dream as defined by white people and must work to construct an American reality defined by Afro-Americans" (5). Further, amid the hundreds of urban riots in the 1960s and early 1970s, numerous black leaders abandoned appeals to white America's conscience through non-violent civil disobedience and endorsed political violence as a critical form of protest and contestation with the state (Singh, 192; Thernstrom & Thernstrom, 165-166).

Ironically, the civil rights successes of the 1960s also presented the establishment civil rights groups with something of an identity crisis relative to the American Creed. Having achieved long-sought goals, the establishment leadership was forced to reconsider its focus on equality before the law. Bayard Rustin, writing in 1965 in *Commentary*, argued the civil rights movement was in the midst of "an evolution calling its very name into question." He contended the movement was "now concerned not merely with removing the barriers to full opportunity but with achieving the fact of equality" (27).

Thus, while appeals to American ideals were central to achieving the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, new challenges and crises uncoupled the black

freedom struggle from its long reliance on the Creed. As Paul Sniderman and Thomas Piazza comment in the *The Scar of Race*, "A generation ago, it was the highest ambition of civil rights activists that the state be neutral on race that it stop using its power to impose inequality on blacks; no one suspected it would exert its authority, only a few years later, to see that blacks are preferred to whites" (67). Echoing Rustin, the post-1965 civil rights movement would increasingly emphasize equality of outcome rather than equality of opportunity and group rights over individual rights in domains as diverse as electoral politics, education, employment, criminal justice and health. This shift has significantly altered the rhetoric, ideology and tactics of the contemporary civil rights movement with important consequences.

Over the last forty years, the black middle class has grown dramatically and thrived. By contrast, life for the black lower class has, by many measures, deteriorated dramatically. This simultaneous rise and fall in African American opportunity and quality of life has been referred to as a Dickinsean black "tale of two cities." The course proposed in this syllabus will investigate whether black America's ambivalent relationship to the American Creed has affected the black "tale of two cities." Some of the key questions to be addressed follow. How have the post-civil rights agendas enhanced or constrained class mobility for African Americans, especially the poor? What effect have the post-1965 agendas had on attempts by blacks to build winning political coalitions and advance the interests of black voters? What policies and agendas are salient or peripheral within the modern black freedom struggle? In each of the prior questions, the course will consider competing views and counterfactual scenarios specifically with regard to the modern black civil rights agenda and the American Creed.

Week 2: Black Progress from 1940-1965

- Jennifer Hochschild. 1995. Facing Up to the American Dream, Chapter 2
- Stephen Thernstrom and Abigail Thernstrom. 1997. America in Black and White, Chapters 2, 3 & 7.
- Bayard Rustin. 1965. "From Protest to Politics: The Future of the Civil Rights Movement," Commentary 39:25-31.
- Martin Luther King, Jr. 1967. "Where Do We Go From Here?" Annual Report Delivered at the 11th Convention of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, http://www.stanford.edu/group/King/publications/speeches/Where_do_we_go_from_here.html

- John D. Skrentny. Ironies of Affirmative Action. Chapter 4.
- Seymour Martin Lipset. 1992. "Affirmative Action and the American Creed." Wilson Quarterly 16 (1):52-60.

This week establishes a social and political context of the post-War but pre-1965 era and the ideological tensions that emerge following the civil rights victories of the mid-1960s.

Between World War II and the late 1960s, black Americans made remarkable advances educationally, economically and politically. Jennifer Hochschild describes the trends on those three fronts as "arenas of unambiguous improvement" (39). According to Stephen and Abigail Thernstrom, in 1940 12.3 percent of blacks aged 25-29 had completed four or more years of high school. By 1960 that number jumped to 38.6 percent (84). Similarly, they report that wages for black men and women more than doubled between 1940 and 1960 (81-82).

Politically, even before the landmark passage of the Voting Rights Act (VRA), blacks were becoming an important voting bloc in key states and in national elections. In the north, 87 percent of blacks settled in just seven states that, together, controlled three-quarters of the electoral votes needed to win the Presidency (88). Even in the south, despite concerted efforts at disenfranchisement, black voting-age registration grew from 3 percent in 1940 to 42 percent in 1964 (152). Following the 1965 passage of the VRA, black registration swelled further, especially in the South, additionally enhancing black political influence.

Amid all the progress, though, persistent and troubling issues of poverty, crime, unemployment, divorce and the decline of two-parent households persisted. Lee Rainwater and William Yancey argued "The year 1965 may be known in history as the time when the civil rights movement discovered, in this sense of becoming explicitly aware, that abolishing legal racism would not produce Negro equality" (As quoted in Skrentny, 70). In simplest terms, victories in courts and legislatures did not translate directly into bigger pocketbooks or more stable homes. Despite the enormous advancements achieved over the prior 30 years, unresolved economic and social inequality left black leaders struggling to articulate a new post-civil rights agenda. Further complicating matters, urban riots and rise of the black power movement in the mid-1960s directly rebuffed many of the core principles of the more mainstream civil rights movement.

Attempting to adapt to the new times, Dr. King and other civil rights leaders began to drift away from the strategy of appealing to the morality of the white majority. The sense of crisis triggered by the riots was linked by a wide range of civil rights leaders to what Roy Wilkins, head of the NAACP, called "black economic insecurity." Against the threat of what

A. Philip Randolph called "volcanic" anger and "socio-racial dynamite," moderate civil rights leaders called for billions of dollars in federal aid to urban black communities (Skrentny, 77). Dr. King went even further and contemplated "restructuring the whole of American society." He asked, "Why are there forty million poor people in America?" And when you begin to ask that question, you are raising a question about the economic system, about a broader distribution of wealth. When you ask that question, you begin to question the capitalistic economy" (6).

Ironically, prompted by the riots, white elites also began to privately and publicly move away from a commitment to color-blind policy. Presidents Johnson and Nixon worked through a variety of channels to pressure business, military, non-profit and other government leaders to ramp up black hiring. Race conscious policies were initially viewed by most civil rights leaders as taboo and, in some cases, even designed to undermine black-labor coalitions. The sense of urgency created by the civil unrest, however, made the previously unthinkable into conventional wisdom (Skrentny).

Calls for massive targeted federal aid and affirmative action were not inherently oppositional to the American Creed. For example, World War II veterans were deemed deserving of both. African Americans, however, were not viewed by most whites as similarly worthy of such public and private benefits. Thus, the demands of black leaders and white elites were increasingly out of step with the sentiment of mainstream whites. Seymour Martin Lipset, echoing Myrdal and others, argues that these white mainstream values were deeply rooted in the American psyche:

More than 150 years ago, Alexis de Tocqueville observed that the American version of egalitarianism emphasized equality of opportunity and of respect, rather than equality of result or condition. This version of equality is one of five related elements in the American Creed, including liberty, individualism, populism (the rule of the people), and laissez faire. (2)

The tension, then, from Lipset's perspective, is that "While the civil-rights movement of the 1960s asked Americans to live up to a single unassailable ideal, today it sets up a conflict between two core American values: egalitarianism and individualism" (1).

This week's readings establish many of the key questions for the remainder of the course. What caused the civil rights movement to lose coherence post-1965? Why did the black and white elites shift from advocating race-neutral to race-conscious programs? To whom was the

policy shift initially targeted? What political risks were entailed in embracing color-conscious policy initiatives?

Week 3: Urban Riots and Black Power, 1965-1992

- National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders. 1968. Pgs. 27-61.
- Thernstrom & Thernstrom. Chapter 6.
- Susan Olzak and Suzanne Shanahan. 1996. "Deprivation Race Riots: An Extension of Spilerman's Analysis." *Social Forces* 74:931-61.
- Anthony Daniel Perez, Kimberly M. Berg and Daniel J. Myers. 2003. "Police and Riots, 1967-1969." *Journal Of Black Studies* 34(2):153-182.
- Abraham H. Miller. 2001. "The Los Angeles Riots: A Study in Crisis Paralysis." Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management 9(4):189-199.
- Bean, Jonathan J. 2000. "Burn, Baby, Burn': Small Business in the Urban Riots of the 1960s." *Independent Review* 5(2):10861653.
- Collins, William and Robert Margo. 2004. "The Labor Market Effects of the 1960s Riots." *National Bureau of Economic Research*. Working Paper No. 10243.
- Huey Newton and Bobby Seale. 1966. "October 1966 Black Panther Platform and Program" in *Call and Response: Key Debates in African American Studies*, Edited by Henry Louis Gates, Jr. and Jennifer Burton.
- Optional: Sidney Fine. 1989. Violence in the Model City: the Cavanagh Administration, Race Relations, and the Detroit Riot of 1987. Chapters 7-9.
- Optional: Gregg Lee Carter. 1987. "Local Police Force Size and the Severity of the 1960's Black Rioting." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 31(4):601614.

This week delves into the urban riots to suggest that the period was more influential on black and white life than is widely appreciated and to demonstrate how different methods of social science can redefine our understanding of seemingly settled matters.

Through most of American history, racial rioting was initiated by white mobs and directed at blacks. Terrifying sprees of murder and bedlam like the New York City Draft Riots of 1863 could result in dozens of blacks losing their lives and hundreds having their property stolen (Bernstein). Prior to the 1960s however, black-initiated civil unrest was rare. Beginning around 1964, however, the number of spontaneous, black-initiated riots grew dramatically

through 1968, and then declined just as quickly through the early 1970s for a total of 752 (Gregg Lee Carter). Eight riots in Los Angeles, Chicago, Baltimore, Detroit, Newark, Cleveland, Milwaukee and the District of Columbia were especially destructive and together resulted in an estimated 33,542 arrests, 7,653 incidents of arson, 5,350 injuries and 135 people killed. The scope and unprecedented nature of these riots meant that disorders like the Watts riot of 1965 were front page news across the nation.

Even more significantly, as referenced in the prior two weeks, the urban riots of the 1960s and 1970s played a central role in reshaping the activist and political landscape of the day. Revered civil rights icons were suddenly marginalized, youthful exhorters of black power captured the national imagination, white elites were motivated to respond to the crisis and new issues became salient to voters. In spite of the pivotal role played by the riots, however, their unexpected arrival and equally rapid disappearance have only partially been explained. More than one academic refers to the period of unrest as "enigmatic."

To offer contemporary readers a sense of the riots, both the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (NACCD) and Violence in the Model City provide detailed accounts of how specific disorders unfolded. In contrast to the typical riot assessments which link poverty and racism to the unrest, Thernstrom & Thernstrom, Olzak & Shanahan and Carter all suggest that deprivation was a poor indicator of either riot likelihood or severity. Cities like Los Angeles and Detroit, where the two worst riots of the era occurred, were among the best places for blacks to live or work by a wide variety of measures (Thernstrom & Thernstrom, 162). Conversely, many cities in which blacks suffered under especially difficult circumstances saw little or no rioting, particularly in the South. Unlike those focused on structural explanations for the unrest, Perez, Berg & Myers and Miller find evidence that police over- or underreactions may substantially increase riot severity. Bean and Collins & Margo offer longer-term analyses of the harmful effects of the riots on the communities in which they erupted.

Three critical points emerge from these readings. First, though already emphasized in the prior weeks' assignments, the 1964 to 1971 urban riots were extraordinary, transformed the politics of their day and contributed to a number of underappreciated longer term ills in urban communities. Second, from the perspective of most whites and many blacks, the riots represent a sharp break from a significant prior tradition of appealing to the ideals of the American Creed. Third, the intuitively compelling and dominant interpretation that riots are the product of deprivation lacks empirical support, while theories of ethnic competition and police malfeasance appear to offer more explanatory power. The broad meaning of this

last point is additionally important as it will be repeated in future weeks when conventional analyses on other topics will be called into question.

Week 4: Electoral Politics and The Voting Rights Act from 1965 to 2006

- Thernstrom, Abigail M. 1987. Whose Votes Count? Affirmative Action and Minority Voting Rights. Introduction.
- David Lublin. 1997. The Paradox of Representation: Racial Gerrymandering and Minority Interests in Congress. Chapters 1, 2, 5 & 6.
- Tate, Katherine. 2003. Black Faces in the Mirror: African Americans and Their Representatives in the U.S. Congress. Chapters 6-8.
- Justin Buchler, Matthew Jarvis, and John E. McNulty. 2004. "Punch Card Technology and the Racial Gap in Residual Votes," *Perspectives on Politics* 2(3):517-524.
- Jesse Jackson. 2005. "Keep the Vote Alive." http://www.keepthevotealive.org/coalition.htm
- Robert Richie. 2004. "Full Representation: Uniting Backers of Gerrymandering Reform and Minority Voting Rights." *National Civic Review*. Summer:3-9.
- Jeff Manza and Christopher Uggen. 2004. "Punishment and Democracy: Disenfranchisement of Nonincarcerated Felons in the United States," *Perspectives on Politics* 2(3):491-505.
- Optional: Susan J. Carroll and Krista Jenkins, Increasing Diversity or More of the Same? Term Limits and the Representation of Women, Minorities, and Minority Women in State Legislatures," unpublished. Online at http://courses.missouristate.edu/StacyUlbig/pls319/carroll.pdf
- Optional: Daniel S. Goldman. 2004. "The Modern-Day Literacy Test?: Felon Disenfranchisement and Race Discrimination." *Stanford Law Review* 57(2):611-655.

This week establishes the format to be used in each succeeding class of looking at a specific issue, across the entire post-civil rights era with a goal of understanding both the effects of a policy and its relationship to the American Creed. The Voting Rights Act serves as ideal starting point due to its evolving meaning and complex costs and benefits in substantive representation.

As noted in Week 2, population shifts, the civil rights movement and the landmark passage of the Voting Rights Act (VRA), all combined to propel Southern black voter turnout from 3 percent in 1940 to 62 percent in 1968. Though African Americans were finally able to vote in large numbers, few were elected to office. In 1982, frustrated with the slow progress, activists and politicians successfully amended the VRA to fight black voter dilution by concentrating minority voters into distinct minority districts. Thus, the objective of the VRA shifted from its initial emphasis on eliminating impediments to African American enfranchisement to the goal of ensuring minority candidates won elections through the creation of majority-minority districts. Though the revised VRA substantially increased the number of black elected officials, some scholars argue that consolidating black voters into majority-minority districts came at a cost to broader black political influence across multiple districts.

Thernstrom, Tate and Lublin all provide overviews of the surprising evolution of the VRA and analyze some of the effects. Tate offers survey data suggesting that there is no "empowerment effect," as hypothesized, of black elected officials on their constituents. Lublin analyzes a large data set of congressional elections and documents both the stark odds facing non-white candidates in majority-white districts and the high level of minority vote wasting that is typical of majority-minority districts. Buchler, Jarvis & McNulty, Goldman, and Manza & Uggen each offer insights into how technical and procedural aspects of voting continue to disenfranchise a significant number of black voters, though in ways that are often overlooked by activists. Jackson's "Keep the Vote Alive" call to arms provides insight into the agenda and rhetoric of the old-line black activists. Lastly, Caroll & Jenkins and Richie identify how additional procedural changes, such as term limits, might enhance minority representation.

The central question is has the shift in focus of the Voting Rights Actaway from fighting disenfranchisement and toward fighting voter dilutionactually increased black political power? Additionally, moral and legal questions arise about the appropriate use of race-conscious redistricting in a multi-racial democracy. The tension between the individual rights of black voters and the group rights of blacks as a class will also be explored.

Week 5: K-12 Education, from 1903 to No Child Left Behind

- Booker T. Washington. 1903. "Industrial Education for the Negro" in *Call and Response: Key Debates in African American Studies*, Edited by Henry Louis Gates, Jr. and Jennifer Burton.
- W. E. B. Du Bois, 1903. "The Talented Tenth." in Call and Response: Key Debates in

- African American Studies, Edited by Henry Louis Gates, Jr. and Jennifer Burton.
- Jennifer Hochschild and Nathan Scovronick. 2003. The American Dream and the Public Schools. Chapters 1, 2, 5 & 7.
- Abigail Thernstrom and Stephan Thernstrom. 2003. No Excuses: Closing the Racial Gap in Learning. Chapters 1, 2, 3 & 7.
- Derick Bell. 2004. Silent Covenants. Chapters 5 & 6.

Week 6: K-12 Education, Understanding the Black-White Test Score Gap

- Christopher Jencks and Meredith Philips. 1998. The Black-White Test Score Gap. Chapters 1, 4, & 9
- William G. Howell and Paul E. Peterson. 2006. The Education Gap: Vouchers and Urban Schools. Chapter 2.
- Roland G. Fryer and Steven D. Levitt. 2004. "Understanding the Black-White Test Score Gap in the First Two Years of School," *Review of Economics and Statistics* 86 (2): 447-464.
- Duncan, Greg J., and Katherine A. Magnuson. 2005. "Can Family Socioeconomic Resources Account for Racial and Ethnic Test Score Gaps?," Future of Children 15 (1): 35-54.

This two-week period investigates the struggle to reform schools as a means of black advancement. The long standing debate about "practical" vocational education (Washington) vs. "academic" education (Du Bois) is briefly covered to put the long history of this debate in context. Further, the rise and fall of the idea of integration is considered both in relation to specific policies and as to whether it conflicts or conforms to articulated American ideals.

Brown v. Board of Ed. was a crowning accomplishment of the civil rights movement yet, more than 50 years after the decision, the typical black twelfth-grader performs at the same level on reading and math tests as the average white eighth-grader (Thernstrom & Thernstrom, 2003). This stark academic achievement gap has broad implications for American society, particularly as the United States has become less segregated and more stratified on the basis of education. Differences between blacks and whites in high school graduation, college degree attainment, and adult earnings are best understood as a function of the test scores received

in middle school, not as a function of race (Jencks, 1998). As Hochschild and Scovronick detail, since *Brown* numerous reform efforts have been attempted from busing to equalizing school financing. Though these various reforms have been tried with widely varying degrees of commitment, there has nevertheless been more than a half-century of policy experimentation and increased funding with depressingly modest results.

The *Brown* decision identified segregation as the primary problem to be addressed and strongly endorsed racial integration as the essential mechanism to achieve equity in education. Though the initial attempts at desegregation of student bodies through busing were short lived, over the intervening past 50 years, integration as a reform has reappeared in different forms. Multicultural or Afrocentric curricula attempted to integrate the bodies of knowledge taught in schools. The conscious hiring of black superintendents and teachers attempted to integrate school management and staffs. The creation of magnet schools to lure whites to attend predominantly black schools attempted integration with carrots rather than sticks.

The elevation by black leaders of integration above alternate methods of reform has increasingly come into question by scholars, activists and elected officials. Derrick Bell suggests that in the *Brown* decision, the Supreme Court was primarily motivated by a desire to improve America's global image during the Cold War. Abigail and Stephen Thernstrom along with Ronald Ferguson demonstrate that some essentially segregated, high-poverty schools can produce exceptional results with strong leadership, teaching, and academic culture (Jencks, 1998). Others have emphasized reforming school governance through mechanisms like standards or choice (Howell & Peterson).

This more recent wave of analysis and reform is typically less concerned with race-conscious efforts to chip away at segregation than with largely race-neutral reforms that ameliorate the negative consequences of problems like public-sector bureaucracy, low-birth weight babies or startlingly high TV consumption among minority kids. Even the No Child Left Behind Act, which is explicitly concerned with racial inequality in education, proscribes largely race-neutral solutions. The shift from emphasizing integration and race-conscious education reforms to test score "gaps" and race-neutral reforms poses challenging questions in the context of the civil rights movement's changing relationship to the American Creed. Bell provocatively considers a Brown decision concurring with the precedent of "separate but equal." Which version of Brown, the actual or Bell's, seems more aligned with notions of individual liberty, egalitarian-ism and laissez faire? How might America and black activism have evolved differently without "separate is inherently unequal"? How might black educational gains and white reactions have

differed if school quality rather than integration had been the civil rights rallying cry?

Week 7: Employment of Native Blacks and Immigrants

- William Julius Wilson. 1996. When Work Disappears. Chapters 1, 5, 6 & 7.
- Glenn Loury. 1996. "Review of When Work Disappears," Wilson Quarterly, Fall:89-92.
- Roger Waldinger. 1996. Still the Promised City? African-Americans and New Immigrants in Post-Industrial New York. Chapter 5.
- Jennifer Hochschild. 1995. Facing Up to the American Dream, Chapter 13.
- Kristin F. Butcher. 1994. "Black Immigrants in the United States: A Comparison with Native Blacks and Other Immigrants," *Industrial and Labor Relations Review* 47(2):265-284.
- Suzanne Model. 1995. "West Indian Prosperity: Fact or Fiction?," *Social Problems* 42(4):535-553.
- Optional: Mary C. Waters. 1999. Black Identities. Chapter 4, "West Indians at Work."

This week investigates why the bottom third of blacks have such low labor-force attachment and why poor black immigrants have greater workforce participation. In addition, we will question whether the "Puritan work ethic" is part of the American Creed or American dream and the differences between these concepts.

Among the most intractable problems of the last forty years has been black unemployment. Where two-thirds of white men have full-time, year-round jobs, only half of black men are similarly employed. Though black unemployment has lessened during boom times and decreased from the Jim Crow era, a substantial gap between white and black unemployment has persisted. In When Work Disappears, William Julius Wilson further documents how black poverty has become increasingly concentrated in specific neighborhoods as industry and the black middle class have moved out of inner cities. Synthesizing econometric, sociological and survey research, Wilson does a remarkable job of documenting the troubling state of the black "underclass." The heart of Wilson's structural argument is that decentralization and globalization have created a "spatial mismatch" between where blacks live and where job opportunities arise. When Work Disappears leaves unresolved, however, important questions regarding crime and the relative success of unskilled poor immigrants when compared with native blacks. As the topic of crime will be addressed in the following weeks, these readings focus primarily on employment and immigration.

Hochschild delineates the multiple pitfalls in measuring the progress of native blacks against that of immigrants. Nevertheless, even acknowledging the selection bias inherent in the comparison, useful insights can be gleaned, especially when looking at black as opposed to European immigrants. Loury and Waldinger provide suggestive evidence that unemployment is less a function of "spatial mismatch" than of a mismatch in expectations wherein native blacks exhibit a significant distaste for low-skill, low-pay work that immigrants take more willingly. Comparing native blacks to black immigrants Butcher adds nuance to the narrative by pointing out that native blacks with higher education or who have migrated within the U.S. tend to have similar or higher workforce participation and earnings. Model similarly confirms that West Indian immigrants on average do have higher workforce participation than native blacks, but only after a few years of adjustment.

During the first and second Great Migrations, a majority of blacks responded to crushing poverty and poor employment prospects by moving from rural areas to cities and from the South to the North, largely without the aid of any civil rights group or government program. Likewise, we are currently in the midst of a reverse migration with millions of blacks moving from the North back to the South. Why more blacks today do not move from low-growth areas in cities like Detroit and Cleveland to high-growth areas like San Diego and Atlanta (or even nearby suburbs) in underanalyzed. Further, why native born blacks might suffer from an "expectations mismatch" in addition to a "spatial mismatch" is not fully understood.

It is not obvious, consequently, how Wilson's policy prescriptions of a "Marshall Plan" to fight poverty and unemployment would address cultural, educational and geographical challenges to higher black workforce participation. Wilson is a scholar not an activist but advocates solutions that are evocative of those championed by the civil rights movement over the last four decades, with the important exception that he strongly prefers targeting programs on the basis of class, not race. How might class- as opposed to race-targeted anti-poverty programs be viewed by the voting public? What qualities of those in need might make Americans more or less sympathetic to helping the poor? What does the higher workforce participation of black immigrants indicate about the role of race versus other factors in the decision making process of employers? What can government programs do to change values about what is perceived to be low- versus high-status work?

Week 8: The Rise of "Law and Order" Politics, 1965-2006

• Edward G. Carmines and James A. Stimson. 1989. Issue Evolution. Chapters 2 & 3.

- Tali Mendelberg. 2001. The Race Card. Chapters 2 & 3.
- Marc Mauer. 2001. "The Causes and Consequences of Prison Growth in the United States," in *Mass Imprisonment: Social Causes and Consequences* edited by David Garland. Chapter 1.
- Stephen Thernstrom and Abigail Thernstrom. 1997. America in Black and White. Chapter 10.
- Jeffrey A. Miron. 2004. Drug War Crimes. Chapters 3 & 4.
- Lawrence D. Bobo and Victor Thompson. 2010. "Racialized Mass Incarceration: Poverty, Prejudice, and Punishment." *Doing Race: 21 Essays for the 21st Century*. (Hazel R. Markus, Paula Moya, Ed.).

Week 9: Collateral Effects of Mass Incarceration, 1980-2006

- Marc Mauer and Meda Chesney-Lind, editors. 2002. *Invisible Punishment: The Collateral Consequences of Mass Imprisonment*. Chapters 2, 5 & 7.
- Becky Pettit and Bruce Western. "Black-White Earnings Inequality, Employment Rates, and Incarceration." Unpublished. Online at http://www.princeton.edu/~western/western/20ajs.pdf
- Bruce Western. 2006. Punishment and Inequality in America. Introduction. Online at http://www.princeton.edu/~western/
- Cathy Cohen. 1999. The Boundaries of Blackness: AIDS and the Breakdown of Black Politics.
- Rucker C. Johnson and Steven Raphael, "The Effects of Male Incarceration Dynamics on AIDS Infection Rates among African-American Women and Men" http://ist-socrates.berkeley.edu/~ruckerj/johnson_raphael_prison-AIDSpaper81105.pdf

These two weeks explore the origins and effects of more punitive criminal justice policy on the black community as well as the generally limited response from civil rights leaders. The lack of a civil rights response is considered as a function of philosophical- and class-orientation.

Between 1970 and 2001, the U.S. jail and prison population increased from 338,000 to 2.1 million. Approximately half of those currently incarcerated are black. For the last two decades, female incarceration rates have been growing at a significantly faster pace than that of men. This radical reordering of the relationship between blacks and the state emerged initially

from the "law and order" and "war on drugs" policies proposed by Nixon and later expanded by Reagan and Clinton. In addition to profoundly altering the lives of the incarcerated, the secondary effects of mass imprisonment have also been devastating to the black community. The dramatic increase in the number of blacks who have spent time in prison contributes to disenfranchisement, low rates of employment, the dissolution of families, high rates of HIV infection and denial of government benefits like subsidized housing or education (Mauer & Chesney-Lind; Pettit & Western). Further, Miron and others argue that the spike in innercity homicides and other crimes in the 1980s and early 1990s are a consequence of "drug prohibition." In sum, a compelling case can be made that the most significant changes in black life over the past 30 years are directly or indirectly a function of changes in criminal justice policy.

Remarkably, black leaders have been largely silent about the extraordinary increase in the breadth and harshness of the post-1970s criminal justice system. Parallels can be drawn to how black leaders responded to the epidemic of HIV in the black community (Cohen). A few narrow issues, such as racial profiling or the sentencing disparity between crack and cocaine have attracted the attention of black elected officials and activists but almost no mainstream black leaders have prioritized fighting the whole regime of drug prohibition or the punitive nature of the modern criminal justice system. Many scholars have also overlooked the rise of law and order policies. Wilson, for example, manages to investigate post-1970 black male unemployment, single-parent households and urban crime without touching on the growth of markedly different criminal justice policies of the current era.

Why did these policies become salient following the civil rights movement? At least part of the answer lies in two significant political shifts triggered by the passage of civil rights legislation. First, following the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Republicans and Democrats began to compete for the first time in decades on the basis of race-related policy (Carmines & Stimson). Second, with the success of the civil rights movement in drawing attention to the horrors of explicit racism, a "norm of equality" around race developed which, in turn, led to the use by politicians of implicit racial appeals like the call for "law and order" (Mendelberg). Additionally, urban riots may have increased the appeal to whites of greater state repression.

The subtlety of these policy shifts has contributed to the absence of any civil rights movement outcry or "March on Washington" for criminal justice reform. Additionally, the lack of mobilization suggests either inability or disinterest in engaging the issue. As with education, black advocacy on criminal justice reform appears primarily to focus on those issues like racial profiling and disparate sentencing which are most easily understood in terms of fighting racism. Larger concerns like the criminalization of addiction or the role of drug prohibition in creating a vast underground economy in inner cities are mostly ignored. Who is privileged by the civil rights movement's focus on equality of outcomes? How might class differences in the black community affect advocacy on criminal justice reform? How might ideals of individual liberty and laissez faire be mobilized by blacks on behalf of criminal justice reform? What might explain the white backlash to alcohol prohibition and relative indifference to drug prohibition?

Week 10: Affirmative Action and the Future of the Black Freedom Struggle

- Thurgood Marshall. 1978. from "Opinion on Regents of the University of California v. Bakke" in Call and Response: Key Debates in African American Studies, Edited by Henry Louis Gates, Jr. and Jennifer Burton.
- Harry Holzer and David Neumark. 2000. "What Does Affirmative Action Do?," *Industrial and Labor Relations Review* 53(2):240-271
- William Julius Wilson. 1987. The Truly Disadvantaged. Chapter 5.
- Richard H. Sander. 2004. "A Systemic Analysis of Affirmative Action in American Law Schools" Stanford Law Review 57(367).
- Richard H. Sander. 2004. "A Reply to Critics" Stanford Law Review 57(1963).
- Swain, Carol, The New White Nationalism, 8.
- Sniderman & Carmines. 1997. Reaching Beyond Race. Chapter 1, 2 & 5.
- Cornell West. 1996. "Affirmative Action in Context." in *Call and Response: Key Debates in African American Studies*, Edited by Henry Louis Gates, Jr. and Jennifer Burton.

This week attempts to synthesize the prior reading and discussion by suggesting that much of the post-civil rights agenda, whether in voting, criminal justice or other arenas, can be understood through the focus on equality of outcomes, an idea most easily identified in affirmative action. The positive and negative effects of affirmative action are considered along with its alignment to the American Creed and American dream.

In contrast to the paucity of mobilization efforts around criminal justice reform, black

leaders and white liberals have devoted significant political capital to supporting and defending affirmative action programs. While much of the public wrangling over affirmative action has narrowed to liberals and conservatives arguing about questions of "fairness," the academic debate has become more ideologically diverse and nuanced. Economists Holzer and Neumark suggest that despite the fierce deliberations over affirmative action, in employment practice it tends to be less controversial and also modestly effective at increasing the representation of competent, though less credentialed, female and minority employees. Wilson's concern has less to do with efficacy than equity. He notes that by definition affirmative action programs will benefit the most advantaged members of the favored class and therefore are not useful for addressing the needs of the least advantaged. Further, he notes that the unpopularity of racespecific programs makes them politically less achievable or sustainable. Sander argues that aggressive affirmative action programs in law schools appear to result in numerous negative consequences for the very black law students they are designed to help. Sander makes a strong case that beneficiaries of racial preferences are significantly more likely to be at the bottom of their law school classes, to drop out, to not pass the bar and to underperform in earnings. Swain contends that "white nationalists," ironically using the logic of an aggrieved minority class, are highly motivated by their deep dislike of affirmative action. Echoing Wilson and Swain, Sniderman and Carmines find that racially-targeted affirmative action is abhored by an overwhelming majority of whites, irrespective of political orientation.

Building on their findings, Sniderman and Carmines arrive at similar conclusions to Wilson and Lipset that the black and liberal reorientation away from principles of color-blindness and towards race-conscious policies has come at a great cost in moral and political legitimacy. Further, Sniderman and Carmines find that a voting majority exists among whites for anti-poverty programs that do not run counter to principles of equality of opportunity and individualism. Thus, a growing body of literature suggests that race-conscious policies and specifically race-conscious affirmative action programs are politically very expensive, do not reach those who are neediest, may harm the recipients and may provoke hostile backlashes from whites. Given these costs, why have black leaders and white liberals fought so tenaciously to maintain the programs? How does the class structure of black leadership affect which agendas are pursued? Would a "grand bargain" eliminating public sector affirmative action in exchange for color-blind, class-based policies advance the welfare of the worst off? How would electoral politics change if Democrats and Republicans were more differentiated on the basis of class policy than on race policy? What policies would be most important to a

Appendix: Topics for Revised Syllabus

- President Obama
- Gender, black feminism/womanism
- Family
- Health
- Culture
- Media