

What is Critical Race Theory?

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Objectives

- ▶ Present an overview of what CRT is and is not
- ▶ Discuss some applications of CRT (from our perspective)
- ▶ Facilitate discussion

Let's Deconstruct

- ▶ Critical – of significance or importance
- ▶ Race – is mostly a social construct and used to describe and categorize people into various social groups based on physical characteristics
- ▶ Theory – beliefs, assumptions that guide how we understand or explain something

CRT

- ▶ CRT is a framework that considers the historical and contemporary role of race in experiences and outcomes.



CRT



- ▶ “The critical race theory (CRT) movement is a collection of activists and scholars interested in studying and transforming the relationships among race, racism, and power.” (Delgado and Stefancic)



CRT



- ▶ CRT considers how systemic and structural racism embedded in institutions perpetuate racial inequalities.
- ▶ CRT acknowledges that a history of enslavement, segregation, and second-class citizenship for African Americans and other people of color continue to contribute to inequalities and disparities.
- ▶ CRT also recognizes that race intersects with other identities, including sexuality, gender identity, and others.

Beginnings

- ▶ Critical race theory came out of a framework for legal analysis over 40 years ago.
- ▶ Created by legal scholars Derrick Bell, Kimberlé Crenshaw, Richard Delgado, among others.
- ▶ Legal scholars examine laws that intersect with issues of race.

Examples

- ▶ The legal enslavement of Africans and then Jim Crow Laws
 - ▶ Forbid interracial marriage
 - ▶ Forbid/restricted Blacks from voting
 - ▶ Restricted where Blacks could live
 - ▶ Restricted where Blacks could attend school
- ▶ Crack-cocaine disparities in sentencing
- ▶ These laws have contributed to racial inequities including housing covenants, redlining, racial disparities in sentencing, etc.



Principles of CRT



- ▶ Racism is embedded in everyday life in the U.S. and is not an aberration.
- ▶ The interests of people of color will only be advanced to the extent that they also advance White interests.
- ▶ Race is socially constructed and there are no inherent characteristics of any racial group.
- ▶ There are differential racialization or unique patterns of racial marginalization across racial groups.



Principles of CRT



- ▶ There are intersecting multiple, mutually-reinforcing forms of oppression that contextualize lived experiences (e.g., being Latina/o, poor, and gay).
- ▶ Due to experiences with racism, racial/ethnic minorities have perspectives that differ from Whites.
- ▶ CRT assumes a commitment to social justice.

Various disciplines use framework of CRT

- ▶ Law
- ▶ Education
- ▶ Psychology
- ▶ Sociology
- ▶ Social Work
- ▶ Medicine
- ▶ Health Care
- ▶ Others



What CRT is not



- It is not a course that is taught (in K-12).
 - It is a perspective used for understanding lived experiences and outcomes.
 - CRT may be used to inform practices and policies to reduce educational disparities for students of color.

What CRT is not

- It does not embrace that White people need to be discriminated against to make up for past discrimination of people of color.
 - It acknowledges racial inequalities for people of color and ways to reduce these inequities.



What CRT is not



- CRT theorists do not reject principles of the civil rights movement of equality.
 - It acknowledges historical oppression and advocates for equity.

What CRT is not

- CRT's focus is not to make Whites feel guilty and to blame for everything that is wrong.
 - It acknowledges the significance of race in life experiences and outcomes for racial/ethnic minorities.
 - It advocates for valid historical accounts of how different racial groups have been treated in this country.

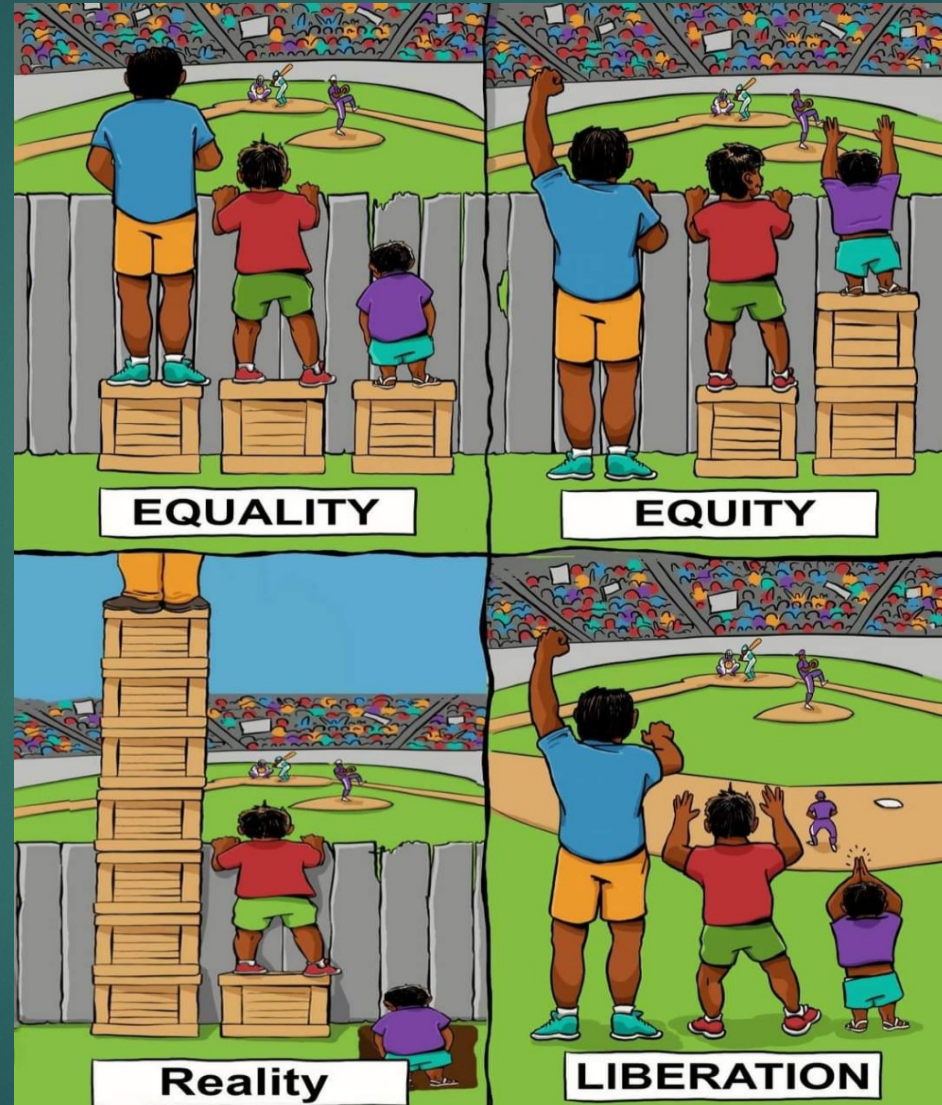
Applications

- ▶ Understanding and Increasing Equity
 - ▶ CRT helps us understand why equity is important and how it differs from equality.
- ▶ CRT provides a framework for understanding racism and how to reduce the impact of racism.

Equity



- ▶ Robert Wood Johnson
- ▶ YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MIXZyNtaoDM>)





Equity Defined



- ▶ Equity is the process of ensuring that procedures and programs are impartial and provide equal possible outcomes for every individual.
- ▶ It ensures everyone has access to the same opportunities and recognizes we don't all start from the same place because some groups have more advantages and others face more barriers.
- ▶ Equity corrects for this imbalance.

Racism

- ▶ Definition 1: prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism directed against someone of a different race/ethnicity based on the belief that one's own race is superior
- ▶ Definition 2: system of advantage based on race/ethnicity

Racism

Individual racism:

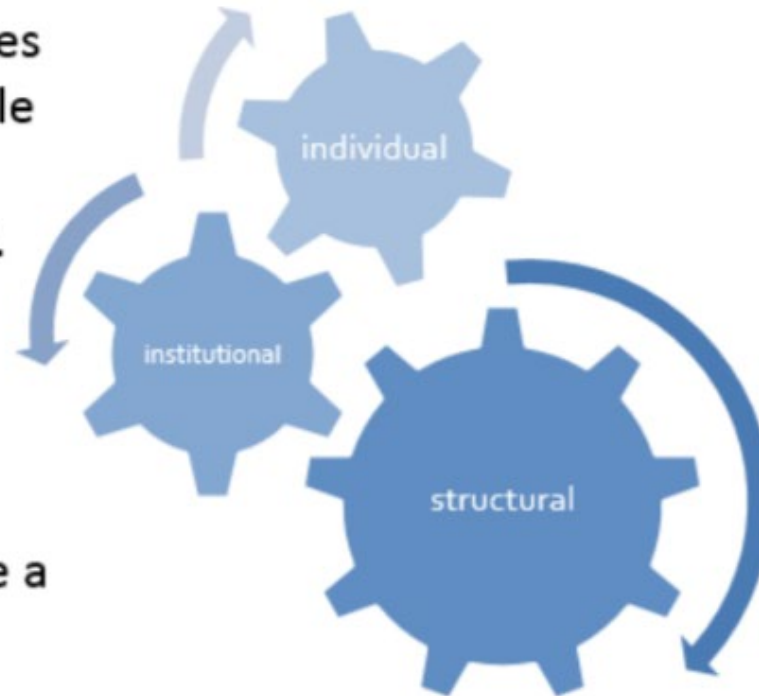
- Pre-judgment, bias, or discrimination by an individual based on race.

Institutional racism:

- Policies, practices and procedures that work better for white people than for people of color, often unintentionally or inadvertently.

Structural racism:

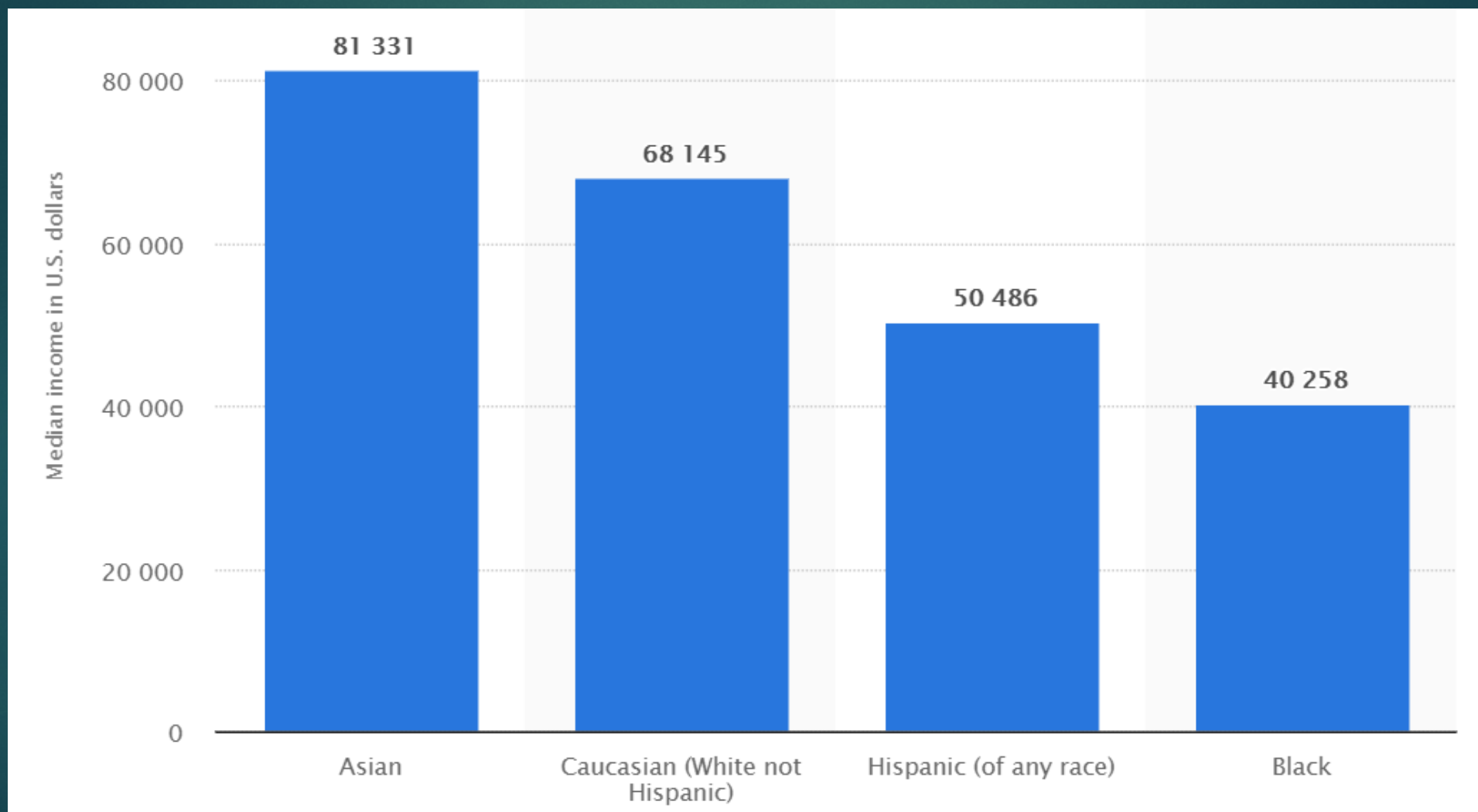
- A history and current reality of institutional racism across all institutions, combining to create a system that negatively impacts communities of color.



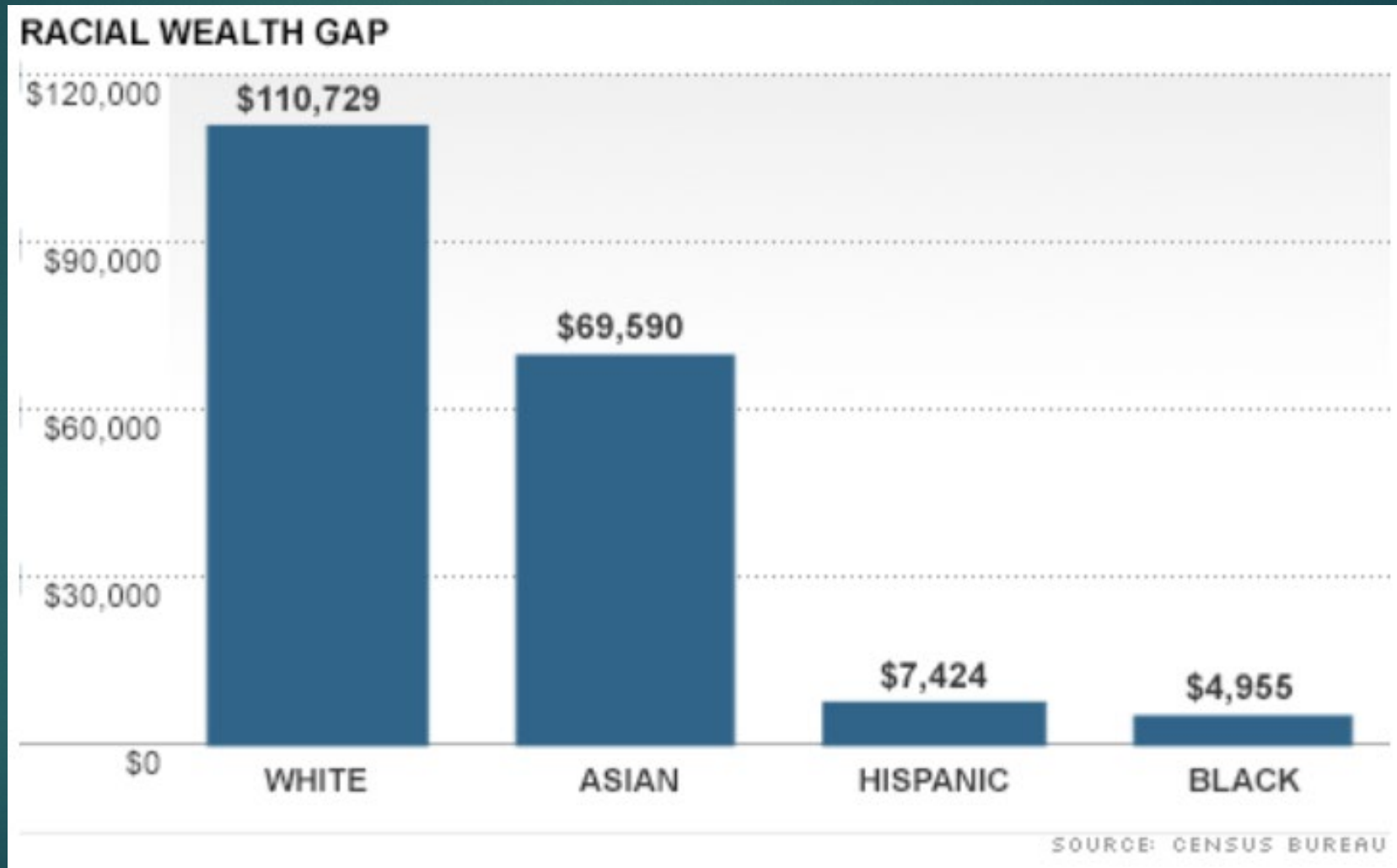
CRT's Focus

- ▶ CRT focuses on structural and institutional racism where policies and systems operate.
- ▶ Disparities in finances, health, education, housing, and incarceration, provide compelling arguments for racism existence at an institutional and systemic level.

Examples: Annual Family Income



Examples: Family Wealth



Examples: Imprisonment

Lifetime Likelihood of Imprisonment

All Men



1 in 9

White Men



1 in 17

Black Men



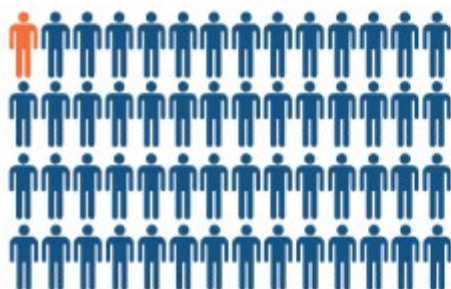
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Latino Men



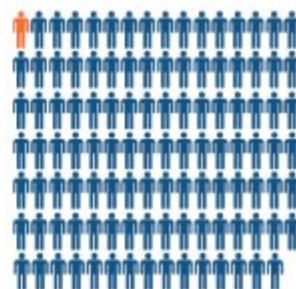
1 in 6

All Women



1 in 56

White Women



1 in 111

Black Women



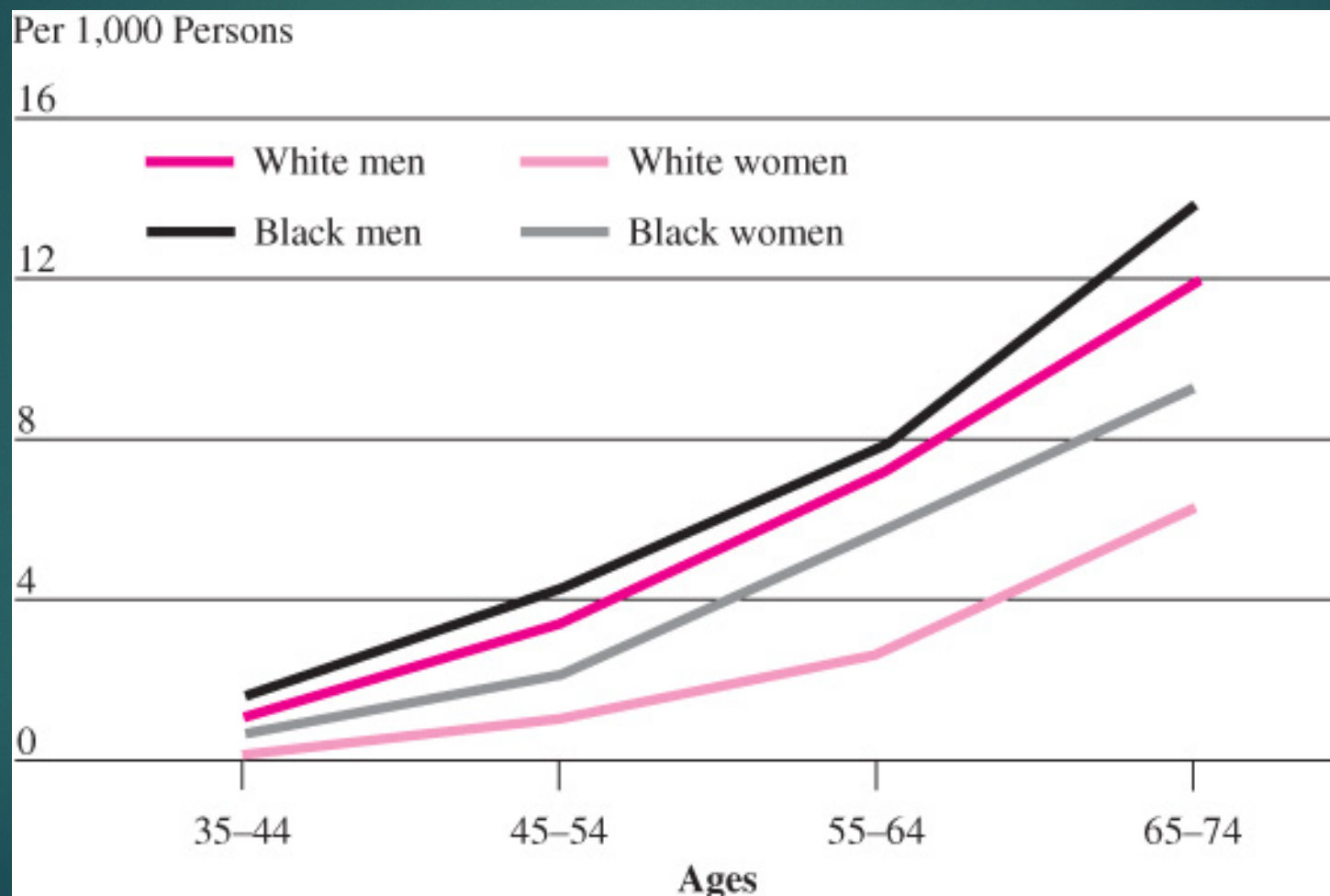
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Latina Women

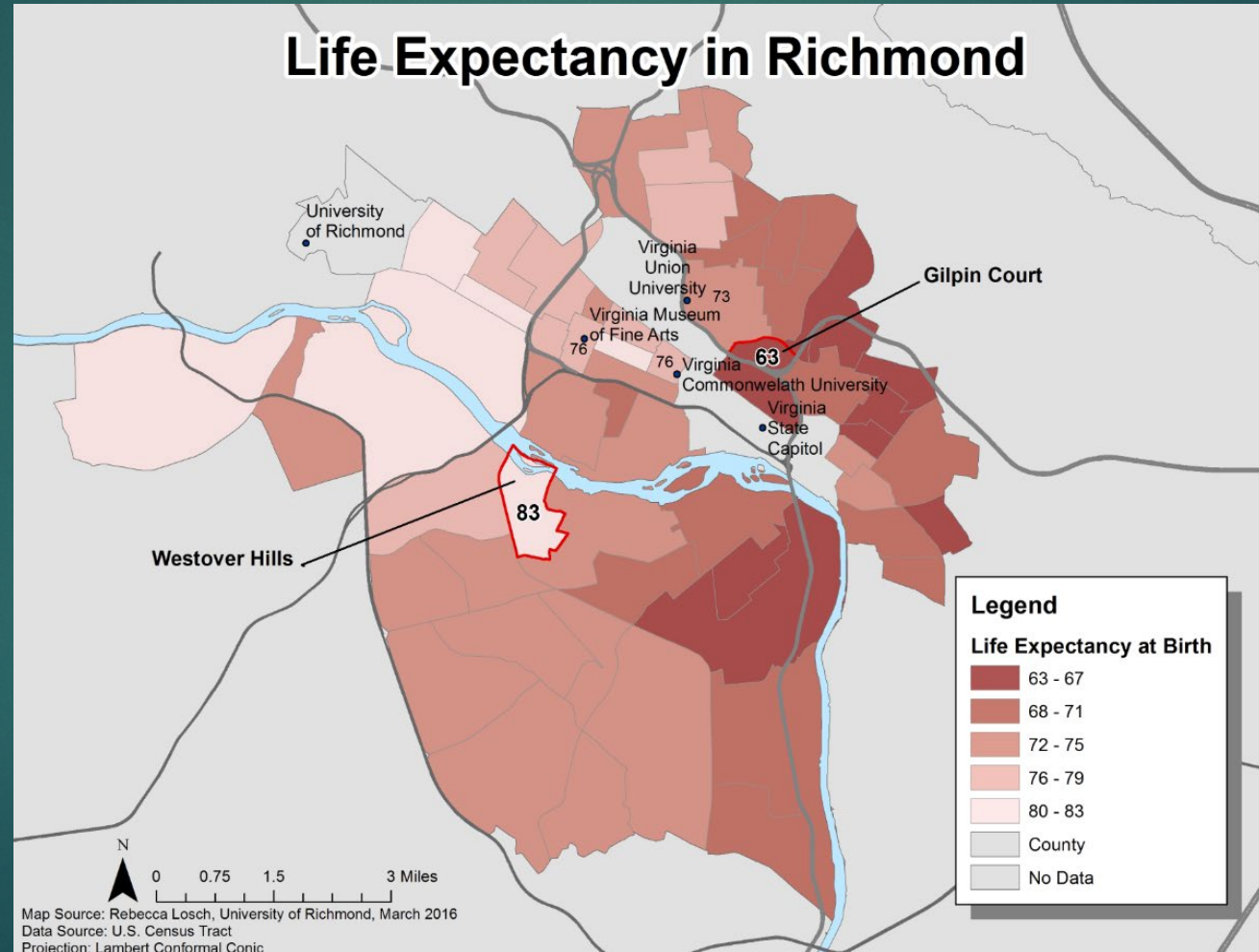


1 in 45

Examples: Health Disparities – First Heart Attack



Examples: Health Disparities – Mortality



Applying CRT to Our Community?

- ▶ Who has the best access to fresh food and supermarkets?
- ▶ To the most highly ranked school systems? To better health care?
- ▶ Who on average lives in more affluent and safer neighborhoods?
- ▶ How can we expect there to no longer be a legacy from our nation's history?
- ▶ If these disparities are not caused by this legacy and a current day reality of racism, then what?

