



Making a Menace to Society: The Criminalization of Black Men and Boys

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This curriculum unit is recommended for:
American History II

Keywords: Criminal, Blackness, Whiteness, Myth, Media, White Supremacy, White Privilege, Crime, Trope, Stereotype, Marginalize, Racism, Race Riots, 13th Amendment, Black Codes, Vagrancy Laws, Pig Laws, COINTELPRO, Civil Rights Movement, Black Power Movement, The Scottsboro Boys, Central Park 5/Exonerated 5, Mass Incarceration, War on Drugs, Police Brutality, Lynching, Revolution, Convict Leasing, Chain Gangs, 3 Strikes Policy

Teaching Standards: See [Appendix 1](#) for teaching standards addressed in this unit.

Synopsis: This curriculum unit focuses on the mythology of inherent Black criminality. The creation of the Black criminal began as a tool to reestablish white dominance and Black labor at the end of enslavement; then as a response to the migration of Black people to urban centers during the 1920s through the 1950s; then as a government tactic to dismantle during the Civil Rights Movement and revolutionary actions of the Black Panther Party in the 1960s and 1970s; then as a method to incarcerate numerous Black men, women, and children at an exponential rate beginning in the 1980s to present-day; and most recently the cause of Black bodies being brutalized and murdered by the police. By highlighting the racist rhetoric used in the media and the fabricated Black crime statistics beginning heavily in the 1890s students will have a deeper understanding of the negative impact that the criminal stereotype that has burdened the Black community, while simultaneously providing the White community with a “benefit of the doubt” in their involvement in these instances. Students will grapple with the generational effects of Black criminality through text, video, and image analysis.

I plan to teach this unit during the spring semester of the 2019-2020 school year to approximately ninety 10th-12th graders in American History II.

I give permission for the Institute to publish my curriculum unit and synopsis in print and online. I understand that I will be credited as the author of my work.

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Yasmin Forbes

Introduction and Rationale

Sociologist and civil rights activist, W.E.B. Du Bois, wrote in *The Souls of Black Folks* that “the problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color-line.”¹ Essentially, Du Bois predicted the racism that would continue to plague society within the United States. This does not necessarily have to be overt actions such as Jim Crow segregation and the practice of lynching (murdering) Black individuals. Instead, these practices of racism can be more subtle forms of racism that appear to be socially acceptable. This curriculum unit is inspired by the covert and overt actions of racism listed in the triangle below adapted from the Safehouse Progressive Alliance for Nonviolence.



The focus of this curriculum unit will be to highlight a form of racism that is typically overlooked a term coined as white privilege. It is often not considered racism in

¹ W.E.B Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folks* (Chicago, IL: A. C. McClurg & Co., 1903).

² Safehouse Progressive Alliance for Nonviolence, “Building a Multi-Ethnic, Inclusive & Antiracist Organization-Tools for Liberation Packet for Anti-Racist Activists, Allies, & Critical Thinkers” (2005).

because it does not appear in an overt sense. However, any time that a white person is a beneficiary of the racist institution of white supremacy, racism is at play. The specific element of white privilege that will be covered can be summed up in this quote from Khalil Gibran Muhammad's *The Condemnation of Blackness: Race, Crime, and the Making of Modern Urban America*, "at the dawn of the twentieth century, and a rapidly industrializing, urbanizing, and demographically shifting America, blackness was refashioned through crime statistics. It became a more stable racial category in opposition to whiteness through racial criminalization. Consequently, white criminality gradually lost its fearsomeness."³

School and Student Demographics

Mallard Creek High School is located in the Northeast Learning community of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School system. The school opened in the fall of 2007 to alleviate the population of surrounding high schools such as Zebulon B. Vance High School. Mallard Creek is a three-story comprehensive high school on a 24-acre campus in the University area of Charlotte. The student body remains large, educating roughly 2,400-2,500 students each year. The school is somewhat racially diverse, with a population that is 67 percent African American, 14 percent White, 10 percent Latinx, 6 percent Asian/Pacific Islander, and 4 percent Multiracial. Mallard Creek received a letter grade of a B from the state and has exceeded expected growth for the past five years. In 2017, the school received a Best Urban Schools in America bronze award with the academy of engineering earning distinguished status.

My Classroom

My classes this year are a combination of Honors and Standard courses. However, I maintain the rigor in both of the levels. For the Standard course I often scaffold the information and assignments they receive. My "why" is rooted in the following quote from James Baldwin: "The paradox of education is precisely this - that as one begins to become conscious one begins to examine the society in which he is being educated." My classroom is a safe space that analyzes the marginalized perspectives of different racial groups throughout the United States. Most students do not like history or social studies, because it presents the historical narrative as a definitive story. The way in which I teach this American History II course is with hopes that students will walk away with a more complex view of the history of this nation as it interacts with those who are not considered White.

The description of my American History II course is: This is a survey course of U.S. history from Reconstruction to Present-day. Throughout the course students will examine the United States from socio-cultural, socio-political, and socio-economic lenses. Specifically, the ethnic composition of society, the struggle toward equality and equity (race, class, gender, and sexuality, along with the rise of the U.S. as a major world power. Student outcomes are: to make connections between the past and

³ Khalil Gibran Muhammad, *The Condemnation of Blackness: Race, Crime, and the Making of Modern Urban America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), 5.

present; to be comfortable in group discussions and other oral presentations; to investigate history from multiple perspectives especially the marginalized; and to become civically engaged to foster change in their own community. In my classes I also have two exchange students, one from Spain and one from Germany, which makes their perspectives in our class discourse multifaceted.

Unit Goals

This curriculum unit is designed with the intention of serving as case studies grouped by the methods or means used to criminalize Blackness/Black people overtime. The unit contents can be taught individually or taught straight through (as they are chronically ordered). If taught as an entire unit, it would take the educator roughly 7-10 days to get through the provided content. Each set of resources can be used to facilitate numerous activities as individual lessons. Below, I have provided an overview of the unit goals and content provided in this toolbox on the creation of Black male criminality narrative.

Day 1: The Making of a Criminal through Law (De jure)

The learner will understand the making of Black criminality as it applied to black people following the end of slavery.

- Exploiting the 13th Amendment
- Convict Leasing and Chain Gangs
- Black Codes/Vagrancy Laws
- Pig Laws

Day 2-3: The Making of a Criminal through Society (De facto)

The learner will understand the role that stereotypes and white supremacy impacted the perpetuation of the Black criminal trope.

- Crime Statistics at the Turn of the Century
- Blackface and Stereotypes – “Birth of a Nation”
- “Negro Rule”
- Mob Rule: Lynchings, Race Riots and the Ku Klux Klan

Day 4-6: The “Black Brute/Rapist Beast” Criminal

The learner will understand the role that the “rapist beast/Black criminal” used in the wrongful criminality of Black boys through the media.

- The Scottsboro Boys
- Central Park 5/Exonerated 5

Day 7: The “Revolutionary” Criminal

The learner will understand the role that the United States’ government played in criminalizing the actors and goals of the Civil Rights Movement and Black Panther Party.

- FBI – COINTELPRO
 - Civil Rights Movement
 - Black Power Movement
 - Black Panther Party

Day 8-10: The “Thug” Criminal

The learner will understand the how the creation of the “thug” stereotype continues to negatively impact Black men and boys, typically at the hands of the police.

- War on Drugs
 - Crack vs. Cocaine disparities
- 1994 Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act
- Trayvon Martin
- Modern Century Police Brutality

Content Research

Khalil Muhammad would argue that Du Bois’ prediction of the color line tensions was fulfilled through the creation of the “Black criminal,” while simultaneously decriminalizing whiteness. This whiteness even began to include the immigrants that were previously discriminated against. For example, Muhammad’s beginning research questions were based on determining how “European immigrants —The Irish and the Italians and the Polish, for example—Gradually shed their criminal identities while blacks did not? In other words, how did criminality go from plural to singular?”⁴ Therefore, as the institution of slavery ended so did a system of control, one that needed to be replaced by a system that was only inherited if one had blackness.

Michelle Alexander, a legal scholar and author of *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*, argues that the follow up system is Jim Crow segregation.⁵ Although this is true it minimizes the creation of the criminalization of blackness through the exploitation of the exceptionality clause within the 13th Amendment (1865). The 13th Amendment states, “neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.”⁶ The clause within the amendment which is exactly written as, “except as a punishment for crime,” became a precursor for the exploitation of Black bodies yet again through the criminal justice system. The creation of Black Codes and vagrancy laws implemented throughout the South and the fabrication of criminal statistics in the North gave birth to the urban (Black) criminal. “Consequently, the black southern migrant—the Negro, stranger in our midst—was marked as an exceptionally dangerous newcomer.”⁷

Southern Black Codes and vagrancy laws could be as simple as convicting a Black person of a crime if they were found guilty of any of the following: supposed or actual unemployment, congregating/assembling in groups without the presence of white chaperone, homelessness, drunkenness, failure to move out of the way of a white person, intermarriage, pig theft (Pig Laws), carry fire-arms (which is legal under the “right to

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* (New York: The New Press, 2010).

⁶ Constitution of the United States of America, 1789.

⁷ Muhammad, *Condemnation of Blackness*, 6.

bear arms” within the 2nd Amendment), etc. Many of those convicted under Black Codes and vagrancy laws were essentially re-enslaved. Except this time, they were owned by the state rather than an individual. The state however could lease them to individuals. Sometimes as convicts they were ordered to work back on the plantations under the watch of the master’s they were previously enslaved. Other times they became a labor source for the state’s infrastructure projects. Historians, journalists, and filmmakers often refer to this system of convict leasing as “slavery by another name”.

In *Slavery by Another Name: The Re-Enslavement of Black Americans from the Civil War to World War II*, writer and journalist Douglas A. Blackmon, argued that the Black Codes were "an array of interlocking laws essentially intended to criminalize black life,"⁸ which would create a new system of forced labor or “industrial slavery.”⁹ The South is not the only place in the United States where whites criminalized Black people. “Many postbellum race-relations writers innovatively pointed out that the highest rates of black criminality could be found in the cosmopolitan, freedom-loving urban North. Since then, such “indisputable” statistical evidence from places like Chicago, New York, and Philadelphia has been at the heart of modern ideas about race and crime.”¹⁰

In the North, at the height of the so-called Progressive Movement, respected white sociologists such as Thorsten Sellin wrote pieces that explained how the press used enhanced reports to assert that all Blacks were criminals. As seen in the following quote, “we are prone to judge ourselves by our best traits and strangers by their worst. In the case of the Negro, stranger in our midst, all beliefs prejudicial to him aid in intensifying the feeling of racial antipathy endangered by his color in his social status. The colored criminal does not as a rule enjoy the racial anonymity which cloaks the offenses of the individuals of the white race. The press is almost certain to brand him, and the more revolting his crime proves to be the more likely it is that his race will be advertised. In setting the hallmark of his color upon him, his individuality is in a sense submerged, and instead of a mere thief, robber, or murder, he becomes a representative of his race, which in its turn is made to suffer for his sins.”¹¹ If anything, the crime statistics made whites believe that Jim Crow segregation was even more justifiable. Hence, “although the statistical language of black criminality often means different things to different people, it is the glue that binds race to crime today as in the past.”¹²

Even as race riots broke out all throughout Northern urban cities the blame was always placed on Blacks, rather than the poor whites and immigrants that started the bloody conflicts. Even when examining “both immigrant and black crime discourses in the urban North as they were mutually constituted by new statistical data and made meaningful to a Jim Crow nation, we can more easily discern distinct (and novel) patterns

⁸ Douglas A. Blackmon, *Slavery by Another Name: The Re-Enslavement of Black Americans from the Civil War to World War II* (New York: Vintage Books, 2008), 58.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 39.

¹⁰ Muhammad, *Condemnation of Blackness*, 5.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 2.

¹² *Ibid.*, 1.

of talking about race and crime”¹³ due to the publication of an overrepresentation of Black crime statistics; racist satire in the form of films, sheet music, and political cartoons; and public lynchings.

The ideas about black criminals also resulted in an increase of vigilante justice. This was most present through the violence of the Ku Klux Klan and the lynchings of Black men, women, and children. “Lynching held a singular psychological force, generating a level of fear and horror that overwhelmed all other forms of violence.”¹⁴ Most victims of lynchings were Black men; often the excuse for these lynchings was rape or assault against a white woman. These lynchings could take place in small gatherings or in large spectacles “likely to lynch their black victims openly and with excessive force, exacting unprecedented tortures and mutilations.”¹⁵ These acts of violence occurred because of fears that whites had about the social freedoms of Black Americans. “White southerners lashed out at alleged black criminals stemmed from fears and anxieties that modernization generated.”¹⁶ In addition, “stories of black crime and moral dereliction dominated southern newspapers, which further fueled racial fears.”¹⁷ The narratives of George Junius Stinney Jr., Henry Smith, Emmett Till, the Scottsboro Boys, and the Central Park Five/Exonerated Five are all reflective of white male fears about black male rapists. The desire of white men that wanted to defend their patriarchy, wives and daughters defended two types of lynchings: murdering of the Black body and murdering of the Black spirit/identity. Media played a large role in doing both.

Some historians mark the gruesome lynching of Emmett Till as the motivation that kicked off the Civil Rights Movement. The courage of the men, women, and children that risked their lives to secure the future of Black rights were often criminalized. Even Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was labeled as a criminal. He was arrested numerous times for attempting to desegregate the South and targeted by J. Edgar Hoover (FBI director). The Black Power Movement also experienced criminalization. The FBI’s COINTELPRO, which attempted to surveil, infiltrate, and discredit Malcolm X, Robert F. Williams, along with many leaders and members of the Black Panther Party who were targeted by these covert and often illegal practices. In 1965, *The Negro Family: The Case For National Action*, a book by sociologist Daniel Patrick Moynihan was written about the Black family. This book was full of stereotypes that perpetuated the ideology of Black criminal pathology. Even the development of policy for the Johnson administration during his War on Poverty use this book to validate Black inferiority and inherent criminality, which further exacerbated the issues during the 1960s and 1970s.

Beginning in the 1980s, we saw a surge in police brutality. This is large in part to the War on Drugs. The War on Drugs began under the Nixon Administration in 1971 and was kicked into high gear during the Reagan Administration (1981-1989) and the Clinton

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Amy Louise Wood, *Lynching and Spectacle: Witnessing Racial Violence in America, 1890-1940* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 1.

¹⁵ Ibid., 3.

¹⁶ Ibid., 6.

¹⁷ Ibid., 6.

Administration (1993-2001). From marijuana targeting to the disproportionate sentencing of cocaine versus crack-cocaine we began to see that “police brutality against men and women of color provided the most urgent grievance but represented a range of festering racial problems: the criminalization of black bodies; the militarization of law enforcement; mass incarceration; racial injustice in the judicial system...”¹⁸ Analyzing the contemporary police involved murders of Black men and boys (including the non-police murder of Trayvon Martin,) historian Timothy Tyson argues that “America is still killing Emmett Till.”¹⁹ Overall, Tyson contends that as a nation we have an enduring legacy that has yet to be confronted much of which is rooted in the myth of inherent Black criminality (especially that of Black men and boys.) This curriculum unit seeks to serve as a guide to explore the historical myth of the ‘Black male criminal.’

In conclusion, when referring back to the introductory source, the White Supremacy Triangle, from Safehouse Progressive Alliance for Nonviolence it brings about the lack of societal empathy for the covert and overt crimes committed against Black people. However, it simultaneously showcases how a narrative of white privilege has pushed the criminal narrative on to people of color, especially Black folks, that some feel calls for some white people or those of color to perpetuate forms of white supremacy in order to maintain “control.”

Instructional Implementation

Teaching Strategies

- Wall Graffiti
- Socratic Seminars/Smackdowns
- Source Analysis – Image, Documents, Film
- See. Think. Wonder.
- Think. Pair. Share
- Student Creation: ie. Newspaper Editorial, FlipGrid, PowerPoint Presentation

Classroom Lessons/Activities

Mini-Lesson: Introduction to Black Criminality Inequities

Activity 1: Students will analyze the following facts and info graphic from “The Sentencing Project” to begin understanding the disparities in the criminal justice system that implicitly showcases that race and gender is at the center of this issue.

Criminal Justice Facts²⁰

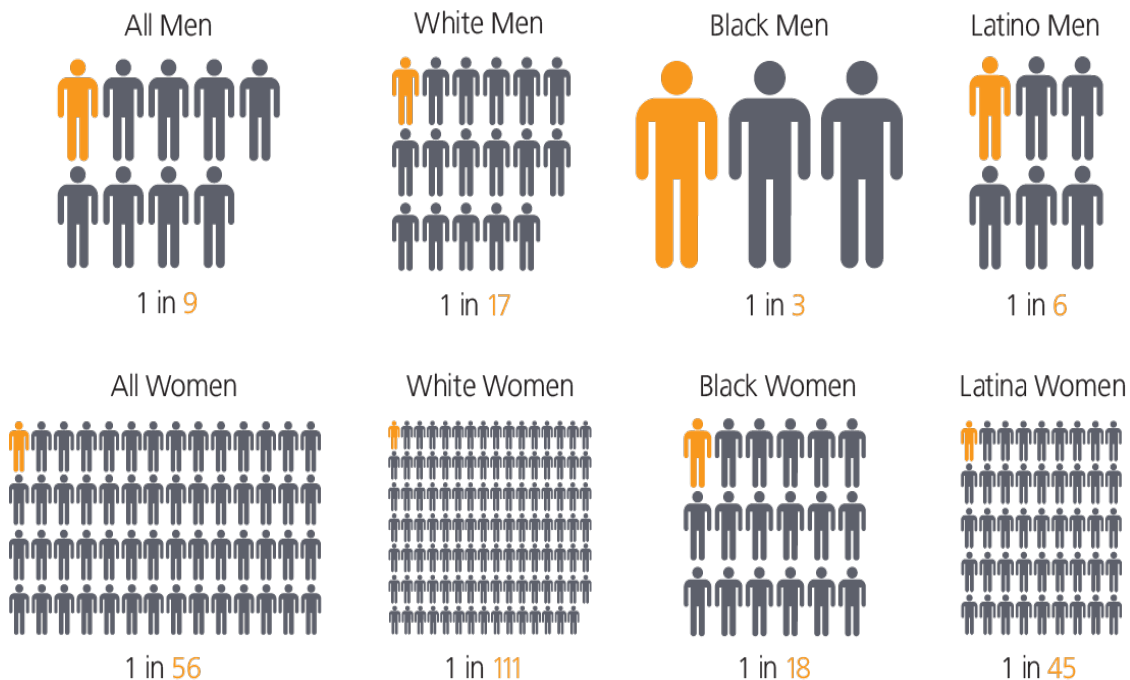
¹⁸ Timothy B. Tyson, *The Blood of Emmett Till* (New York: Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, 2017), 213.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 214.

²⁰ Criminal Justice Facts (The Sentencing Project). Data source: Bureau of Justice Statistics. <https://www.sentencingproject.org/criminal-justice-facts/>

- Mass incarceration has not touched all communities equally (the racial impact of mass incarceration).
- Sentencing policies, implicit racial bias, and socioeconomic inequity contribute to racial disparities at every level of the criminal justice system.
- Today, people of color make up 37% of the U.S. population but 67% of the prison population.
- Overall, African Americans are more likely than white Americans to be arrested; once arrested, they are more likely to be convicted; and once convicted, they are more likely to face stiff sentences.
- Black men are six times as likely to be incarcerated as white men and Hispanic men are more than twice as likely to be incarcerated as non-Hispanic white men.

Lifetime Likelihood of Imprisonment of U.S. Residents Born in 2001



Source: Bonczar, T. (2003). *Prevalence of Imprisonment in the U.S. Population, 1974-2001*. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics.



Activity 2: Student will watch and analyze the “13TH” Trailer (link in footnotes.)²²

FRESH Movie Trailers offers this description of the documentary based on the trailer: “The title of Ava DuVernay’s extraordinary and galvanizing documentary 13TH refers to the 13th Amendment to the Constitution, which reads “Neither slavery nor involuntary

²¹ Ibid.

²² 13th Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IW9otKafIV4>.

servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States.” The progression from that second qualifying clause to the horrors of mass criminalization and the sprawling American prison industry is laid out by DuVernay with bracing lucidity. With a potent mixture of archival footage and testimony from a dazzling array of activists, politicians, historians, and formerly incarcerated women and men, DuVernay creates a work of grand historical synthesis.”²³

Students can do a Think. Pair. Share. for this introduction activity.

Click each day to gain access to the PDF’s of information and activities needed to facilitate this unit.

[Day 1: The Making of a Criminal through Law \(De jure\)](#)

The learner will understand the making of Black criminality as it applied to black people following the end of slavery.

[Day 2-3: The Making of a Criminal through Society \(De facto\)](#)

The learner will understand the role that stereotypes and white supremacy impacted the perpetuation of the Black criminal trope.

[Day 4-6: The “Black Brute/Rapist Beast” Criminal](#)

The learner will understand the role that the “rapist beast/Black criminal” used in the wrongful criminality of Black boys through the media.

[Day 7: The “Revolutionary” Criminal](#)

The learner will understand the role that the United States’ government played in criminalizing the actors and goals of the Civil Rights Movement and Black Panther Party.

[Day 8-10: The “Thug” Criminal](#)

The learner will understand the how the creation of the “thug” stereotype continues to negatively impact Black men and boys, typically at the hands of the police.

Culminating Assessment

As a peer group/team (3-4 students) will answer the following compelling question: How have Black men and boys been criminalized by society and through the U.S. justice system overtime? This peer group/team should answer this question using the resources and activities provided for the five themes (days 1-10) on Black male criminality. The students may have the choice of the following to complete this assessment:

Option 1: Create a FlipGrid/Vlog and show the class

Option 2: Create a PowerPoint/Prezi/Google Slides Presentation and present to class

Option 3: Create a Podcast using voice recorder on their phone and play for the class

²³ Ibid.

Appendix 1: Teaching Standards

The following American History II North Carolina Essential Standards will be utilized throughout this curriculum unit:

History Essential Standard

- ★ AH2.H.1 Apply the four interconnected dimensions of historical thinking to the United States History Essential Standards in order to understand the creation and development of the United States over time. Concept(s): Historical Thinking, Change, Perspective
 - AH2.H.1.1 Use Chronological Thinking to:
 1. Identify the structure of a historical narrative or story: (its beginning, middle and end)
 2. Interpret data presented in time lines and create timelines
 - AH2.H.1.2 Use Historical Comprehension to:
 1. Reconstruct the literal meaning of a historical passage
 2. Differentiate between historical facts and historical interpretations
 3. Analyze data in historical maps
 4. Analyze visual, literary and musical sources
 - AH2.H.1.3 Use Historical Analysis and Interpretation to:
 1. Identify issues and problems in the past
 2. Consider multiple perspectives of various peoples in the past.
 3. Analyze cause-and-effect relationships and multiple causation.
 4. Evaluate competing historical narratives and debates among historians.
 5. Evaluate the influence of the past on contemporary issues.
 - AH2.H.1.4 Use Historical Research to:
 1. Formulate historical questions
 2. Obtain historical data from a variety of sources
 3. Support interpretations with historical evidence
 4. Construct analytical essays using historical evidence to support arguments.

History Essential Standard

- ★ AH2.H.4 Analyze how conflict and compromise have shaped politics, economics and culture in the United States. Concept(s): Conflict, Compromise, Change, Policy, Economy
 - AH2.H.4.1 Analyze the political issues and conflicts that impacted the United States since Reconstruction and the compromises that resulted

- AH2.H.4.2 Analyze the economic issues and conflicts that impacted the United States since Reconstruction and the compromises that resulted
- AH2.H.4.3 Analyze the social and religious conflicts, movements and reforms that impacted the United States since Reconstruction in terms of participants, strategies, opposition, and results
- AH2.H.4.4 Analyze the cultural conflicts that impacted the United States since Reconstruction and the compromises that resulted

The following African American Studies North Carolina Essential Standards will be utilized throughout this curriculum unit:

History Essential Standard

- ★ AAS.H.1 Apply historical thinking in order to understand the African American life in the United States over time
 - AAS.H.1.1 Use primary and secondary sources to interpret various historical perspectives
 - AAS.H.1.2 Analyze competing historical narratives and debates among historians
 - AAS.H.1.3 Integrate evidence from multiple relevant historical sources and interpretations into a reasoned argument about the past
 - AAS.H.1.4 Analyze how historical context shape and continue to shape people’s perspectives

History Essential Standard

- ★ AAS.C&G.1 Understand the African American quest for full citizenship over time
 - AAS.C&G.1.2 Analyze the relationship between African-Americans and other groups in terms of conflict and cooperation in the pursuit of individual freedoms and civil rights
- ★ AAS.C.1 Analyze the lives of African Americans to understand the impact of shared and differing experiences and identities
 - AAS.C.1.1 Analyze the impact of assimilation, stereotypes, and oppression on the lives of African Americans.

Teacher and Student Resources

Alexander, Michelle. *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. New York: The New Press, 2010.

Alexander argues that mass incarceration is the rebirth of a caste-like system in the United States that continues to relegate African Americans to a permanent second-class status that eerily resembles Jim Crow segregation.

Blackmon, Douglas A. *Slavery by Another Name: The Re-Enslavement of Black Americans from the Civil War to World War II*. New York: Anchor Books, 2008.

Blackmon reveals the stories of those who fought unsuccessfully against the re-emergence of human labor trafficking, the companies that profited most from neoslavery, and the insidious legacy of racism that reverberates today.

Kendi, Ibram X. *Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America*. New York: Nation Books, 2016

Kendi argues that racist ideas have a long and lingering history. He explicitly lays out the ways in which race has remained the center of society since colonialism.

Muhammad, Khalil Gibran. *The Condemnation of Blackness: Race, Crime, and the Making of Modern Urban America*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010.

Muhammad discusses the emergence of deeply embedded notions of black people as a dangerous race of criminals by explicit contrast to working-class whites and European immigrants, revealing the influence such ideas have had on urban development and social policies.

Oshinsky, David. *Worse than Slavery: Parchman Farm and the Ordeal of Jim Crow Justice*. New York: Free Press, 1996.

Oshinsky tells the history of race and punishment in the deepest South from Emancipation to the Civil Rights era and beyond.

Tyson, Timothy B. *The Blood of Emmett Till*. New York: Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, 2017.

Tyson tells the story about what actually happened to Emmett Till using a wealth of new evidence, including a shocking admission of Till's innocence from the woman in whose name he was killed. This book also provides a new insight into the way race has informed and deformed our democratic institutions.

Wood, Amy Louise. *Lynching and Spectacle: Witnessing Racial Violence in America, 1890-1940*.

Wood explains what it meant for white Americans to perform and witness these sadistic spectacles and how lynching played a role in establishing and affirming white supremacy. Lynching, Wood argues, overlapped with a variety of cultural practices and performances, both traditional and modern, including public executions, religious rituals, photography, and cinema, all which encouraged the

horrific violence and gave it social acceptability. However, she also shows how the national dissemination of lynching images ultimately fueled the momentum of the antilynching movement and the decline of the practice. Using a wide range of sources, including photos, newspaper reports, pro- and antilynching pamphlets, early films, and local city and church records, Wood reconfigures our understanding of lynching's relationship to modern life.

Documentaries/Films

“The Birth of a Nation.” DVD. Directed by D. W. Griffith. USA, 1915.

“13th.” Netflix. Directed by Ava DuVernay. USA, 2016.

“Ethnic Notions.” DVD. Directed by Marlon Riggs. USA, 1985.

“Fruitvale Station.” DVD. Directed by Ryan Coogler. USA, 2013.

“Scottsboro: An American Tragedy.” PBS. Directed by Barak Goodman and Daniel Anker. USA, 2001.

“Slavery by Another Name.” PBS. Directed by Samuel D. Pollard. USA, 2012.

“When They See Us.” Netflix. Directed by Ava DuVernay. USA, 2019.

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Blackmon, Douglas. *A Slavery by Another Name: The Re-Enslavement of Black Americans from the Civil War to World War II*. New York: Anchor Books, 2008.

“Building a Multi-Ethnic, Inclusive & Antiracist Organization-Tools for Liberation Packet for Anti-Racist Activists, Allies, & Critical Thinkers.” Safehouse Progressive Alliance for Nonviolence, 2005.

Constitution of the United States of America, 1789.

“Criminal Justice Facts.” The Sentencing Project. Data source: Bureau of Justice Statistics. <https://www.sentencingproject.org/criminal-justice-facts/>

Du Bois, W.E.B. *The Souls of Black Folks*. Chicago, IL: A. C. McClurg & Co., 1903.

Muhammad, Khalil Gibran. *The Condemnation of Blackness: Race, Crime, and the Making of Modern Urban America*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010.

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Wood, Amy Louise. *Lynching and Spectacle: Witnessing Racial Violence in America, 1890-1940*.