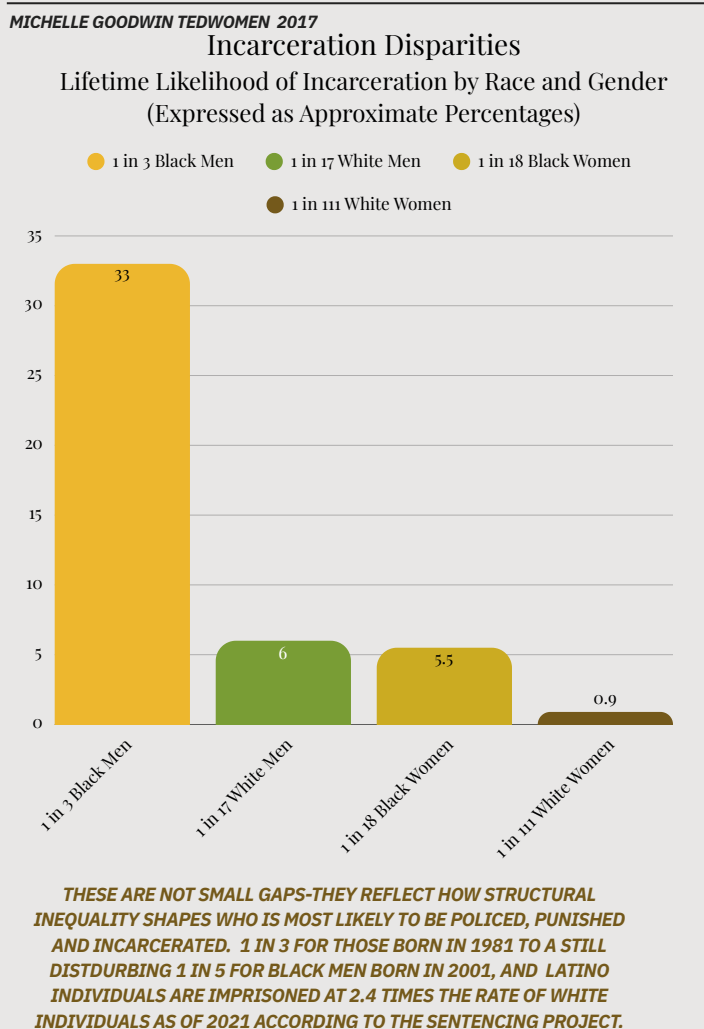




WHY THE SOIL MATTERS: REPARATIONS, STRUCTURAL JUSTICE, AND GENERATIONAL REPAIR

How historical foundations shape modern systems, lived experience, and inequality

The Foundation Was Never Equal



- Enslavement, forced labor, and extraction
- Land dispossession, displacement, and removal
- Segregation, exclusion, and legalized inequality
- Erasure of lineage, ancestry, and identity

👉 Bottom line:

These conditions formed the foundation of inequality in the United States.

Inequality Embedded in Systems

1. Criminal legal system: systems of punishment, over-policing, and incarceration that continue to criminalize Black and Brown life
2. Housing: displacement, redlining, rising costs, and barriers that make stability and ownership harder to hold onto
3. Healthcare: unequal treatment, bodily control, and systems that too often fail to care for the people most in need of care
4. Education: underfunding, historical erasure, and unequal access to both opportunity and truth
5. Administration Subordination: This helps show how institutions themselves can be designed in ways that produce harm, even when they are framed as neutral or lawful

👉 Bottom line:

These systems continue to reproduce inequality across generations.

Unequal Outcomes

1. Persistent racial wealth gaps
2. Mass incarceration and surveillance
3. Unequal health and reproductive outcomes
4. Barriers to inheritance, housing, and generational stability
5. Barriers to access, recognition, and institutional support

👉 Highlight:

Outcomes are shaped by conditions—not just individual choices.

What We See on Screen Reflects the System Beneath It

DISTORTION

FILM HAS LONG HELPED SHAPE RACIAL MEANING, OFTEN PORTRAYING BLACK LIFE THROUGH FEAR, STEREOTYPE, OR PERFORMANCE RATHER THAN FULL HUMANITY.

PROGRESS

THERE HAS BEEN MOVEMENT. MORE BLACK CREATORS ARE NOW VISIBLE BOTH IN FRONT OF AND BEHIND THE CAMERA.

LIMIT

BUT VISIBILITY ALONE IS NOT STRUCTURAL REPAIR. ACCESS TO AUTHORSHIP, OWNERSHIP, FUNDING, AND POWER STILL REMAINS UNEQUAL.

👉 BOTTOM LINE:

What we see on screen reveals not only who is visible, but who has been allowed to shape the story.

Birth of a Nation
by D. W. Griffith 1915



Sinners
by Ryan Coogler 2025



Repairing the Foundation

SOURCES

- Investment in education and healthcare
- Mental health and trauma-informed services
- Criminal justice reform
- Land and property restoration
- Genealogical restoration and historical repair
- Equity in storytelling and representation

👉 Highlight:

Reparations are not charity—they are repair.

- Darity, Mullen, and Slaughter 2022
- Hannah-Jones 2019
- Field
- Goodwin, Michele. 2017
- Lipsitz 2006
- Johnson and Odom
- Shah
- National Public Radio / Susan Burton
- Yurkanin / ProPublica
- Federal Bureau of Investigation or National Park Service
- Joseph (BLKNWS)
- Sentencing Project

IF THE SOIL IS UNEQUAL, WHAT GROWS FROM IT WILL REFLECT THAT INEQUALITY.