

INTRODUCTION

watershed milepæl
saying talemåde
achieve opnå
equality lighed
segregation raceadskillelse
explicit åbenlys
resentment afstandtagen
parameter parameter,
faktor

INTRODUCTION

The election of Barack Obama to the presidency in 2008 no doubt marked a watershed in American history. It seemed to prove finally that the saying "anyone can grow up to be president" was true also for African Americans. In a sense the election marked the end of a long 20th century during which African Americans had continuously struggled to achieve equality. Some people have even declared 21st century America to be a "post-racism" society.

Recently, America's racist past caught the attention of Hollywood filmmakers. A stream of historical movies including *The Help*, *Twelve Years a Slave*, *The Butler* and *Selma* explore race relations as a thing of America's past and might indicate that modern democratic Americans think of racism as mostly a thing of the past. But is racism really over?

To be sure, Jim Crow style segregation is history and explicit racism is now met with considerable resentment by most Americans. Some, however, point out that racism now continues as *structural racism*. This means that racism today is structured into political and social institutions and therefore difficult to recognize directly. As a consequence, African Americans still lag behind white Americans on many traditional parameters of success such as education and income while at the same time being significantly over-represented in criminal statistics.

EDUCATION AND INCOME

Though segregation of schools was outlawed more than half a century ago, many schools remain segregated in practice. On average African-American students, at practically all levels of the educational system, lag behind white students: in 2010, for instance, only 18 % of African Americans had a college degree whereas 31 % of white Americans had achieved a similar level of education.

college degree bachelorgrad

Students celebrate the 182nd commencement of the New York University, 2014

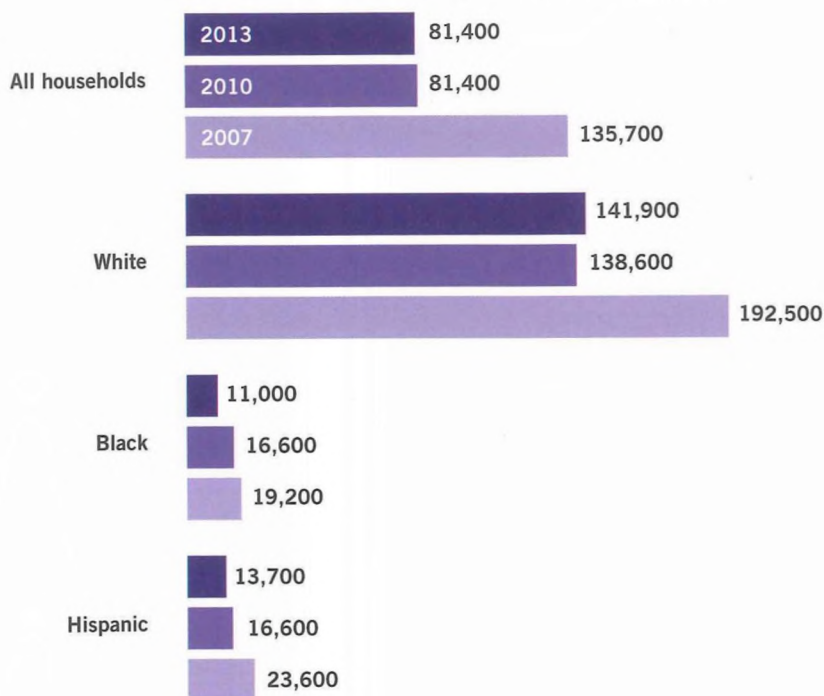


median net worth gen-
nemsnitsformue før skat

The level of education is often linked to the level of income, and here too African Americans lag behind the white population. In 1959, more than half of African Americans lived in poverty. Some fifty years later this number has been drastically reduced, but as of 2013 the median net worth of African-American households continues to be much lower than that of white Americans (see figure below).

WEALTH BY RACE AND ETHNICITY, 2007-13

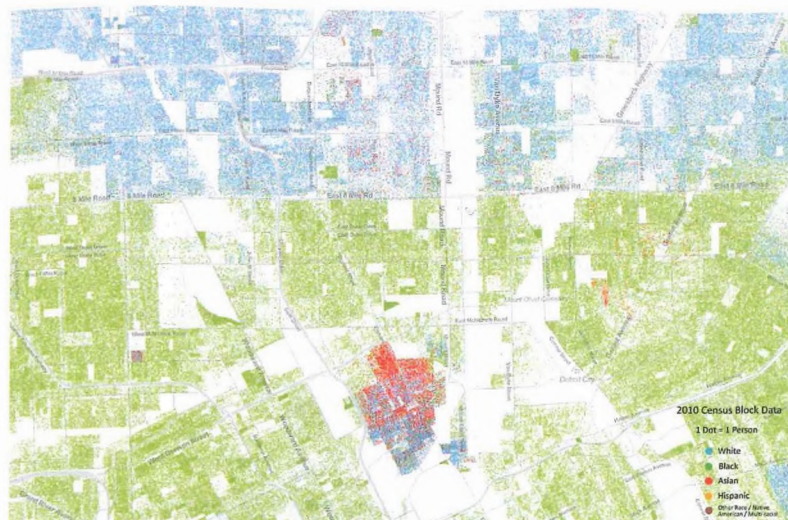
Median net worth of households, in 2013 dollars



Note: Black and whites include only non-Hispanics. Hispanics are of any race.

Kochhar, Rakesh and Richard Fry. "Wealth inequality has widened along racial, ethnic lines since end of Great Recession." Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (December 12, 2014). <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2014/12/12/racial-wealth-gaps-great-recession/>

The map shows residential segregation in Detroit, Michigan. Green dots are for African Americans, blue for white Americans, red for Asian Americans and orange for Hispanics. Each dot represents one individual linked to an address. (Map created by Dustin Cable of the University of Virginia based on data from the US Census)



residential segregation

"boligadskillelse". Begrebet beskriver en tendens til at hvide, sorte, sydamerikanere og asiater bosætter sig i forskellige områder

display udvise
distinctive synlig
mortgage boliglån
foreclosure tvangsauktion

The education and income gap between African Americans and white Americans is also reflected in residential segregation. Even today, most American cities display a remarkable degree of racial residential segregation with distinctive black, Hispanic, Asian and white neighborhoods. African Americans live in neighborhoods in which homes are worth less and tend to have higher-risk mortgages, in turn increasing the risk of foreclosure.

CRIME

prison sentence fængselsdom
absent fraværende
bleak dårlig
biased forudindtaget
accusation beskyldning
charge tiltale
authorities myndigheder

African Americans also stand out in relation to crime compared to white Americans. Presently, 3 % of all African Americans are serving a prison sentence compared with 0.5 % of white Americans. Some have blamed the over-representation of black Americans in criminal statistics on a high number of absent fathers and low rates of marriage among African Americans. Others point to a lack of education, low income and the bleak life chances that accompany that. Still others have suggested that the American justice system is biased against black people.

In 2014 accusations of police racism drew national headlines when a number of unarmed black men and boys, including Michael Brown from Ferguson, Missouri, and Eric Garner from New York City, were killed by white police officers who were never charged by the authorities. Their cases and others like them were the cause of protests in several cities as well as a renewed debate on the treatment of black Americans in the American justice system.

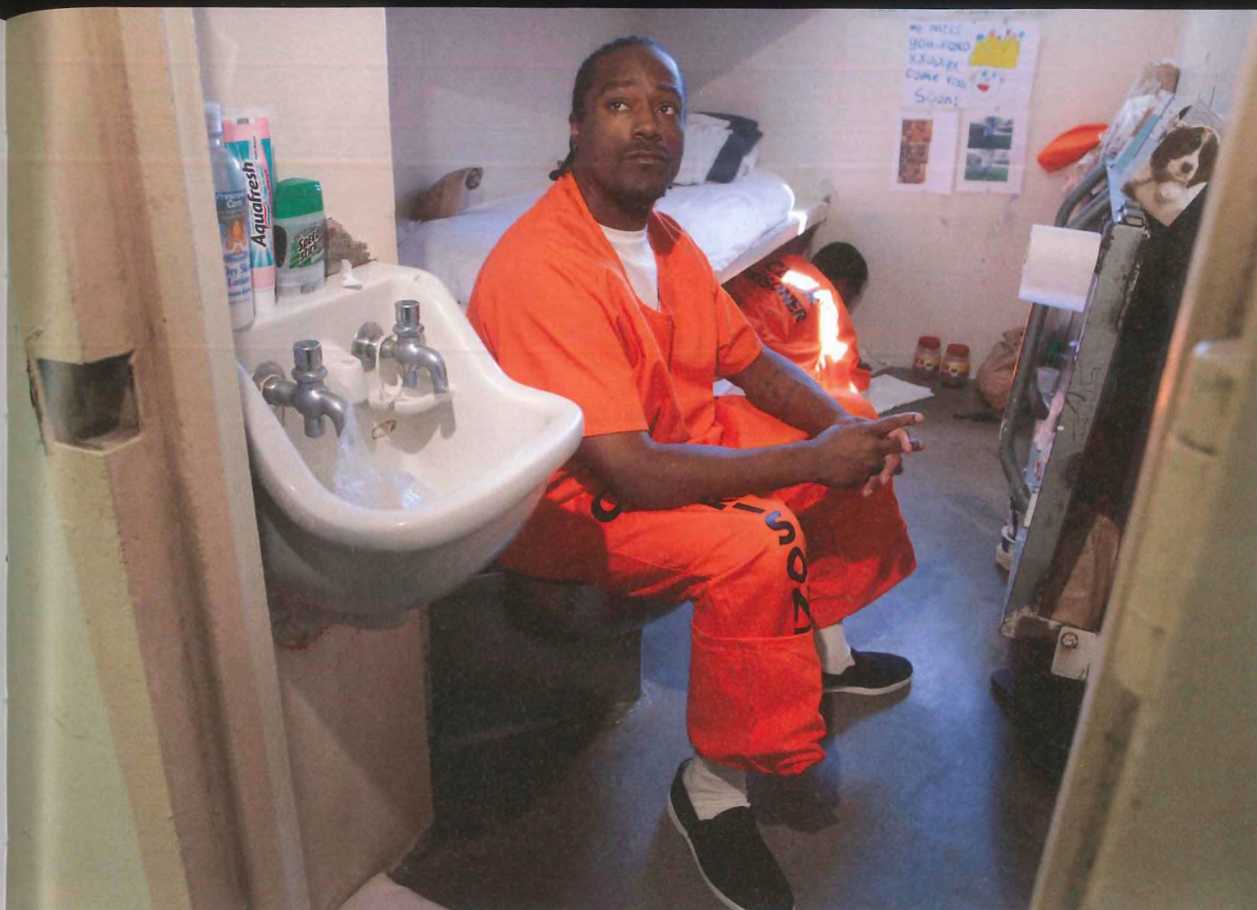
POLITICS

significant betydelig
milestone milepæl

In politics the United States has made great progress towards racial equality. As mentioned, the election of President Barack Obama in 2008 was a significant milestone in African-American history. African

Anthony

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level nive
US Congre
den føde
forsamlin
af to kam
Repræsen
Kongress
vedtager
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House of R
Se "US C
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eulogy be
Reverend
Pinckney
lokalpolit
South Ca
sammen
kirkegan
2015 i En
Church i



Anthony Turner is serving 25 years for three offenses in California Institution for Men state prison, 2011

gain ground vinde terræn
level niveau

US Congress Kongressen, den føderale lovgivende forsamling i USA; består af to kamre: Senatet og Repræsentanternes Hus. Kongressen behandler, vedtager eller forkaster alle lovforslag

House of Representatives Se "US Congress" ovenfor
Senate Se "US Congress" ovenfor

cumbersome besværlig
electoral participation valgdeltagelse

explicitly på en klar og tydelig måde

attention opmærksomhed

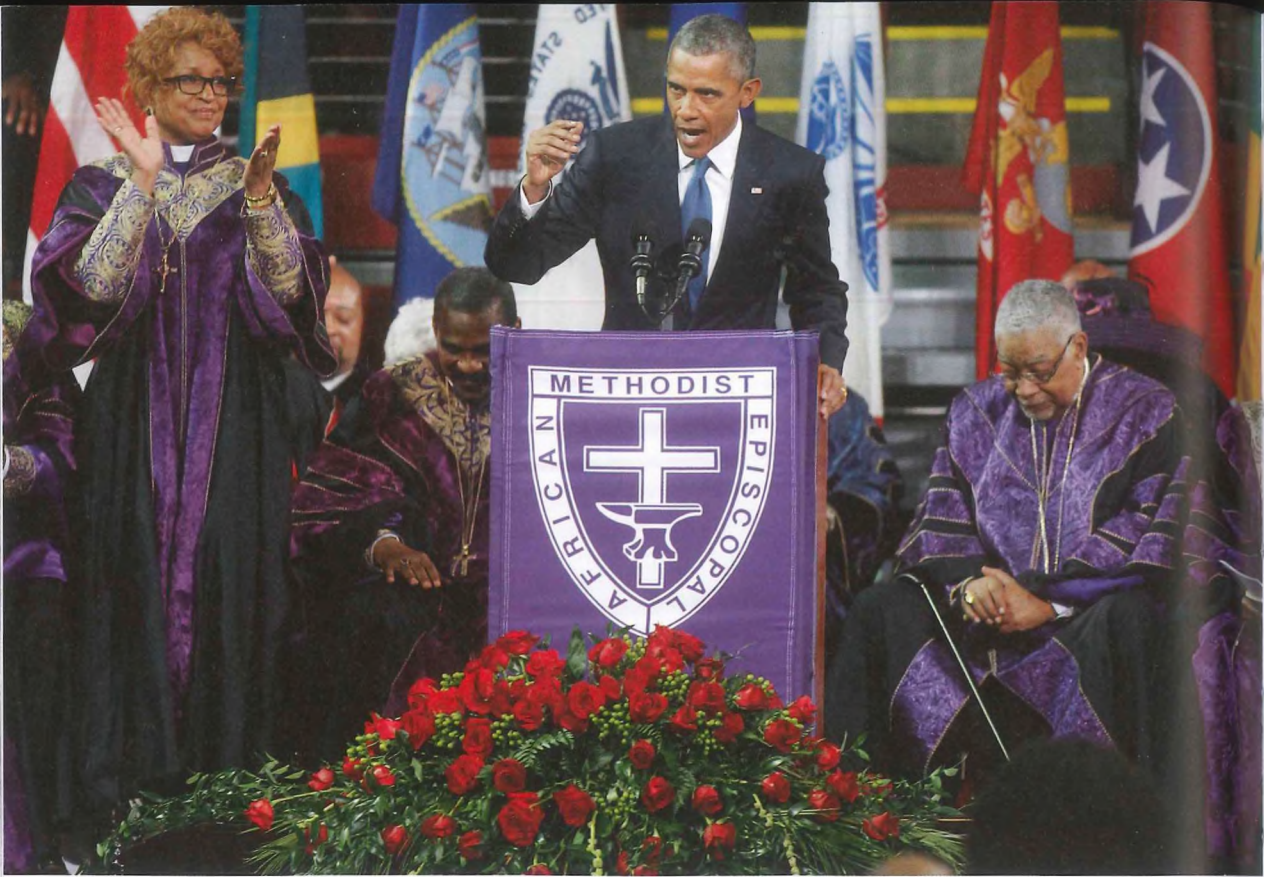
eulogy begravelsestale
Reverend Clementa

Pinckney Sort præst og lokalpolitiker i Charleston, South Carolina. Dræbt sammen med otte andre kirkegængere den 17. juni 2015 i Emanuel A.M.E. Church i Charleston

Americans have also gained ground on other levels of US politics. In 2015 there were 45 African-American members in the US Congress (43 in the House of Representatives and 2 in the Senate) compared to only 5 in 1965 (out of the 545 members of Congress). Recently, however, some states, especially in the South, have made plans to make voting more cumbersome, for instance by requiring certain types of ID and rejecting others – something which is believed by civil rights groups to be aimed at lowering electoral participation among the poor and minorities.

POST-RACIST AMERICA?

As the enthusiasm for Barack Obama's victory slowly died down, and the disadvantages of African Americans remained – even grew – questions arose: Can America ever overcome the racial gap? Is there such a thing as "too much history"? In June 2015 Obama explicitly returned these questions to national attention following the shooting of nine African Americans in a South Carolina church by a young white man. Giving the eulogy at the funeral of Reverend Clementa C. Pinckney, who was among the victims, Obama said:



President Barack Obama gave the eulogy at the funeral of Reverend Clementa C. Pinckney, 2015

10

injustice uretfærdighed
languish sygne hen
dilapidated forfalden
prospect fremtidsudsig
examine undersøge
justice system retssystem
infect inficere
bias fordom
embrace omfavne (tage
imod)
equip udstyre
bond bånd
law enforcement politi
guard værne
slur nedsættende udtryk
subtle subtil, (her)
ubevidst
term (præsident)periode
agenda dagsorden
various forskellig

For too long, we've been blind to the way past injustices continue to shape the present. (...) Perhaps this tragedy causes us to ask some tough questions about how we can permit so many of our children to languish in poverty, or attend dilapidated schools, or grow up without prospects for a job or for a career. Perhaps it causes us to examine what we're doing to cause some of our children to hate. Perhaps it softens hearts towards those lost young men, tens and tens of thousands caught up in the criminal justice system, and leads us to make sure that that system is not infected with bias; that we embrace changes in how we train and equip our police so that the bonds of trust between law enforcement and the communities they serve make us all safer and more secure. Maybe we now realize the way racial bias can infect us even when we don't realize it, so that we're guarding against not just racial slurs, but we're also guarding against the subtle impulse to call Johnny back for a job interview but not Jamal.

While the first black president's second term is coming to an end and racial inequality is back on the national agenda, many Americans of various backgrounds are asking themselves: Are we really living in a post-racism America?