

**IFÁ (Yorùbá for 'Wisdom'):**

# **Intro for All**

**A free short course on Black Studies**

**You are invited  
to five  
FREE lectures  
on five  
fundamentals**



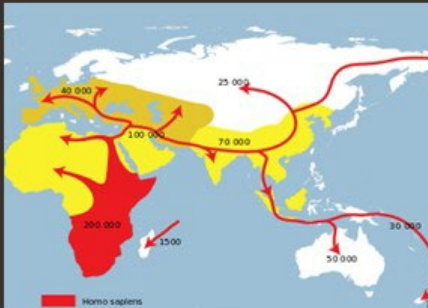
**Aug 26:  
Color**

**Sep 2:  
Class**

**Sep 9:  
Culture**

**Sep 16:  
Gender**

**Sep 23:  
Consciousness**



**Saturdays 10–11:30 am US Central time (UTC–5)  
Register at <https://go.illinois.edu/ifa>**

**Abdul Alkalimat,  
Instructor**

**Welcome!**  
**We'll start a few  
Minutes after 10am  
US Central Time**

# Class

**Abdul Alkalimat**  
**IFA: Intro for all**  
**Community Lecture #2**  
**September 2, 2023**

# **How to participate in the discussion?**

More than 250 people have registered and more than 100 want to comment. There are several ways to do so. Our time is limited to 90 minutes, including 45 minutes of presentation.

1. During the discussion time, raise your hand to start the discussion with short (<4 min) comments (with video, thanks) (use the “reactions” button and “raise hand”)
2. Anytime during the session, write your comments, questions, links etc. in the chat
3. Take the discussion into your classes, your networks and all other Black Studies contexts

**We look forward to our collective intelligence.**

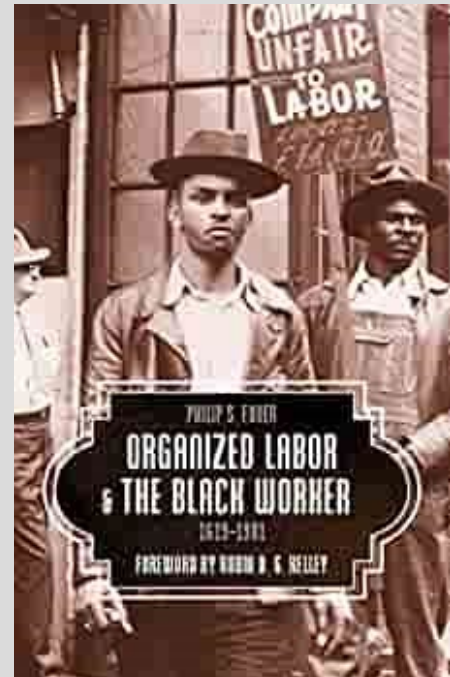
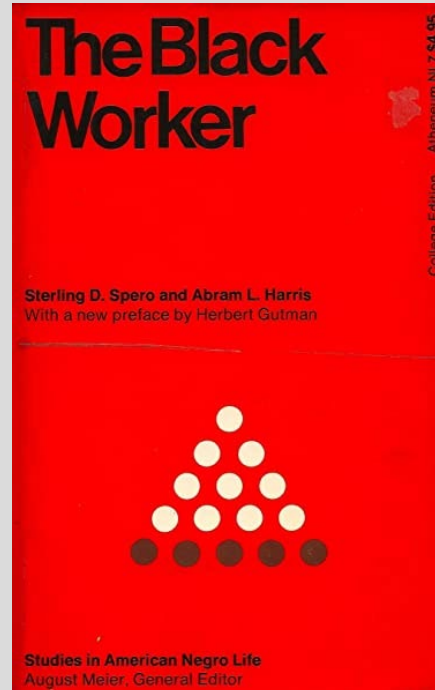
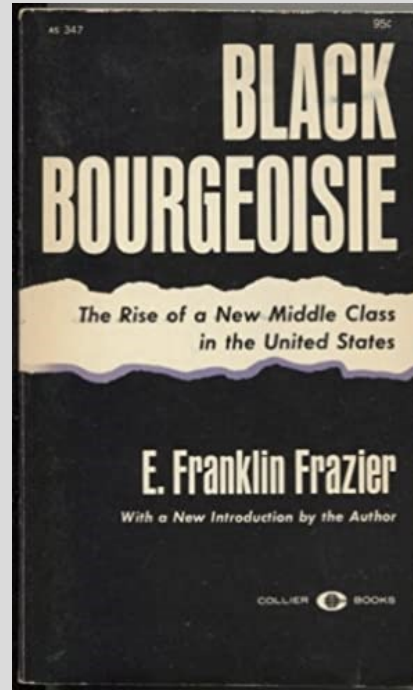
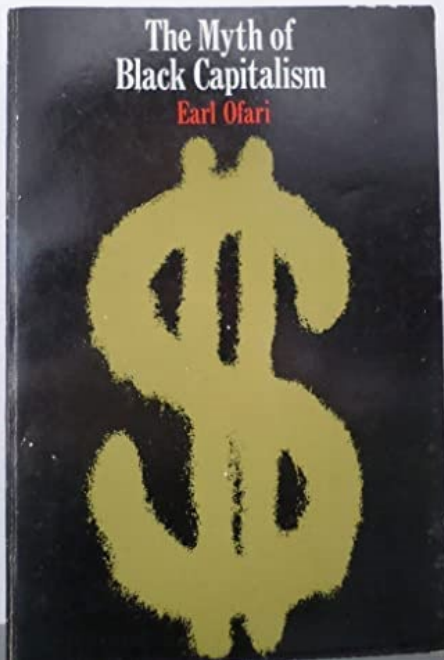


- 1. What is a social class?**
- 2. Two approaches to class**
- 3. Class in Black history**
- 4. Class structure of Black people today**
- 5. Class struggle and Black liberation**





**Class is the way a society is organized.  
Everyone has a class position.  
Not everyone understands their class position  
Some people have false consciousness.  
Class consciousness is needed for social change**

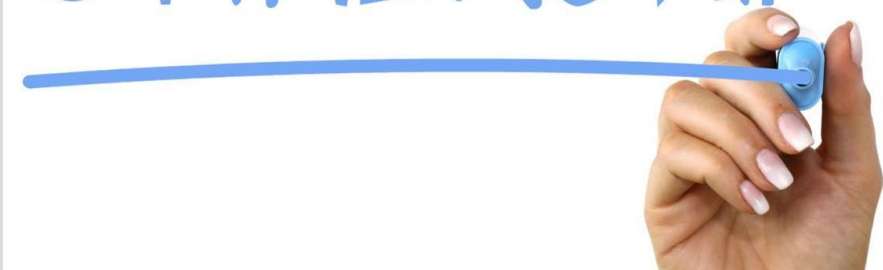


# Class is about two aspects of life:

**Quality of life**  
**Power**



OWNERSHIP





# Two alternative approaches to class

## Social Stratification (quality of life)

- Objective: ranking people by income and/or educational attainment
- Subjective: ranking people by social status, including occupational prestige

## Political economy (power)

- Objective: ownership and control of the means of production versus labor
- Subjective: capitalist production of false consciousness to suppress labor

# **Black Studies approach to class**

- 1. Use both approaches: stratification and political economy**
- 2. All studies of class should be based on empirical data**
- 3. Studies should clarify different classes in the Black community**
- 4. Studies should clarify differences between Blacks and Whites in the same class**
- 5. Studies should make comparisons throughout Africa and the African Diaspora**



**Are you in this picture? We need to study**



# Who benefits from a \$15 national minimum hourly wage increase?



One third of all workers and **47%** of Black workers.



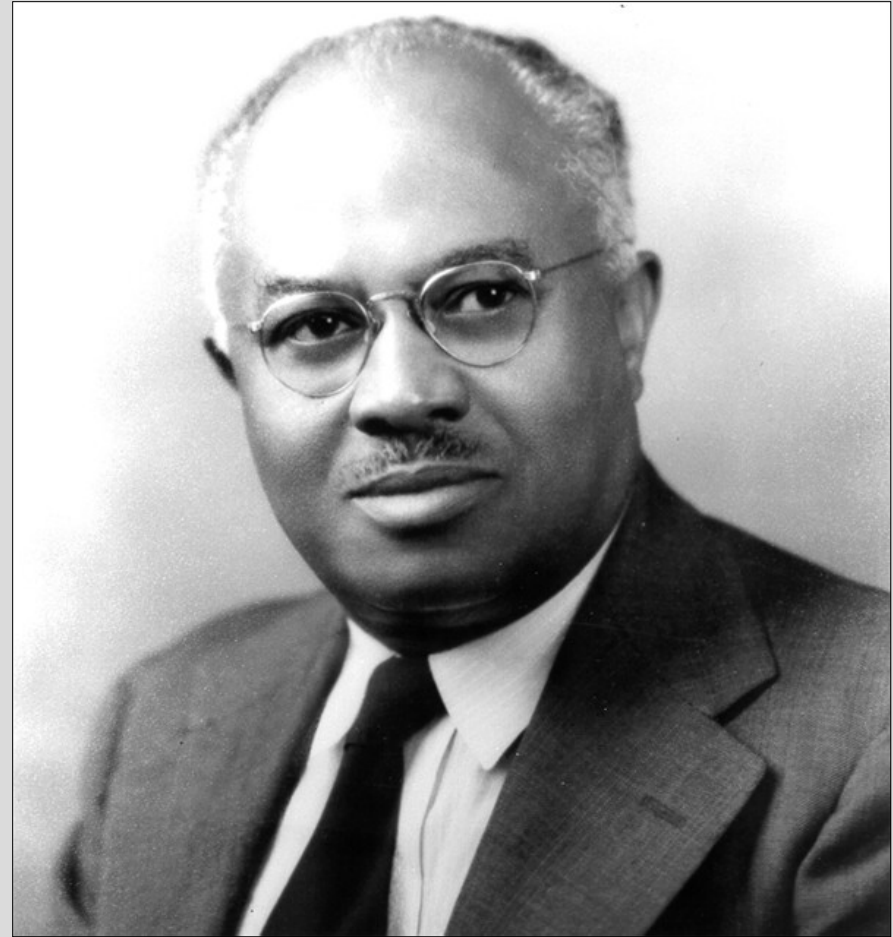
## Max Weber 1864-1920

**The systems of class, status and party are all at work. The main issue is ones market position, social standing in the community, and role in the political process.**

# E. Franklin Frazier

## 1894-1962

**The stratification of the Black population can be described best by income, educational, and occupational status. In addition, the cultural values of different classes have to be considered.**





## Karl Marx 1818-1883

**Every stage of history is shaped by technology and the struggle between the owners and the workers. The struggle is for power over the means of production to run the economy and the state, including the military and the police.**

# W. E. B. Du Bois

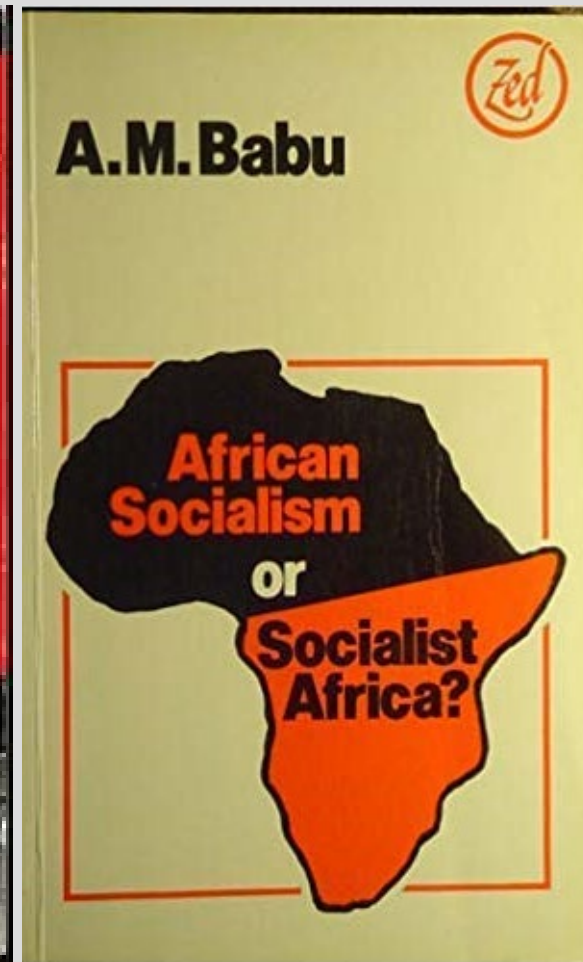
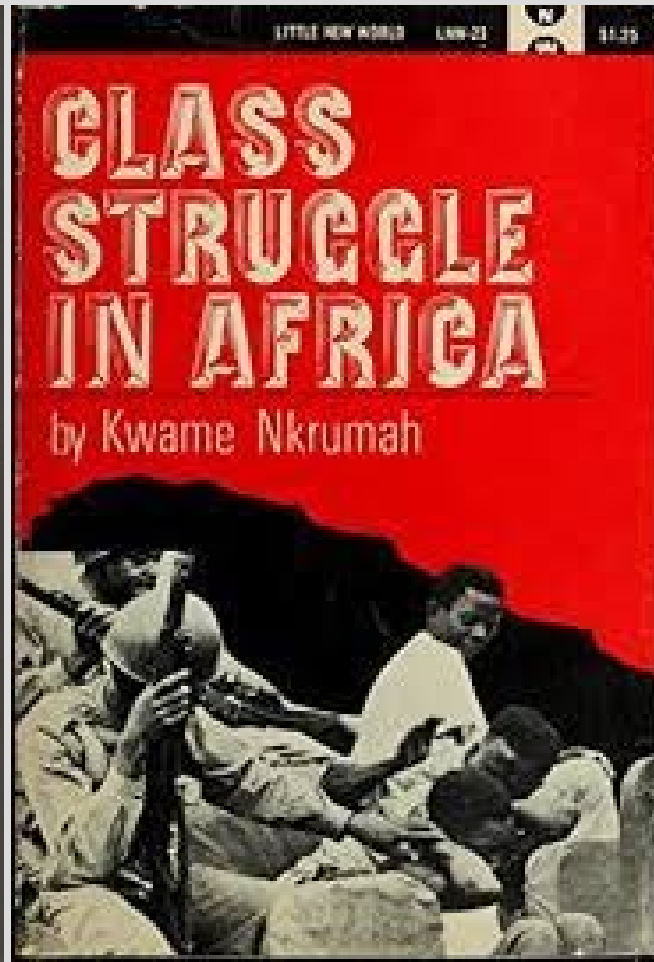
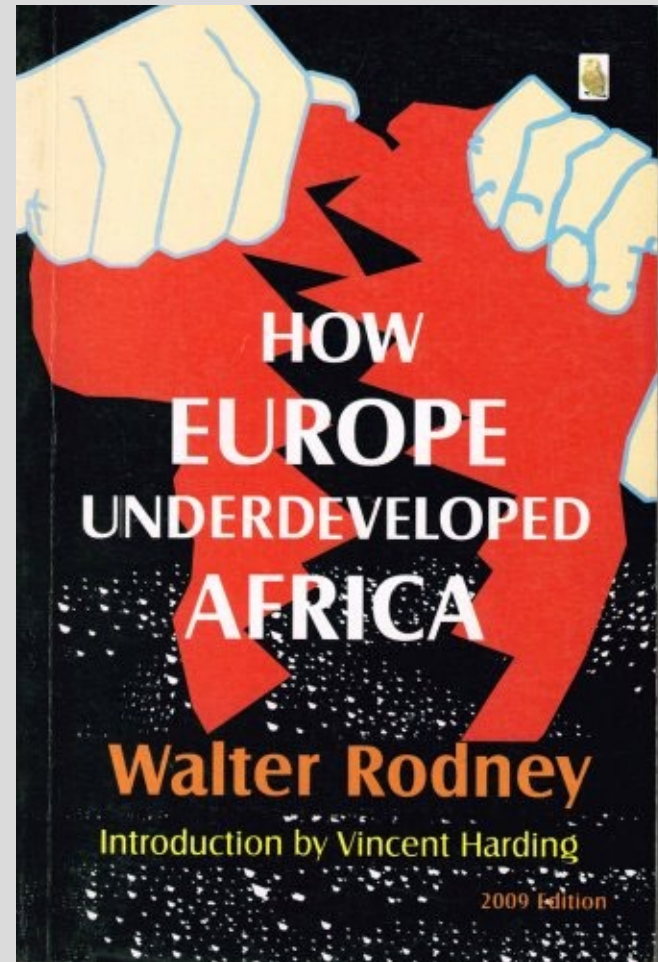
## 1868-1963

DuBois combined a study of political economy, sociology and history. He analyzed the Civil War and Reconstruction in terms of class struggle. In 1921 he stated he favored for Blacks what had happened in Russia in 1917.



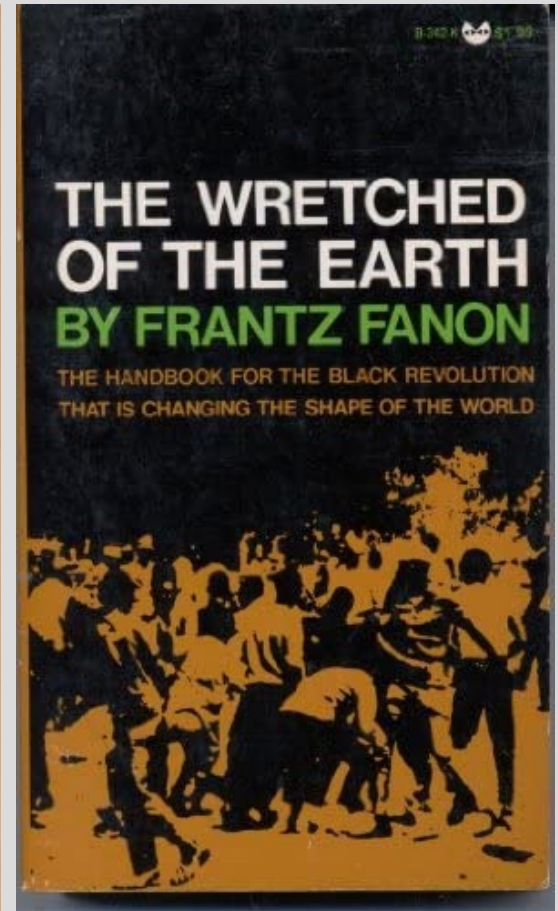
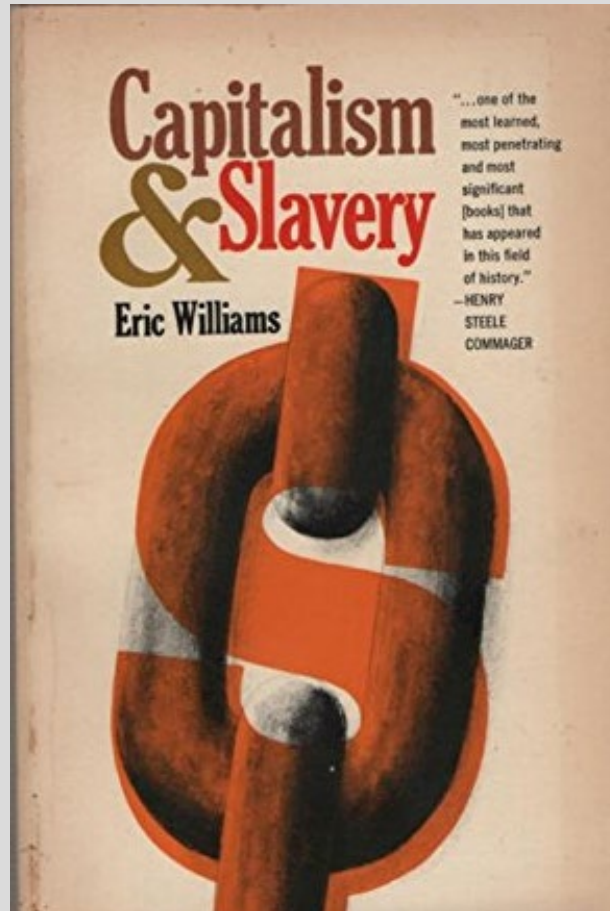
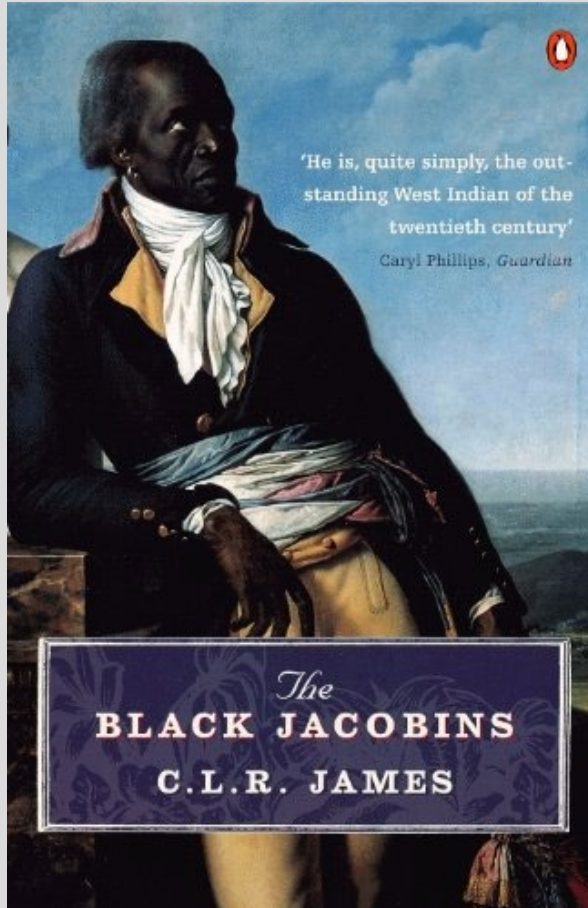


“[The] association of wealth with whites and poverty with blacks is not accidental.” Walter Rodney



# Class Struggle in African History

The rich are only defeated when running for their lives.  
C.L.R. James

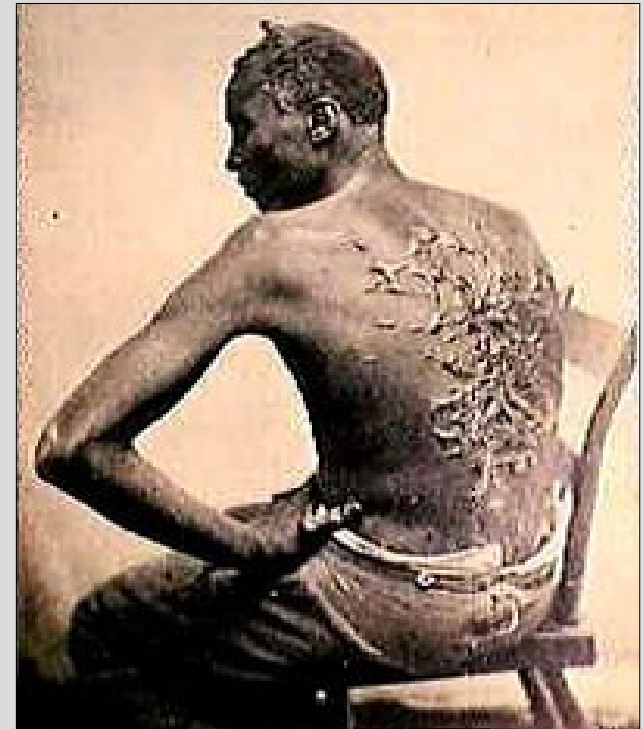


# Class Struggle in Caribbean History

History of class and class struggle:

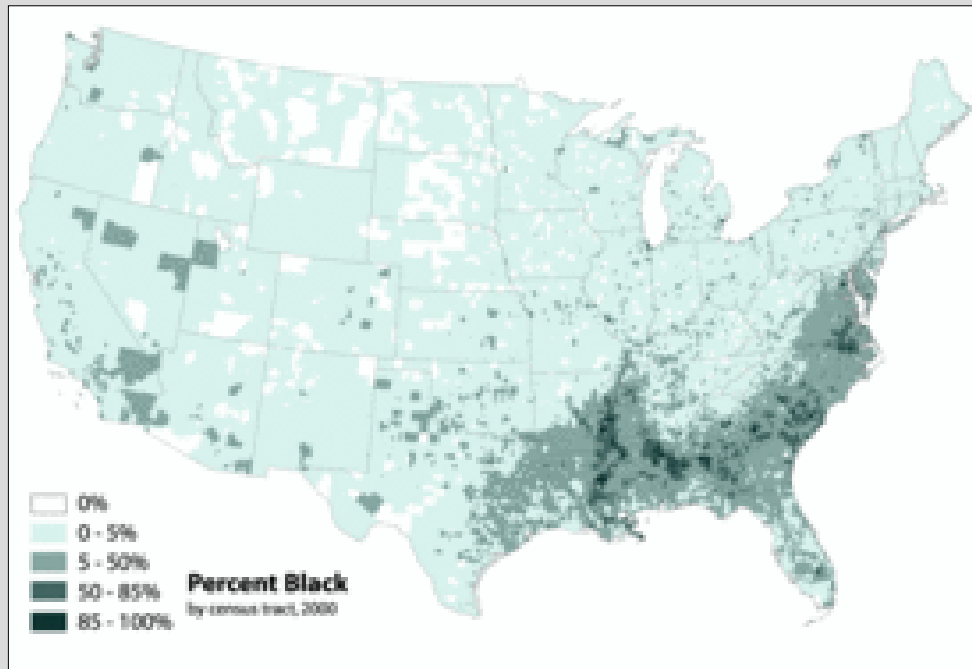
# Slavery and capitalism

The main class relations were slaves and the owners of slaves. The rule of the slave master was by brutal force. The majority of slave owners had few slaves, but the power was in the hands of the big plantation owners. Slavery was an engine of the capitalist system as well as an obstacle to its development. What was the role of technology?





# History of class and class struggle: Sharecropping and the National Question



**The African American nation was formed in the Black Belt South, based on family labor, church organization, blues and African retentions. The main factors were rural isolation, concentration, and exploitation. What was the role of technology?**

History of class and class struggle:

# Black industrial workers and changes in the Black Middle Class



Two Great Migrations led to Black workers being concentrated in northern cities. This was a radical transformation from South to North, from rural to urban, from agricultural to industrial. Time changed, literacy requirements changed, and family structure changed. Ghetto businesses opened.



# **Social Class and Black People 2023**

**The Black capitalist class: main income from ownership, especially stocks**

**The Black middle class: main income from professional jobs and family businesses**

**The Black working class: main income from jobs with little freedom of decision making**

**The Black anti-class: main income insecure from government and underground economy**

# The Black capitalist class



**John Johnson 1918-2005**

Over three quarters (76 percent) of public Fortune 1,000 companies had at least one African American director on their board as of September 2022, compared with 61 percent at the end of 2020.

Forty percent of the African American directors joined their boards after June 1, 2020 showing progress since the murder of George Floyd in May 2020.

# Black Capitalism

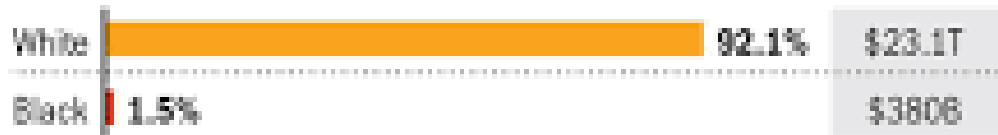
## Stock ownership accelerated racial wealth gap

White households received \$13 trillion in stock buybacks and dividends from 2004 to 2019, compared with Black families, who received \$181 billion during that time frame.

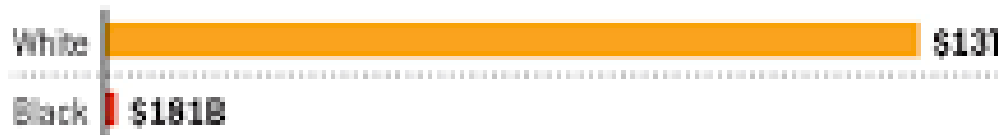
### MEDIAN WEALTH FOR HOUSEHOLDS, 2016



### % AND DOLLAR VALUE OF STOCK EQUITY AND MUTUAL FUNDS OWNED BY HOUSEHOLDS IN THIRD QUARTER, 2019



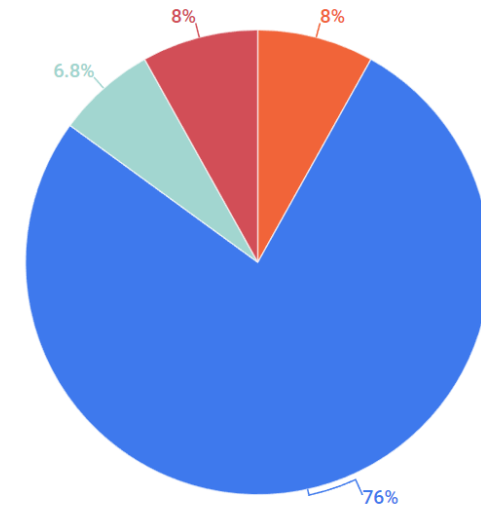
### STOCKHOLDER PAYMENTS TO HOUSEHOLDS IN THE FORM OF DIVIDENDS AND STOCK BUYBACKS, 2004-19



Sources: Federal Reserve Bank 2016 Survey of Consumer Finances, Roosevelt Institute

Chance Brinkman-Sully/  
Post-Gazette

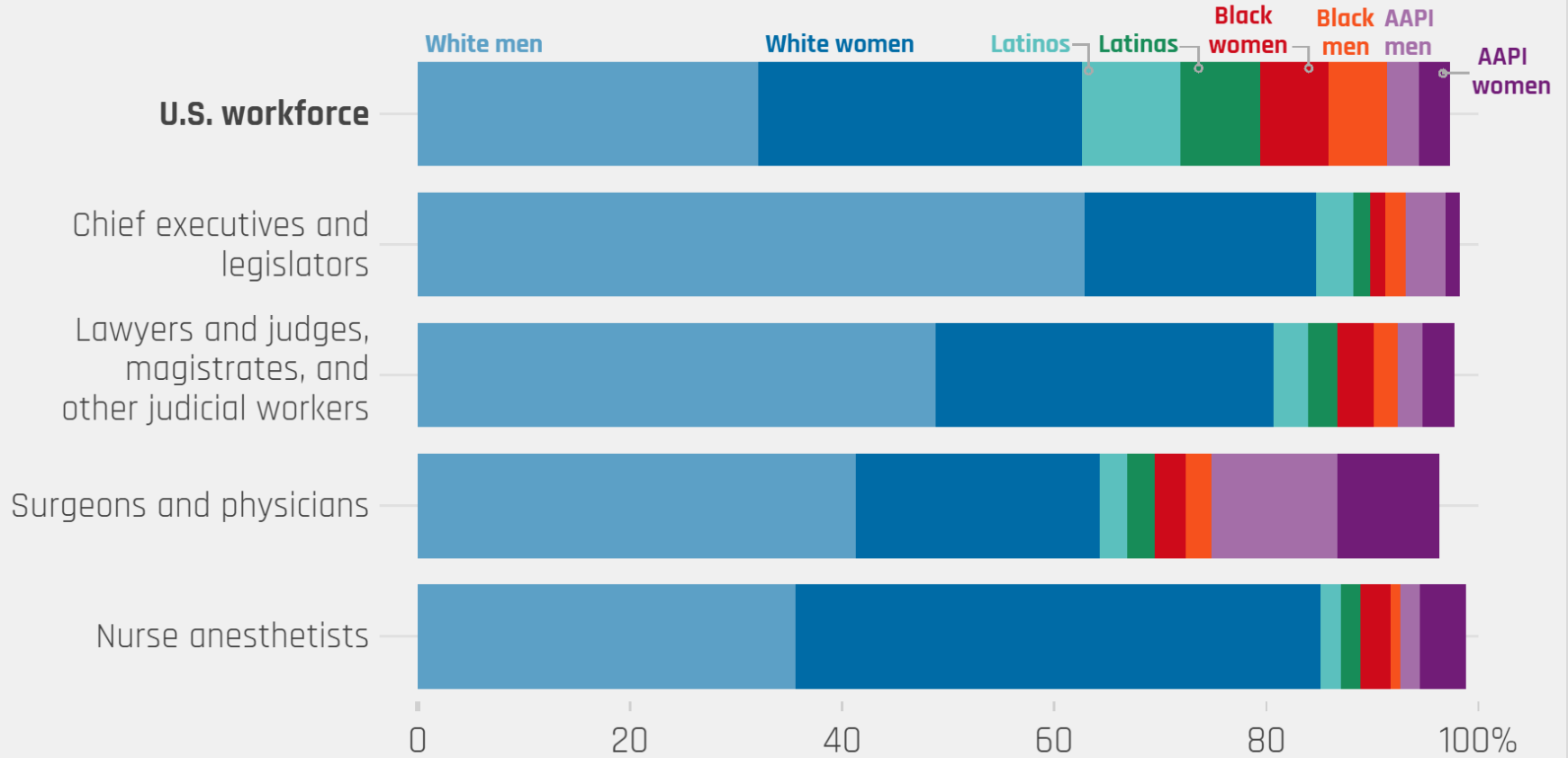
Millionaires in the U.S. by Race/Ethnicity



Asian White Hispanic/Latino Black

# Black and Latinx workers are underrepresented in highest-paying occupations

Gender and racial/ethnic compositions of highest-paying U.S. occupations, 2015-2018



Source: Author's calculations using American Community Survey data, 2014–2018 5-year estimates.

# Black People don't like capitalism!

## Black adults are more likely to have a negative than positive view of capitalism

*% of Black adults who say they have a \_\_\_ impression of capitalism*



*% of Black adults who say the phrase “gives all people an equal opportunity to be successful” describes capitalism ...*



Note: Black adults include those who say their race is Black alone and non-Hispanic.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Aug. 1-14, 2022.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

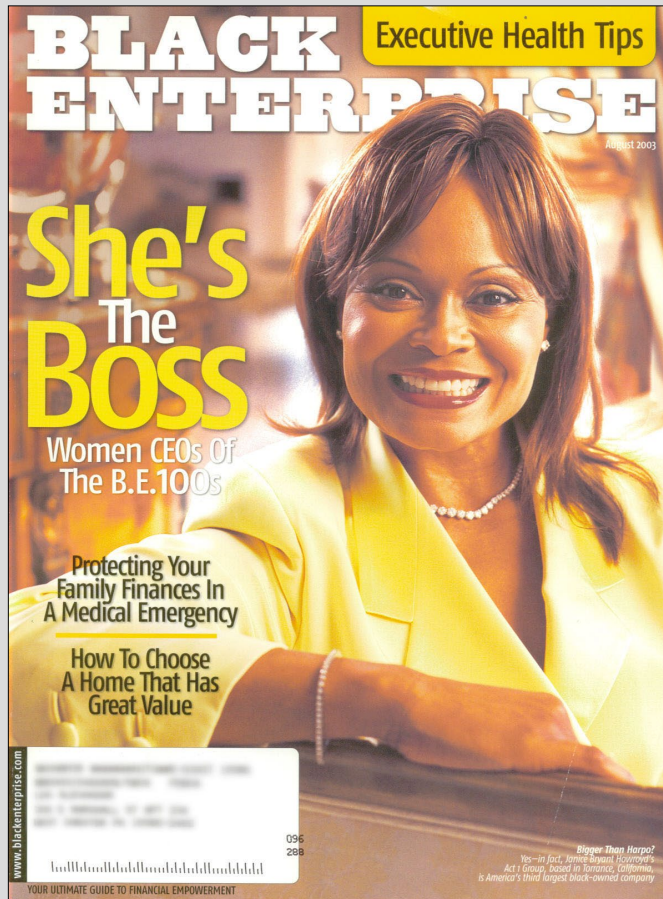
Do Black people like the system they are in?





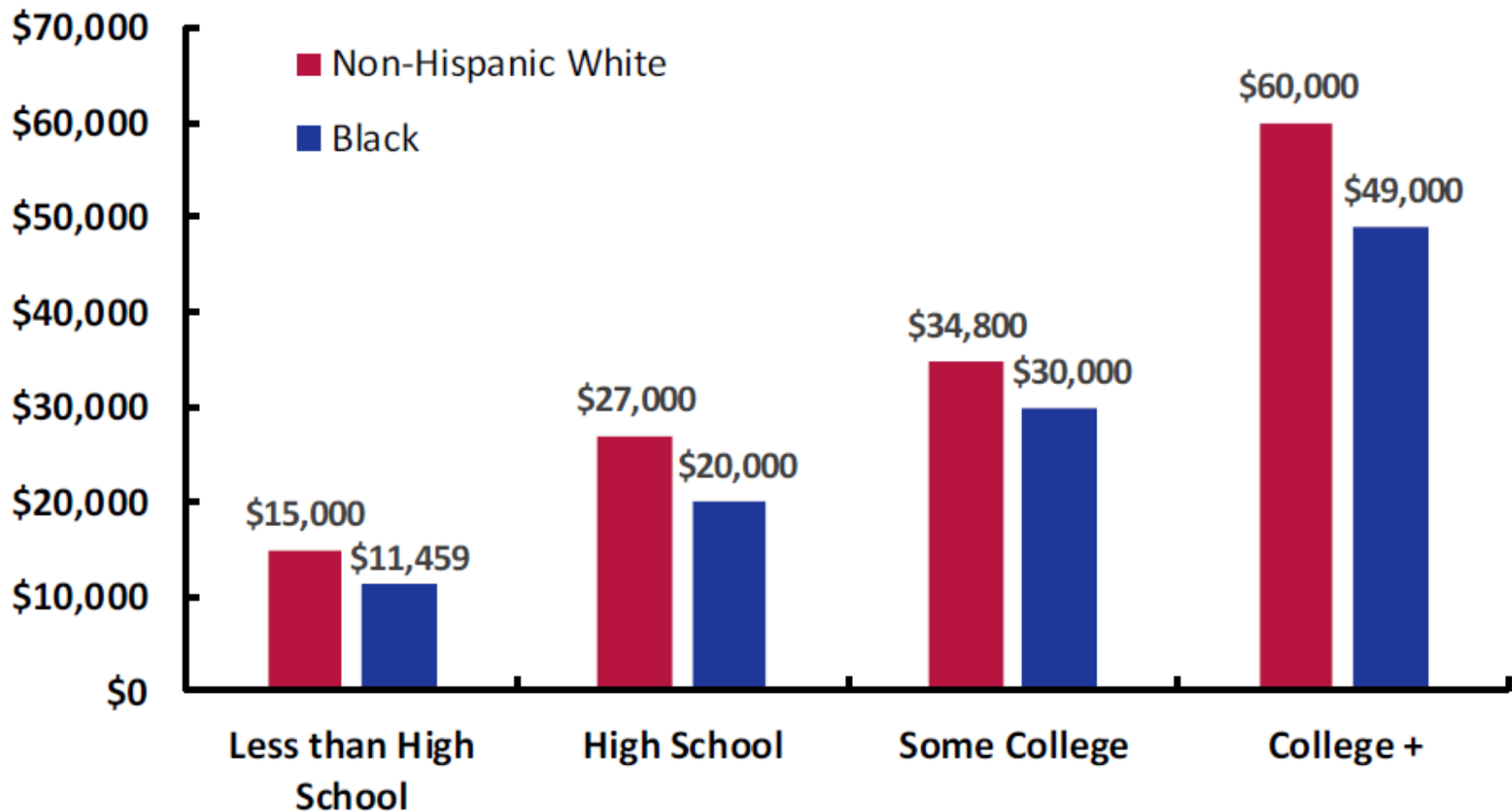
# The Black middle class

The shift in the Black middle class: business to the professions. A college education is the ticket into the middle class.



# Racial Pay Gaps Are Widest for Employees with College Degrees

Median Total Personal Income by Race, 2018

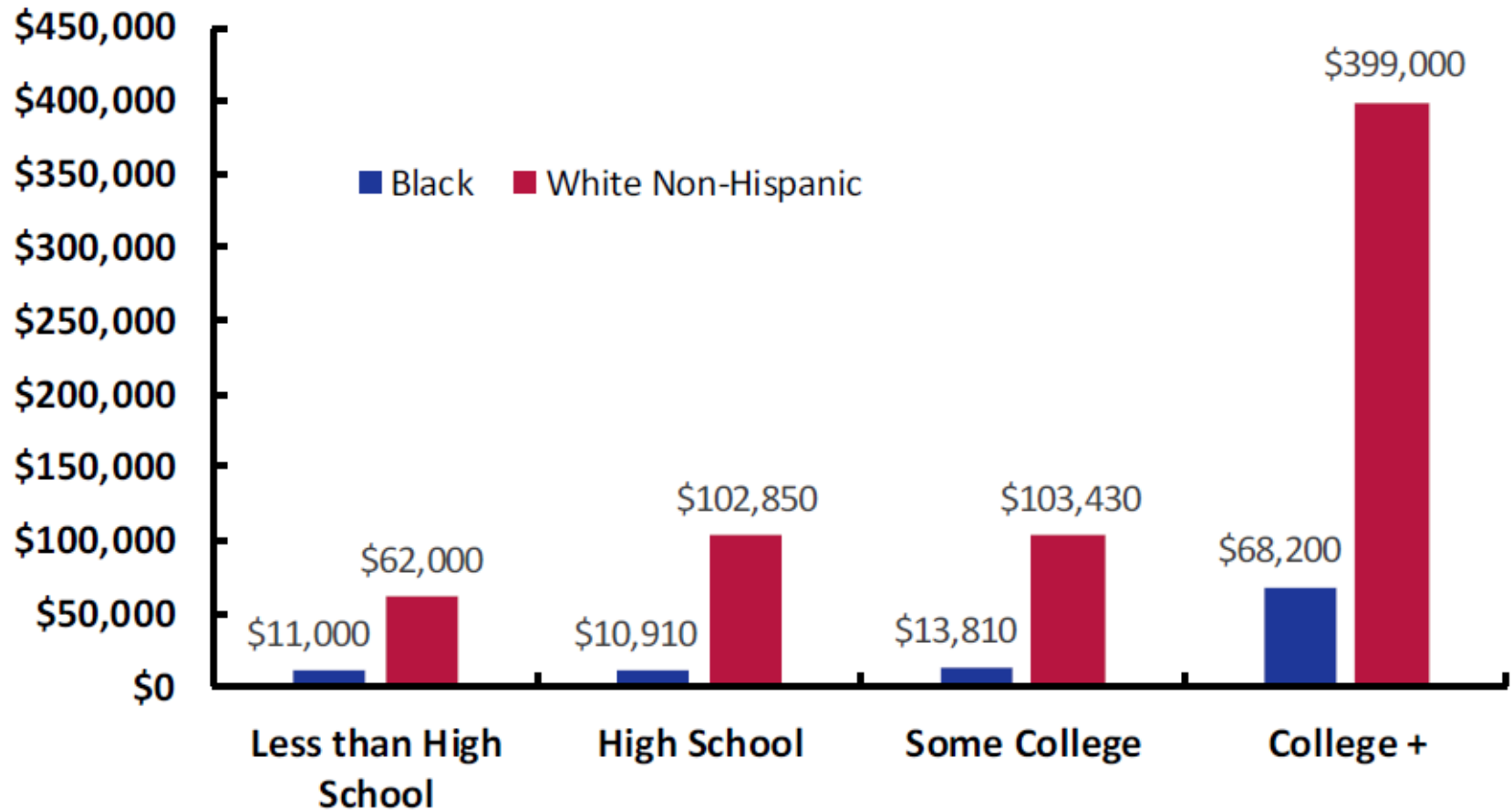


Source: JEC Democratic Staff Calculations, Current Population Survey, ASEC 2019.

Note: "Some College" includes associate degrees, "College +" refers to bachelor's degrees and more. "Black" refers to Black Alone or in Combination. "Non-Hispanic White" refers to White Alone, Not Hispanic.

# Racial Wealth Disparities Increase with Education

Median Household Net Worth by Race, 2016



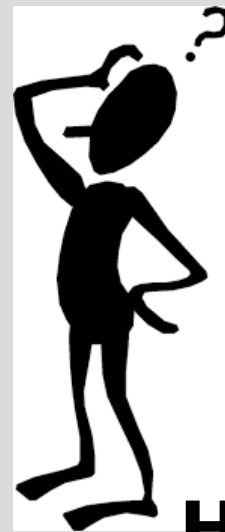
Source: 2016 Survey of Consumer Finances.

Note: "Some College" includes those with associates degrees; "College +" refers to bachelor's degrees and more.

# **Black workers:** From production work to service work, from workers to robots



# What is new about 21<sup>st</sup> century capitalism?



**AI (Artificial Intelligence)**

**Digital tools**

**Computers**

**Robots**

**Total surveillance**

**Global scale**

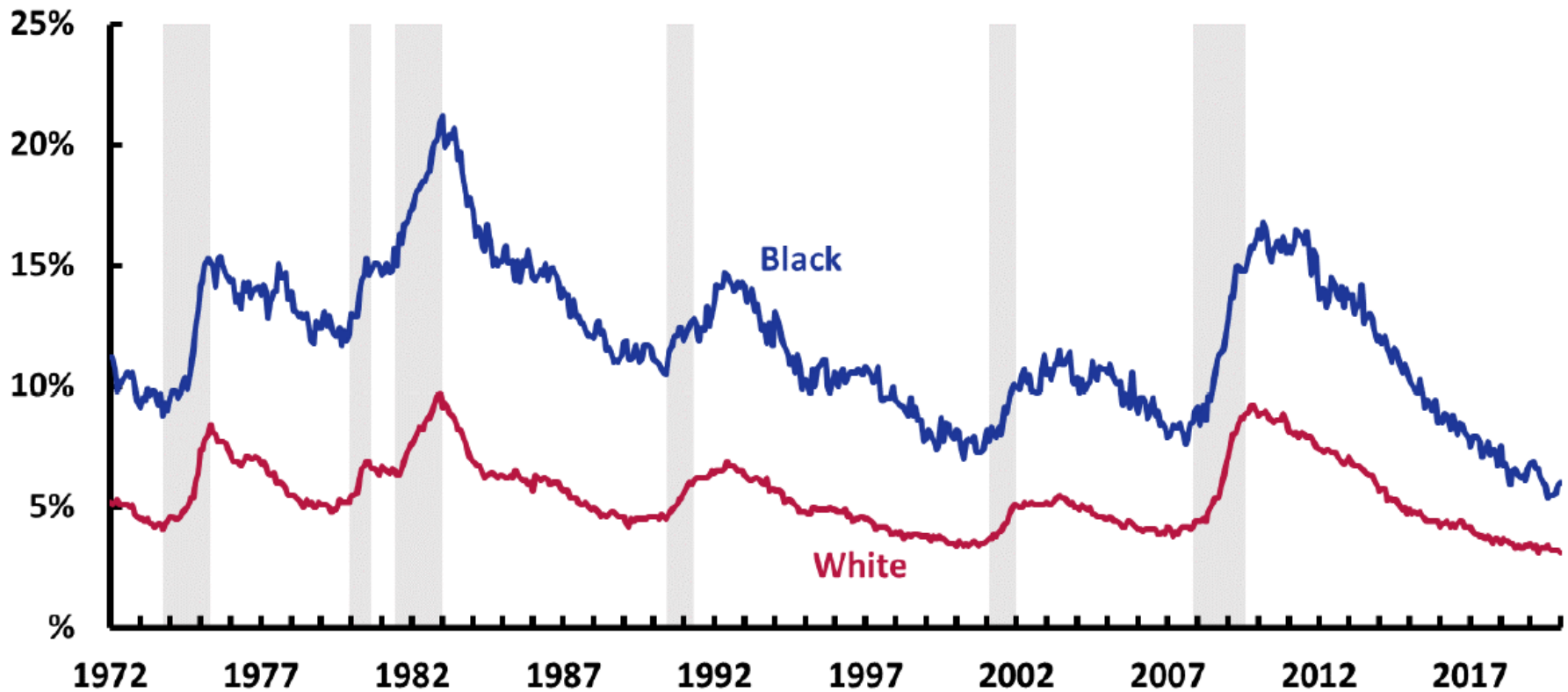
**Horizontal & Vertical**

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# Black Unemployment Is Consistently Almost Double White Unemployment Across Time

January 1972-January 2020

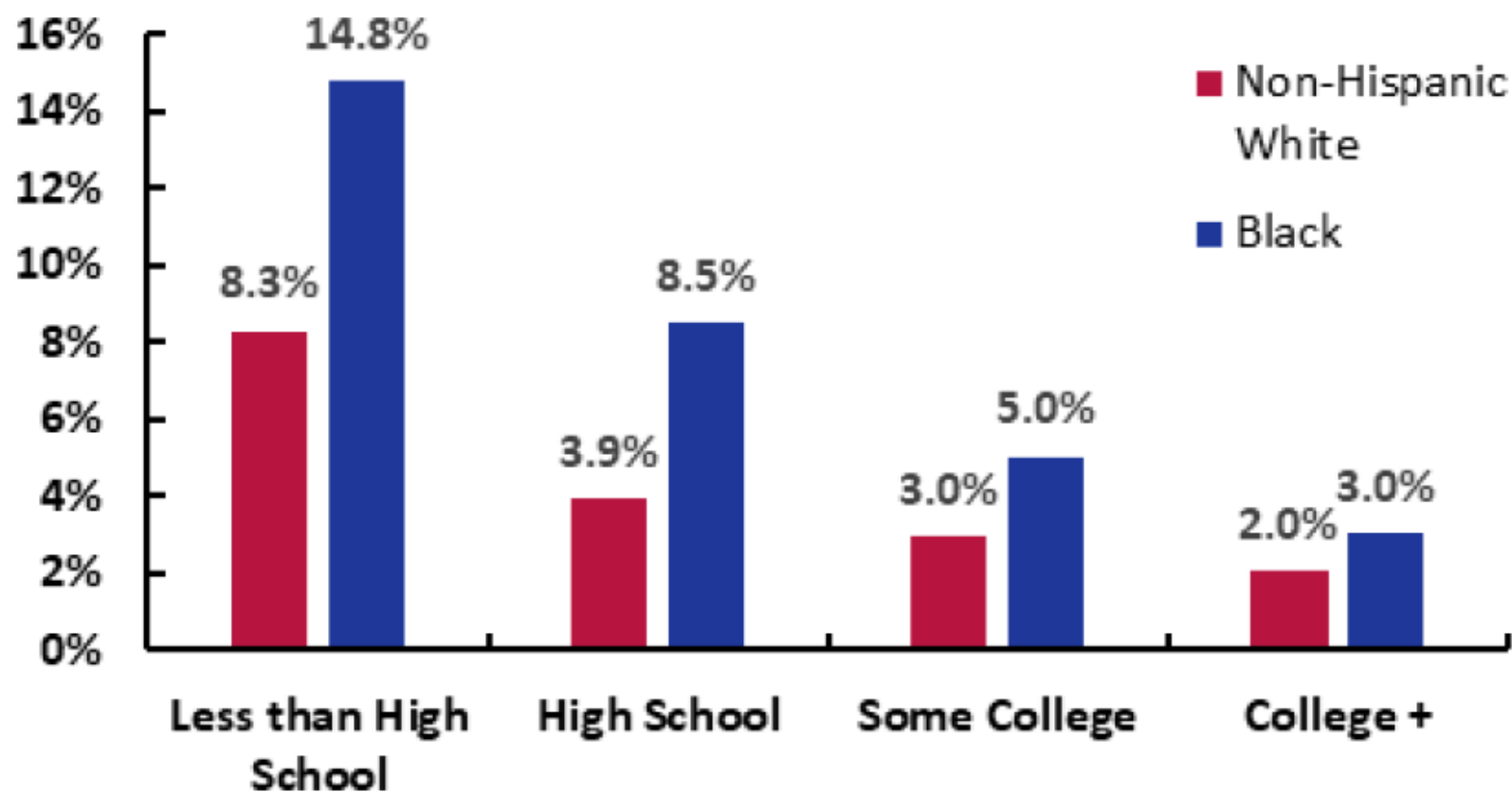


Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, National Bureau of Economic Research, Haver Analytics.

Note: Unemployment rate for those 16 years and over; data are seasonally adjusted. Shading reflects periods of recession.

# Racial Unemployment Gaps Are Widest for Employees Without College Degrees

Unemployment Rate by Level of Education and Race, 2019

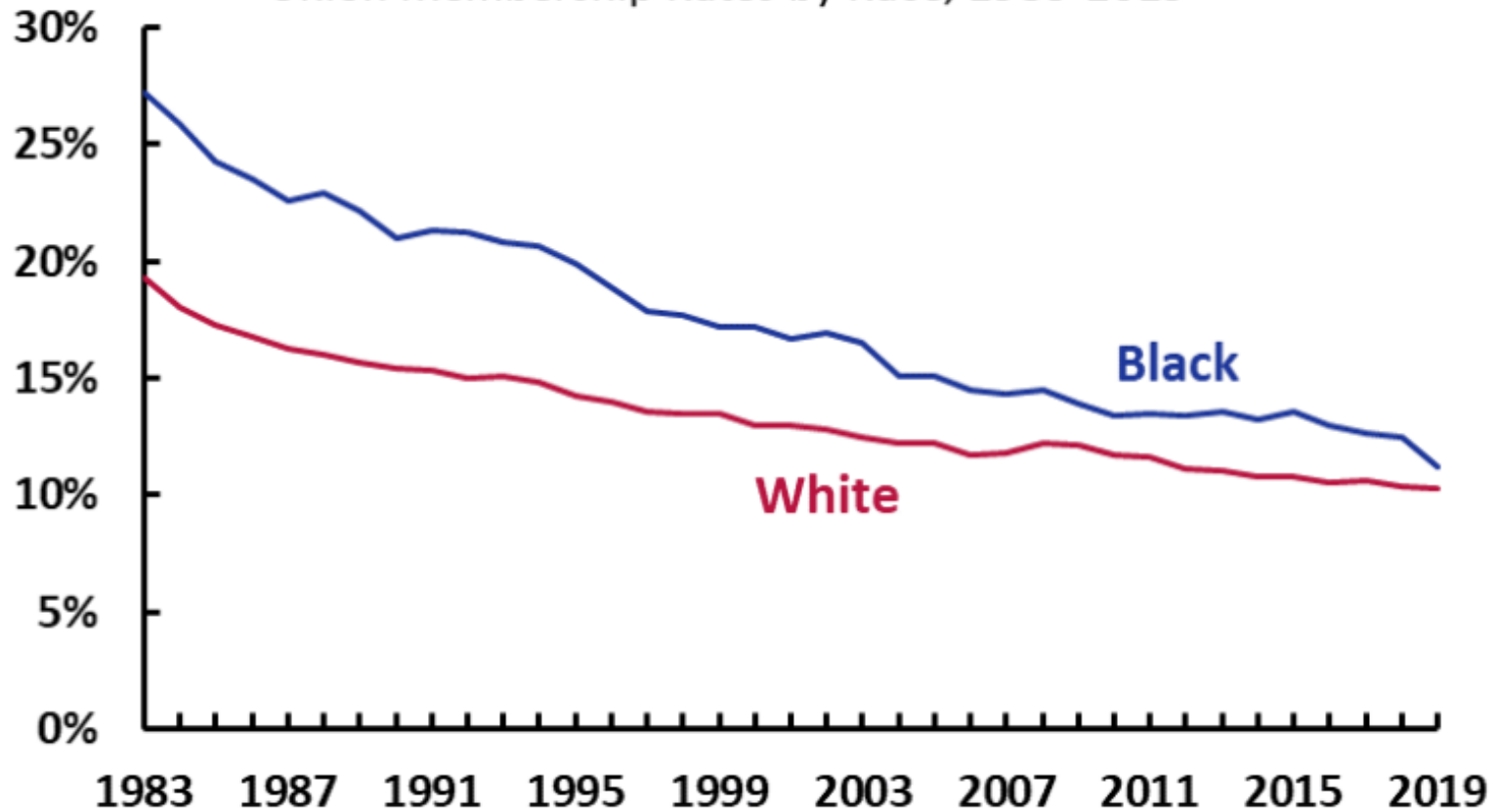


Source: JEC Democratic Staff Calculations, Current Population Survey 12-Month Moving Average January 2019-December 2019.

Note: "Some College" includes associate degrees; "College +" refers to bachelor's degrees and more. "Black" refers to Black Alone or in Combination, Non-Hispanic. "Non-Hispanic White" refers to White Alone, Not Hispanic.

# Black Workers Remain More Likely to Be Unionized, But Rates Are Falling Across the Board

Union Membership Rates by Race, 1983-2019



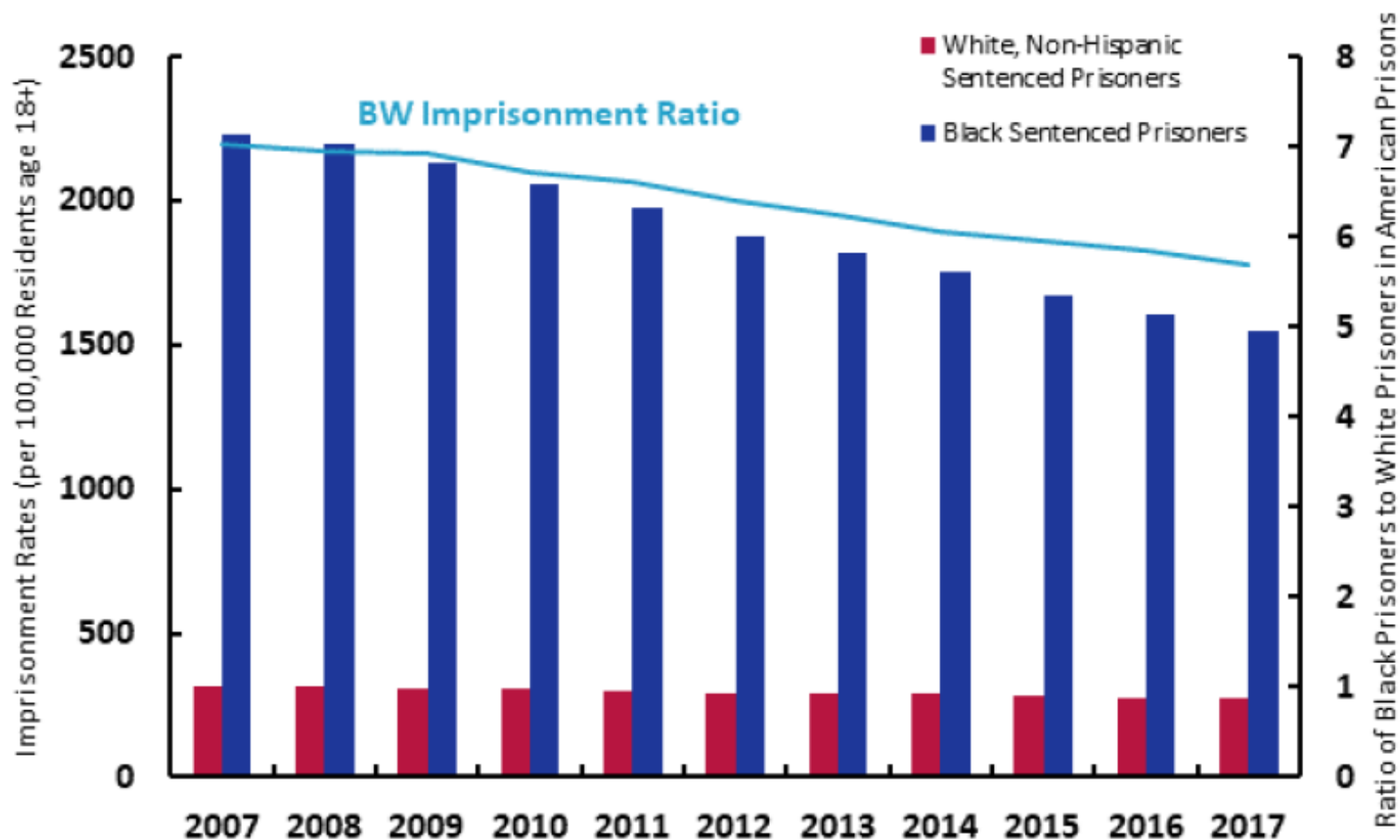
Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Union Affiliation Data from the Current Population Survey.

# The “outsiders – the anti-class”

Almost 20% of Black people will never have a good job, and will be marginalized, criminalized, and liquidated. The system has no future for this class.

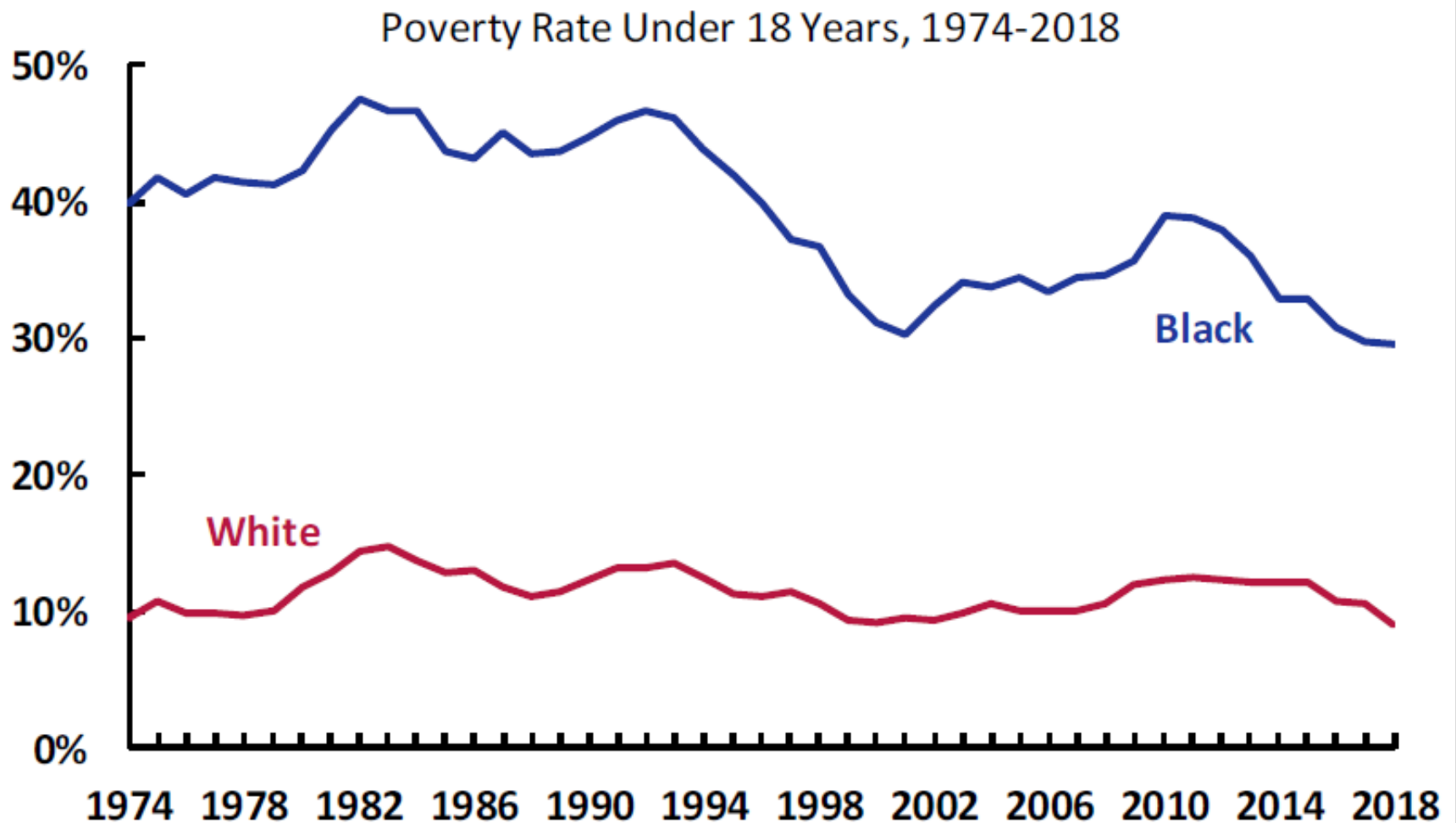


## Incarceration Rates for Black Americans Are Declining, But Blacks Are Still Nearly Six Times as Likely to Be Imprisoned as Whites



Source: JEC Democratic Staff Calculations; Bronson, J, Carson, EA. "Prisoners in 2017." Bureau of Justice Statistics. NCJ 252156. Table 5. Imprisonment rates of sentenced prisoners under jurisdiction of state or federal correctional authorities, by jurisdiction and demographic characteristics, 2007-2017.

# Black Child Poverty Rates Are Regularly Triple White Rates



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Historical Poverty Tables: Table 3. "Poverty Status of People by Age, Race, and Hispanic Origin."

Note: "Black" refers to Black Alone (2002-2018)/Black (1974-2001). "White" refers to White Alone, Not Hispanic (2002-2018)/White, Not Hispanic (1974-2001).



History of class and class struggle:

# Social Class and Black People 2023

**The Black capitalist class: main income from ownership, especially stocks**

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# 1967 Detroit Rebellion





# Detroit: Black workers begin to organize

OVER [1968] OVER  
DODGE REVOLUTIONARY UNION MOVEMENT

# drum

HEAR A DRUM SPOKESMAN AND PARTICIPANT

DODGE REVOLUTIONARY UNION MOVEMENT  
PULLED OUT 2000 BLACK WORKERS  
TO STRIKE FOR AN END TO RACISM  
IN DETROIT AUTO PLANTS.



**AUGUST  
9th  
8 P.M.**

**DEBS HALL  
3737 WOODWARD**

**FRIDAY NIGHT  
SOCIALIST FORUM**

OVER

*Handwritten notes:* John W., 865-751-00

*Handwritten signature:* Murphy

# "OUR THING IS DRUM!"



**1968**



An updated edition of the classic account of revolutionary Black workers in Detroit

# DETROIT: I DO MIND DYING

A STUDY IN URBAN REVOLUTION

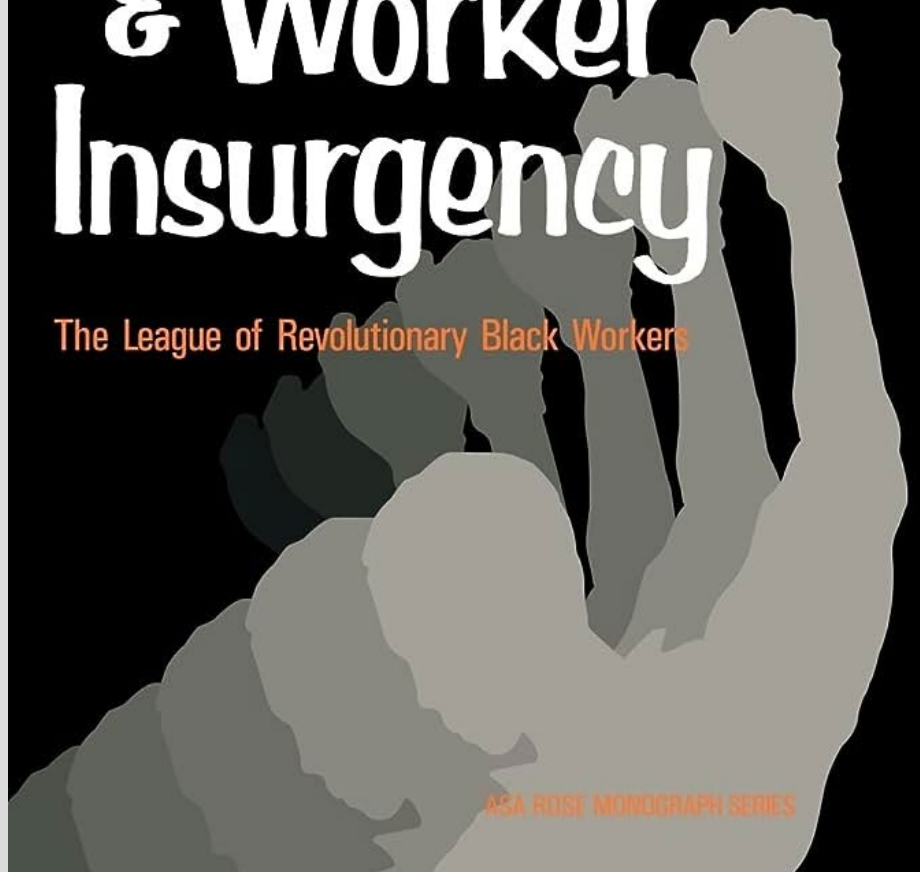
— Foreword by Manning Marable —

DAN GEORGAKAS  
AND  
MARVIN SURKIN

James A. Geschwender

# Class, Race, & Worker Insurgency

The League of Revolutionary Black Workers



ASA ROSE MONOGRAPH SERIES



**THE EVIL SYSTEM OF COLONIALISM AND IMPERIALISM  
AROSE AND THROVE WITH THE ENSLAVEMENT OF NEGROES  
AND THE TRADE IN NEGROES, AND IT WILL SURELY COME  
TO ITS END WITH THE COMPLETE EMANCIPATION OF THE  
BLACK PEOPLE.**

**MAO TSE-TUNG**





# **Black Liberation is the key to revolution**

**“Labor in a white skin cannot emancipate itself where it is branded in a black skin.” Karl Marx**

**“You show me a Capitalist, I’ll show you a bloodsucker.”  
Malcolm X**

**CAPITALISM:  
What it is and  
how to fight it**

**Abdul Alkalimat**

**May 21 2021**



# Black Workers<sup>for</sup> Justice



# Southern Workers Assembly



# Power!



# Summary

1. Every society is made up of a class structure
2. This is both by stratification and political economy
3. The majority of Black people are in the working class
4. Black liberation is a class question
5. Black liberation can not be realized under capitalism

**#Black  
Workers  
Matter**

**Organize the South**

