

## Local Politics Matter

# The Case For Reparations

## The Time is Now



The argument over reparations will always be ignored. Just as a debtor ignores the phone calls from creditors America ignores the cries of African Americans. For the purposes of my writings, I prefer the term Black or Black American not to be confused with a blond haired, blue eyed South African who moved to America, also an African American. I digress. The case for reparations to Black Americans is an open and shut case. Especially when you apply some of the earliest and most simple political theories from which this country was shaped. As the UN hands down its verdict against America and the way it's Black citizens were and are treated in their forced habitat, the issue of reparations and the silence of the American government collide, creating a sonic boom of avoidance that must not be ignored. The same way a debtor won't pick up the phone and call a creditor saying, hey... I owe you that money right, America and its supremacy won't knock on the doors of its Black citizens and say hey we're sorry, let alone hey we owe you at the very least, a fair shot at the good life. Even for the sake of its own common good, America would rather suffer as the strongholds of institutionalized racism wraps its hands around her neck, until blood vessels pop in the form of rebellion across its urban landscape. Pressure must be increased, the heat turned up. Our demands based in facts and grounded by theories. Good ole' fashioned political theory which always excluded Blacks but became the very fabric of our constitution and democracy. A democracy stained with the blood of Black bodies. No more will we accept substandard schools and neighborhoods. Substandard food, systematic and deliberate blocks on opportunity and access to health care will no longer be accepted No longer will we be the tail and allow our children to be gunned down in the streets. We can't put a price tag on what we're owed but we can demand what is deserved based on our birthright along with living under the American flag and having to abide by laws which weren't made for us or by us. I draw my demand from [John Locke](#), 17th century English philosopher, a white man. My demand is not for money in our pock-

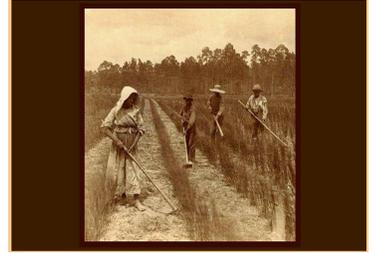
ets, but investment in our people. My demand is for a reevaluation and restructuring of our political, racial and socioeconomic system. We can simplify it, by simply giving ownership of the Black body back to the slave. Let's start from scratch! This country was built on free labor. It's time for Blacks to reap what our fore fathers sowed. Every person owns their own body, it's their God given freedom and every person has the right to profits incurred from labor performed from their property, which in this case would be the Black body. Slave owners stole more than land from Blacks. They stole their bodies, they stole their property, they stole their profits, they stole their value, and they stole their natural born right. America became indebted to the Black race by stealing their most prized possession, self-identity, self-awareness and self-ownership. How much was that worth? We are the richest country on the planet, you do the math!

The [First Treatise of John Locke](#) is a criticism of Robert Filmer's Patriarcha, which argues in support of the divine right of kings. According to Locke, Filmer cannot be correct because his theory holds that every man is born a slave to the natural born kings. Locke refuses to accept such a theory because of his belief in reason and in the ability of every man to virtuously govern himself according to God's law. Let's correlate this to the Black slave. According to this theory, no Black should have been born into slavery. Every man and woman is born free. Free to decide, free to govern themselves, free to work and use their self-owned body for their own profit, or not. The average slave labor income value in 1850 was [\\$400, which equates to at least \\$82,000](#) in today's dollars. The Black family, the Black race was robbed of at least \$82,000 per Black body by not being under their own ownership, thus not being able to capitalize off their own labor and value. This in turn robbed the Black body of the ability to create generations and legacies of wealth based on the work they performed. This, in turn enabled whites to not only capitalize off of their own labor but the labor of every Black body they owned, at least \$82,000 worth per body. In 2009 the [median household wealth](#) or net worth of a Black family was \$ 5,677, compared to white counterparts at \$113,149. Hmm I

should just [drop the mic](#) right now, opinion piece over. \$5,677 compared to \$113,149!! In my theory the basis of this [drastic imbalance](#) roots itself in the jump start provided to white families by their fore fathers' thievery, \$82,000 per body, per year all going to the criminal that stole the Black body. A slave died a slave, bearing nothing, not their names, let alone their value and true wealth. Slave owner John died a rich man and thus his legacy carries on.

The [Second Treatise of Locke](#) is laid in the foundation for modern forms of democracy and for the Constitution of the United States. Locke claims that all men are originally in a state of nature. A man in this original state is bound by the laws of nature, but he is otherwise able to live, act, and dispose of his possessions as he sees fit. More important, human beings, free from the arbitrary laws of other men, have an obligation to protect the interests of each other, since they are all equally children of God. They also have an obligation to punish those who go against God's will and attempt to harm another by compromising his life, liberty, or possessions. The slave had no control over their bodies, how they used them, who used them, how they lived and how they died. The second crime after the original thievery was the mishandling of the Black slaves' life. The scraps they were given to eat, the harsh quarters they lived in, the brutal beatings, the rapes, the disease, the murders. Wow, that actually doesn't sound too far off from our Black communities today. Subpar grocery stores, the projects or low income housing, police brutality, the disrespect our women and children absorb, HIV, urban genocide. If Blacks were given their natural born right to at least own their body, I'm sure natural instinct would prevail and the pursuit of the good life would be the norm. The mere act of being able to work and live good to preserve a way of life robbed. According to Locke's theory our captors and enslavers should be punished. Okay, we'll call the supremacy's "punishment" the redistribution of wealth, paying us back what is owed. \$82,000 per body!

[Chapter V of Locke's writing](#) deals with the definition and function of property. Whether by natural reason or the word of the Bible, the earth can be considered the property of all the people in the world to use for their collective survival and benefit. But Locke also believes in individual property. For individual property to exist there must be a way for individuals to take possession of the things around them. Locke explains that the best theory of right to ownership is rooted in the fact that each person owns his or her own body and all the labor that he or she performs with that body. So, when an individual adds his own physical labor, which is his



own property, to a foreign object or material, that object and any resulting products become his property as well. Locke defines labor as the determining factor of value, the tool by which humans make their world a more efficient and rewarding place for all. Locke explains that money fulfills the need for a constant measure of worth in a trading system but is still rooted in the property of labor. With that being said, I lead to my conclusion. How could and how can our worth be measured without money, without value based on our labor? The resulting product of Black bodies and Black labor is America, in all her glory. Slavery is not a theory, it happened. A reality rooted in every human's worse nightmare, the inability to control their own lives, their own bodies. Slavery is one of the worst crimes against humanity. I didn't say it, UN experts did. Since when does a crime on that large of a scale go unpunished, unmentioned in the US. The intentional thievery of our bodies, of our value and of our wealth cannot go untreated. The wound never heals. It is too deep, too inscribed in the very fabric of the American flag. Blacks were continuously and repeatedly robbed of possessions in a country where they often feel unwelcomed, a system where they feel openly shunned. The argument against reparations is, oh that was 400 years ago. That's exactly right, that was 400 years worth of deliberate and systematic attacks on a people by a nation. 400 years worth of engrained thievery, 400 years worth of property stolen daily, 400 years worth of investment is what you owe us per body, over a 400 year period. \$82,000 per Black American body times 400 years. That is the least of our value, but we'll take it. If you want to talk purely numbers, let's start with investing the result of that equation into the Black community, Black families and Black schools. America could never repay what is truly owed, but it can acknowledge, restructure and invest. Start at the root, start with our children. Give us back ownership, give us back our history, give us education, give us back our neighborhood, give us back our health. Give us back our wealth. Give us back our value. We need to first take back our identity, know who we are, know our worth and demand our reparations. We are our own property. Pay me what you owe me for your thievery of my body, my family, my wealth. End the vicious cycle and repercussions of America's original sin.

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