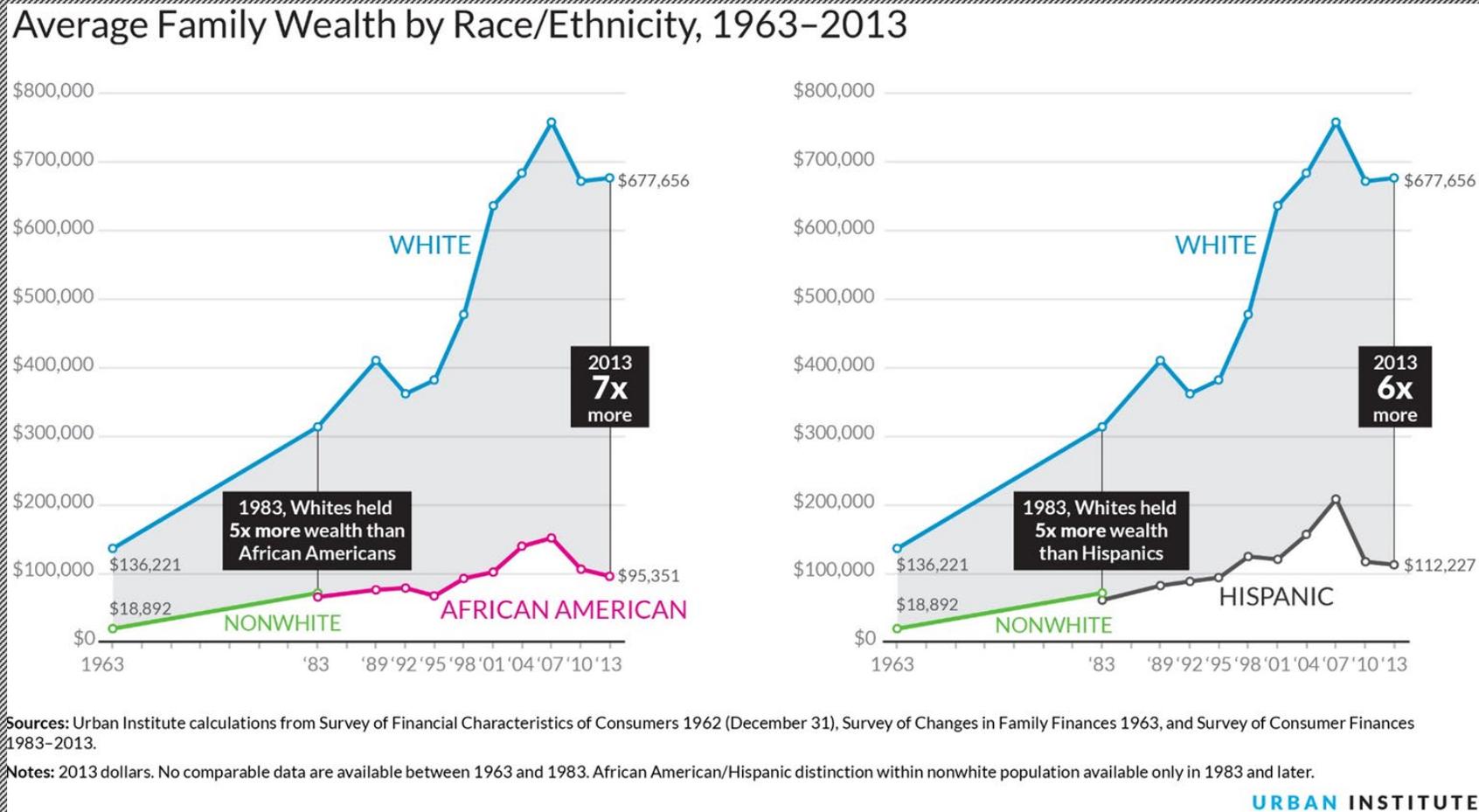# Social Dominance in the Post Civil Rights Era

The Criminal Justice System

Is there a race problem in the criminal justice system?

Isn't class the real issue and not race?

Race and Class are a Combined Problem

Average Family Wealth by Race/Ethnicity, 1963–2013

Sources: Urban Institute calculations from Survey of Financial Characteristics of Consumers 1962 (December 31), Survey of Changes in Family Finances 1963, and Survey of Consumer Finances 1983–2013.

Notes: 2013 dollars. No comparable data are available between 1963 and 1983. African American/Hispanic distinction within nonwhite population available only in 1983 and later.

URBAN INSTITUTE

Race Locks in Class Inequality

- Group identity undergirds justification for inequality.

- Race, Ethnicity, Tribe, etc. provide a political reason to ignore inequality

- Heterogeneous societies have less economic disparity

Five Fallacies of Racism

1. Individualistic Fallacy
2. Legalistic Fallacy
3. Tokenistic Fallacy
4. Ahistorical Fallacy
5. Fixed Fallacy

Guilt Free Explanations Abound

- Unconscious bias
- Network effects of whiteness
- Discrimination by default
- Racism dividend from past discrimination
- Culture of poverty

Individual focused explanations are necessary but not sufficient

- Racist cops

- Racist juror

- Racist prosecutor

- Racist judge

Race is a social phenomenon that requires a social analysis

Race in American History
- Conquest
- Slavery
- Segregation

Systematic Mechanisms
- Legal
- Economic
- Political

Social Dominance Theory and Racial Hierarchy

Group stratification and dominance is a universal trait across human societies although the intensity and the grounds vary across societies and across time within societies.*

Social Dominance

Human societies tend to organize as group-based social hierarchies in which at least one group enjoys greater social status and power than other groups.

Universal Forms of Dominance

- Age

- Gender

- Arbitrary Set

Arbitrary Set - Nation Specific Dominance

- Religion

- National Origin

- Gender expression / gender identity / sexual identity

- Class

- Race

Universal Phenomenon

Regardless of:

Governmental form
Religion
Economic system

Benefits of Dominance:
Disparate share of positive social value

- Political power

- Wealth

- Security

- Abundant quality food

- Quality housing

- Health Care/Medical Services

- Education

- Leisure

Costs of Subordination: Disparate share of negative social value

- Substandard housing

- Disease

- Unemployment/Underemployment

- Dangerous and distasteful work

- Stigmatization

- Punishment

- Vilification

Hierarchy-Enhancing Legitimizing Myths / Ideologies

- Societal myths or ideologies that support existing social hierarchy(ies) based on moral or intellectual justifications

Hierarchy-Enhancing Legitimizing Myths / Ideologies

- Meritorious Karma
- The Divine Right of Kings
- Manifest Destiny
- Culture of Poverty
- The "Natural Order"
- Male Superiority/Female Inferiority
- White Superiority / Black, Latino, Asian, and Indian Inferiority

Hierarchy Enhancing Ideologies

- Black Criminality (pathological)
- Young Black Super-predators
- Latino Criminality (pathological)
- White Criminality (circumstantial/mental health based)

Hierarchy-Attenuating Myths/Ideologies

- Societal myths/ideologies that undermine social hierarchy

Hierarchy-Attenuating Myths/Ideologies

- Human rights,
- Equality before God
- Socialism
- Feminism
- Racial Pride
- LGBT Pride

Hierarchy Enhancing Institutions

- Reproduce and maintain social hierarchy through their allocation of more positive social value to dominant groups.

- Financial firms (e.g., Wall Street), corporations, police forces, criminal justice systems, and prisons all represent hierarchy enhancing institutions.

Hierarchy Attenuating Institutions

- These institutions provide disproportionate assistance to members of subordinate groups.

- Religious organizations aiding the poor, civil and human rights organizations, and welfare organizations are considered hierarchy attenuating institutions.

Social Dominance Psychology - SDO

- Social Dominance functions structurally and individually

- Societies include individuals who like/prefer group dominance (high SDO)

- SDO is predictable based on group membership, education and other factors

SDO and Juries

- In a rape trail study, SDO was positively associated with perceptions of African American defendant guilt, while SDO was negatively associated with perception of white defendant guilt.

SDO and Sentencing

- SDO was also positively correlated with sentence severity for African American defendents, while for white defendants SDO was negatively correlated with sentence severity.

SDO and Criminal Justice Policy

- Studies show that SDO influences support for criminal justice policies.

- High SDO correlates to belief in the fairness of the criminal justice system and its lack of racial bias.

- This belief, in turn, correlates to support for the death penalty and a lack of support for legal aid to indigent prisoners.

Social Dominance Psychology - SDO

- Members of subordinate groups typically have lower SDO

- So, Women, African Americans, Latinos, LGBT persons have lower SDOs

- However, education lowers SDO so people with more education typically have lower SDOs than those without education.

Hierarchy Enhancing Institutions and SDO*

- Hierarchy Enhancing Institutions are disproportionately run and staffed by people with high SDOs

- Hierarchy Attenuating Institutions are disproportionately run and staffed by people with lower SDOs

- Consider how prosecutor offices have fewer women and public defender offices have more women.

*See the SDO Role Congruency Principle below

Historic Social Dominance via Racial Hierarchy in the USA

- Conquest (Native tribes)
- Slavery (Blacks)
- Land acquisition (Latinos)
- Immigration policy (Asians and others)
- Homeland security / counterterrorism (Arabs/Persians/Muslims)

Social Dominance and Terror

- Terrorism has been defined as the practice of using violence or intimidating methods to achieve political ends.

- When used by the state terror is typically used to maintain group dominance over subordinates.

American Racial Hierarchy and Criminal Justice: The Laws of Law

1. The Disproportionate Prosecution Principle

1. The "Out of Place" Principle

1. The SDO / Social Role Congruency Principle

1. The Tolerance of Abuse Principle

1. The Hierarchy-Terror Principle

Societal Drug Use Response for African American Males (1995)

The Disproportionate Prosecution Principle

12% of population

13% of monthly drug users

35% of drug arrests

55% of drug convictions

74% of drug prison sentences

Criminal Justice System Response to Killing Unarmed Black Men and Women

The Tolerance of Abuse Principle

- Sean Carroll, Richard Murphy, Edward McMellon and Kenneth Boss - AMADOU DIALLO

- Michael Oliver, Gescard F. Isnora, Marc Cooper - SEAN BELL

- George Zimmerman - TRAYVON MARTIN

- Darren Wilson - MICHAEL BROWN

- Timothy Loehmann - TAMIR RICE

- Daniel Panteleo - ERIC GARNER

- Sean Williams – JOHN CRAWFORD III

- Betty Jo Shelby - TERENCE CRUTCHER

State Terror and Fear of Police Levels by Race

1. African Americans
2. Latinos
3. Asians
4. Whites

Subject Male Target Hypothesis

Dominant Males Focus Discrimination on Subordinate Males

- Arrests and Incarceration
- Employment
- Finance
- Violence

Observations / Conclusion

- Hierarchy enhancing ideologies have predominated in the post-Civil Rights Era.

- Racial dominance continues to affect life chances and outcomes.

- The Court continues to adopt and support more hierarchy enhancing than hierarchy attenuating ideologies.

Solutions

Reject and Replace Hierarchy Enhancing Ideas

Solutions

- Restructure and Reform Hierarchy Enhancing Institutions

- Massively Fund Hierarchy Attenuating

Solutions

- Identify and reduce social dominance orientation

Areas of Human Activity

1. Economics
2. Education
3. Entertainment
4. Labor
5. Law
6. Politics

7. Religion
8. Sex & Intimacy
9. War
10. Science
11. Medicine