

MENTAL HEALTH AND REPARATIONS

AB 3121 California Task Force to Study and Develop
Reparation Proposals for African Americans

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What I mean by Reparations

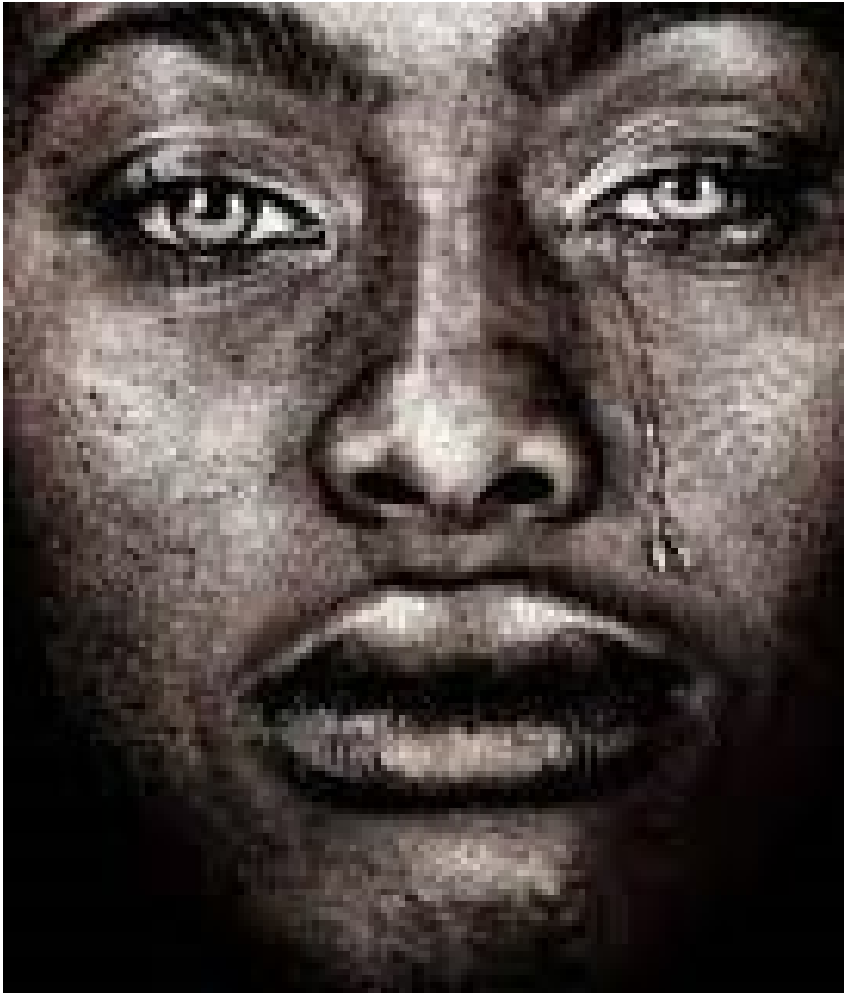
Broadly this is about attending to the historical wrongs, abuse and harm that has affected Black people for generations, for hundreds of years by no fault of our own.

The legacies of enslavement still exist today, as a result of things that were done to us.

Reparations, is about repairing that harm, about correcting these historical wrongs and realizing they exist in contemporary times.



The Harm



- The harm didn't "end" just because enslavement did.
- We can look at historical and current disparities that resulted from slavery and from institutional and systemic racism
- Black people are at the bottom of every "bad list"
 - Wealth gap
 - Housing disparities
 - Health disparities
 - Educational gap



“Somebody told a lie one day....

they made everything black, ugly and evil.”

-Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Healing Racism

To heal wounds of racism, we must see racism for what it is and understand its causes, origin, development and subsequent impact.

“Healing begins where the wound was made.”

—Alice Walker



PSYCHOLOGY OF OPPRESSION

(Myers)

- ✓ Africans captured and convinced through most **brutal and horrific forms of terrorism** that their physical well being was in the hands of their captors.
- ✓ Africans **denied access to cultural traditions, language**
- ✓ African **culture and history negated** (African = Savage)
- ✓ **Cultural history of captors elevated** (European = Civilized)
- ✓ **Divide and conquer** strategy instituted



United States History

- 40 of 56 signers of Declaration of Independence owned slaves.
- Under the Constitution, a slave was counted as 3/5 of a free person.
- 10 of the first 12 presidents owned slaves.

This is who we were as the U.S. became a nation...



Systemic Racism

Has roots in a **hierarchy that privileges one race above another**, namely the white race.

Arises when that hierarchy and those privileges get **baked into the systems and institutions that govern daily life.**





History of Black Experience

- Chattel Slavery (1619 – 1865)
- Jim Crowism (1865 – 1965)
 - 13th Amendment (1865) Slavery Abolished (EXCEPT for crime)
 - Convict Leasing (1866)
 - Black Codes
 - Sharecropping
 - Ku Klux Klan
 - Lynchings



MARKS OF PUNISHMENT INFLICTED UPON A COLORED SERVANT IN RICHMOND, VIRGINIA.



Additional Experiences

- “Separate but Equal”
- Redlining
- “Race Riots” (Massacres) – Tulsa 1921
- Civil Rights Movement
- School-to-Prison Pipeline
- War on Drugs
- Police Brutality
- COVID-19





Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

Those who experienced or witnessed an event involving actual **or** threatened death **or** serious injury and have responded with feelings of fear, helplessness, or horror may develop PTSD symptoms...



Legacy of Historical Black Racial Trauma



1814



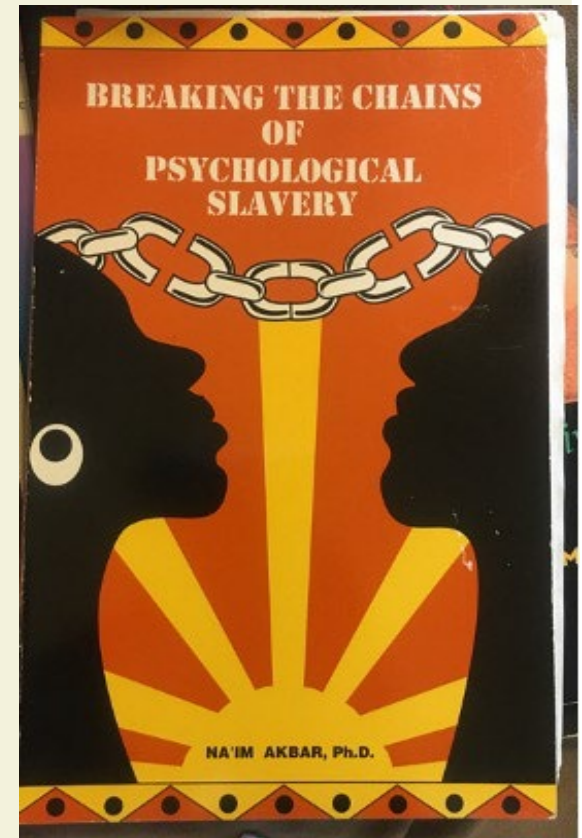
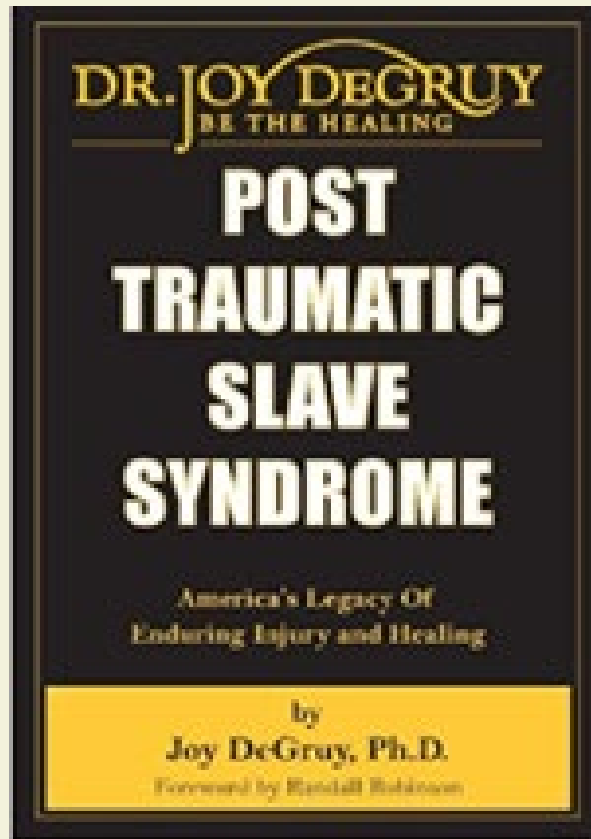
1914



2014

Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome

A condition that exists as a consequence of centuries of chattel slavery followed by institutionalized racism and oppression → Resulted in multigenerational adaptive behavior, some positive reflecting resilience, and others that are harmful and destructive.



A Never Ending Assault

Ongoing Racial Stress/Trauma

NOT

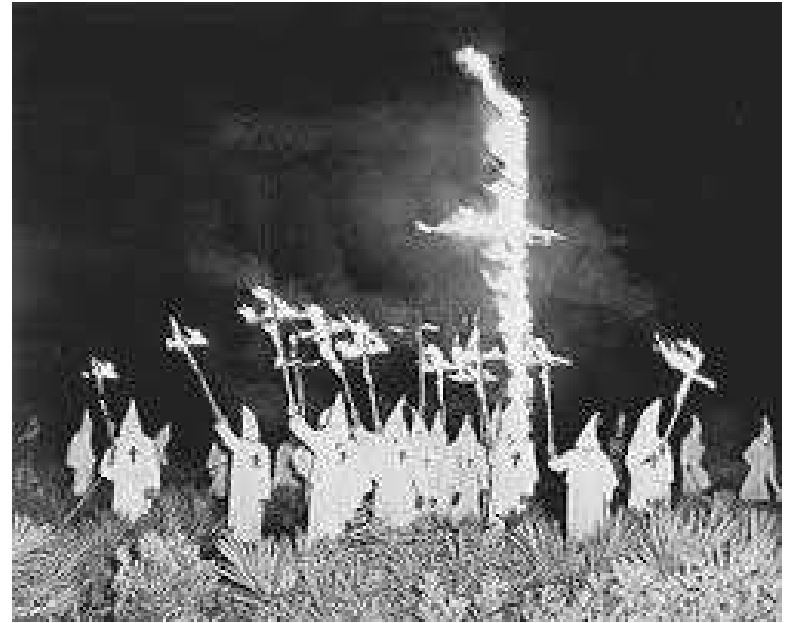
Post (Persistent) Traumatic Stress



Black Racial Trauma

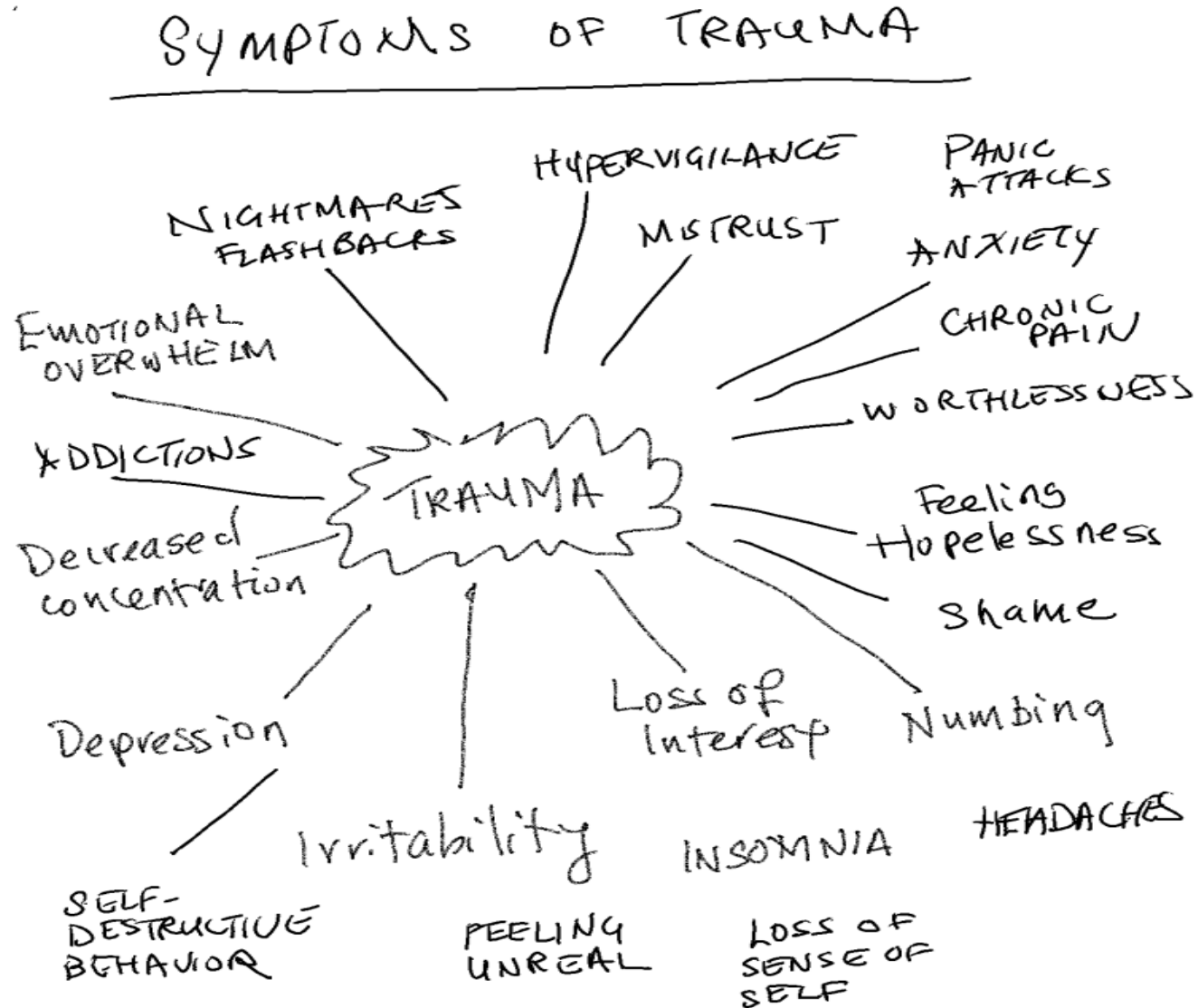
Experiencing psychological symptoms such as anxiety, hyper-vigilance to threat, or lack of hopefulness for your future as a result of repeated exposure to racism or discrimination.

—Erlanger Turner



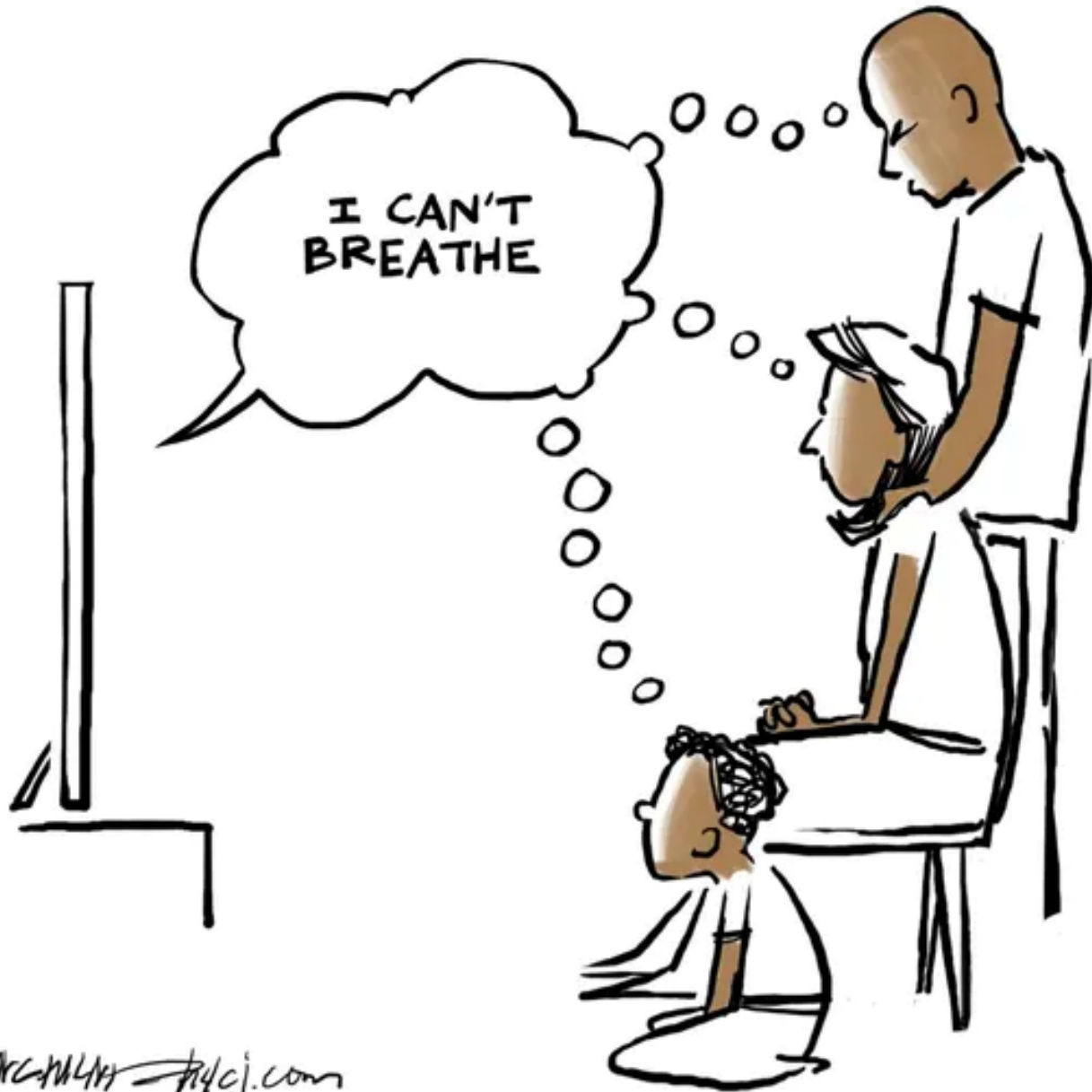
Black Racial Trauma

- Individual
- Collective
- Historical
- Intergenerational



My Racial Trauma...





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Dr. Kristee
HAGGINS

Generational Trauma

Disrupted Family Systems

Slavery &
Historical
Oppression

Self Hatred & Internalized
Oppression

Mistrust of Systems

Police Killings & Black Americans Mental Health

Impact of Police Killings of Unarmed Black Americans (2013-2016)

103,710 Black Americans exposed to 1+ killings in state within 3 months of survey

Black respondents reported more “not good” mental health days (1.7 additional days)

Mental health of White Americans **NOT** effected

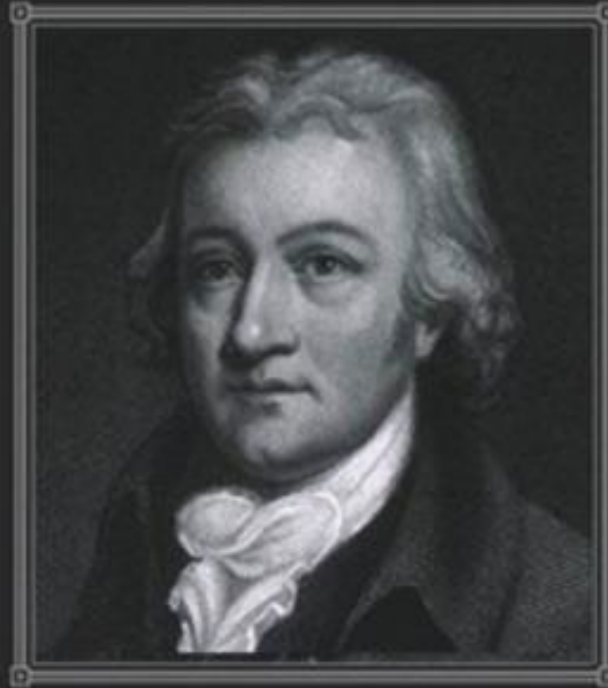
Mental health impact **NOT** observed from killings of unarmed White Americans or armed Black Americans



• 1851 •

Drapetomania

A Psychiatric Diagnosis:
"Runaway Slave Syndrome"

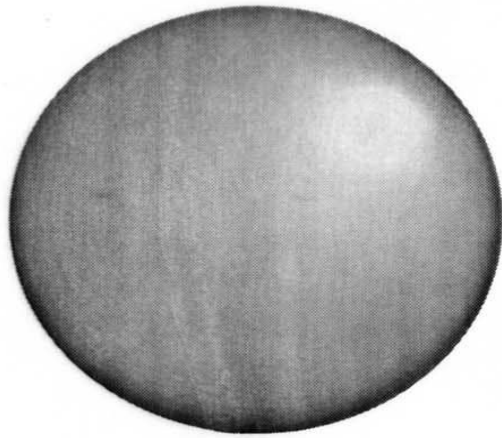


INVENTED BY
Dr. Samuel Adolphus Cartwright
(1793 - 1863)
Physician & Psychiatrist



Afrikan Trauma Cycle

MAAT



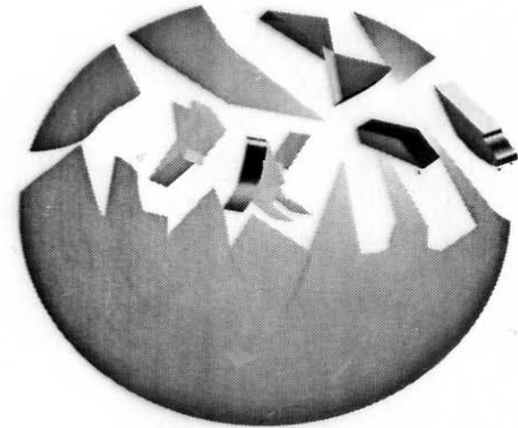
WHOLENESS

MAAFA



**FRACTURING
SPLINTERING
SHATTERING**

SANKOFA



**MENDING
RETURNING TO OUR
OWN FORMS
REDEFINING CIVILIZATION**

Healing and Repair from OUR Perspective

We must reclaim our dignity and humanity as people of African ancestry → Address the trauma directly.

- Emotional Emancipation Circles
- Ubuntu Circles
- Sawubona Circles
- Safe Black Space
- Association of Black Psychologists (ABPsi)



Many Forms of Reparations

Address Trauma Directly

Mental Health/Healing
from a Black, African-
centered culturally specific
frame of reference

- Individual & Community

Land Transference

Housing Opportunities

Direct Financial Restitution

- Individuals & community

Tax Cuts

Investment in Black
Community Members



“Compensation” based on?



Hundreds of years of unpaid chattel slave labor

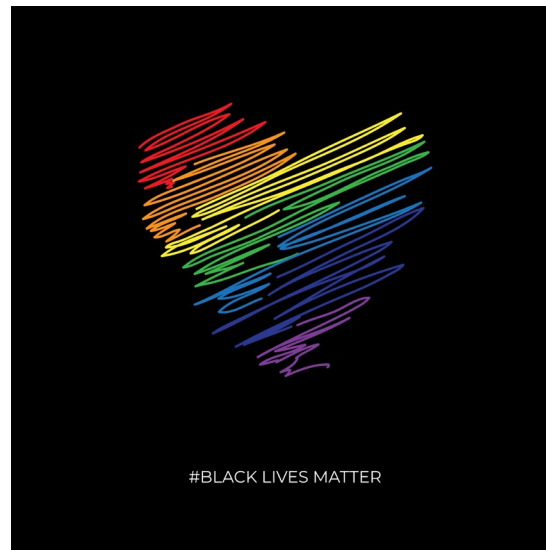
- Unjust enrichment of Slave holders (PAID reparations when slaves freed!?)
- Wrongs suffered because of Jim Crow; Sharecropping; Black Codes; Redlining
- Wrongs suffered because of Institutional racism still experienced today affecting home buying; loans; segregated education; etc.
- Mental health suffered because of the lie of white superiority and black inferiority (anti-blackness) in all its manifestations

Provide to Black people of African Ancestry – Descendants of Non-Immigrant Africans in America

WE ARE EACH OTHERS MEDICINE



BLACK LIVES
MATTER



Closing Comments



- Reparations for Black people of African ancestry who are Non-Immigrant Africans in America
- Injury to enslaved Black people and their descendants is documented, is real and its effects are pervasive
- Reparations should include a variety of strategies, including specific attention to our mental health, including a focus on community healing that's culturally specific
- To NOT provide reparations - would perpetuate the belief that Black people are not truly human.

“To be free is not merely to cast of one’s chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others.” -Nelson Mandela



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Safe Black Space

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