

Transcript from the
2022 Inequality in America Initiative Symposium
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Faculty of Arts & Sciences
Harvard University

[00:00:18.63] CLAUDINE GAY: Jennifer just let me know when you want me to start.

[00:00:26.29] JENNIFER SHEPHARD: Just give it a few more seconds to see if we're changing and numbers here. We still have people joining, but I would say let's go ahead and start, just on the interest of keeping on schedule over all.

[00:00:57.49] CLAUDINE GAY: OK, great. Well, welcome, everyone. And thank you all for making the time to join us for this year's inequality in America symposium. I'm Claudine Gay, the Edgerley Family Dean of the faculty of Arts and Sciences. And I'm thrilled to be the official host. But the real attraction will be the scholars who are going to be joining us and sharing their work.

[00:01:24.02] So just by way of context, we launched the Inequality in America Initiative with the goal of bringing together a community of scholars across the intellectual breadth of the FAS, in a multidisciplinary effort to elevate and energize teaching and research on social and economic inequality. And that's what we'll get to experience in today's conversation. I'm so excited to hear from our four faculty presenters, whose work is bringing urgent and focused attention to the complex problems surrounding inequality. Each of the projects that you'll be hearing about today has received support from the Inequality in America Research Fund, a competitive grant program that we launched to catalyze innovative scholarship that advances our understanding of the causes and consequences of inequality.

[00:02:19.33] Our ultimate ambition is to support work that will inform future scholarship, but also help shape the public debate on these consequential issues. And so today's event is really a cornerstone of our broader effort. And I'm thrilled to be a part of it and to have you be a part of it as well.

[00:02:40.67] Now, it would be impossible not to acknowledge the hardship and disruptions of the past two years, which impacted not only approaches to research, when travel was restricted, archives were closed, and in-person activities curtailed, but also the research questions themselves, as COVID has further laid bare the stark inequalities in our nation. I want to thank our faculty and their research teams for their perseverance and commitment to this work in the face of what have been pretty significant challenges. I also want to just take a moment to thank those of you in the audience who have generously and enthusiastically supported this initiative, really from the beginning. We are incredibly grateful for your partnership, which is powering innovation and discovery on issues of public importance like inequality. So thank you for that.

[00:03:34.07] So finally, just a few housekeeping notes before our speakers begin. The meeting is being recorded, as you heard. And it's going to be posted on the inequality and division of social science websites in the next week or so. And anyone will be able to access the talks there.

[00:03:52.24] This far into the Zoom era, I probably don't need to say this, but I will anyways. I'm just going to ask everyone to please double check that you're muted when our speakers are presenting. So each speaker will have the floor for about 25 minutes to include their presentation and brief time for Q&A following the presentation. And my colleague, Dean Larry Bobo, will moderate the Q&A. And to ask a question, just raise your electronic hand, and he will call on you.

[00:04:26.35] And now, I'll just very briefly introduce today's speakers, and we'll get started. So they are Walter Johnson, who's the Winthrop Professor of History and Professor of African and African-American Studies; Michèle Lamont, who's the Robert I. Goldman Professor of European Studies and Professor of Sociology and of African and African-American Studies; Nathan Nunn, who's the Frederic E. Abbe Professor of Economics; and Stephanie Stantcheva, the Nathaniel Ropes Professor of Political Economy. So thanks to each of you for sharing your work with us today. And I will now turn the floor over to Professor Johnson.

[00:05:07.92] WALTER JOHNSON: All right, thank you very much. I am going to share my screen. And what are you going to be looking at while I begin is a sort of a montage of photographs of the city of St. Louis by the photographer Michael Eastman. Thank you to the Inequality in America Initiative for supporting this work, along with the Mindich program. Thank you particularly to Jennifer Shephard, who has seen me through many twists and turns in the administrative piece of this. I'm very grateful to her, always, for her support and enthusiasm, and particularly, her patience.

[00:05:52.86] The work that I've been doing in St. Louis has come to be framed by something a visionary housing rights activist called Macler Shepard said. He said that an educated person is someone who can go anywhere in a society, from the top to the bottom, and not embarrass themselves and not embarrass anyone else. And for me, that has become sort of a polestar of how I try to imagine both my teaching at Harvard and the purpose of my scholarship and the purpose of my work in St. Louis in connection with the IAI.

[00:06:35.73] A lot of the work that I've done-- and I will describe it in a minute-- focuses on listening. And really, that's what I try to communicate to our students as I work with them and teach them in St. Louis. I think that our students are wonderful, and they are people who have been groomed all of their lives to be talkers and leaders. And so I think that it is, for many of them, both difficult and somewhat exciting to be asked to be listeners and to work in support.

[00:07:19.23] I'm just trying to move my screen around a little bit. So as an example of that, I want to put up-- no wrong thing. You know, I worked so hard on trying to-- there we go.

[00:07:30.76] So there's an article written by one of the students who worked with me in St. Louis, Che Applewhaite, who is in this picture on my, and I guess your, far right. And Jennifer is going to put the links in the chat. And it's really about Che's struggles. It's about Che's struggle as

a filmmaker and an activist to learn to work at the pace of other people, at the pace of people in the community.

[00:08:02.62] Another St. Louis activist said to me at some point that the work moves at the speed of trust. And I think one of the things that I have learned and that I want to communicate and to try to amplify through my work in the University is the importance of slowing down, of listening, of moving at the speed of the relationships that you build in the community, with people. I think of that as part of a larger commitment to what the Detroit political philosopher and activist Grace Lee Boggs called dialectical humanism. And what she meant by dialectical humanism is that as we go out and try to work in service of the improvement of humanity, we need to transform ourselves. We need to transform ourselves as human beings to try to make ourselves into deeper and, I guess, more loving and understanding types of human beings.

[00:09:03.27] And while that sounds a little bit smarmy, I think that my experience with the students who I've supervised in St. Louis has been exactly that. If you just look at the picture of these kids, along with the extraordinary Percy Green, who is one of the real Black Power radicals in the history of St. Louis-- Percy Green climbed the St. Louis arch when it was under construction in 1964 to shut down construction, because there were no Black construction workers being employed in the project, a number of other visionary, radical, and some quite hilarious actions in St. Louis-- Jamaal Rogers, who is with the Organization of Black Struggle, and a group of kids from all over-- very, very different kids. And one of the things that really made me want to keep doing this work, and has, I think, to some degree, changed the way that I think about my job at Harvard and my calling generally, the relationships that these kids built with one another and with people in St. Louis.

[00:10:10.45] So what are the sorts of things that they have been doing? So a lot of the work that Harvard students and I have been working on in St. Louis is in connection with three or four projects. One of them is in Centreville, Illinois. And Centreville, Illinois is across the river from St. Louis. It's just South of East St. Louis.

[00:10:36.24] It is, by standard of median family income, arguably the poorest municipality in the United States. It is 98% Black, mostly elderly, and they have in Centreville, a terrible flooding problem. So this is not a picture of the Mississippi River flooding. This is a picture of what Centreville looks like after a medium to heavy rainfall. And so this happens four, five, eight, 10 times a year.

[00:11:08.77] And you can see here, this is what happens to houses in Centreville. That's a house where the foundation has been washed out. This is the existing infrastructure that's supposed to pump the water out of Centreville.

[00:11:21.27] So what we're looking at is a case of complete governmental social abandonment, right? When the town floods, the failing stormwater infrastructure interacts with the failing sewage infrastructure. And so the flood pictures that I've shown you are literally floods of sewage, right?

[00:11:50.31] So what the students have done in Centreville is worked in tandem with a group of lawyers, which was my initial way into the project, and then with the Centreville Citizens Committee. And they have done the work that the Centreville citizens have asked them to do. Part of that was creating a press kit. It took a very, very long time for us to get any stories into the newspaper about this.

[00:12:16.20] Finally, we were able to, and now, the story has been in as far away as The Guardian. And the senators in Illinois are involved. And all of that has been work that tied back to this press kit that our students made.

[00:12:34.77] The other thing that they have done is they've created a website for the Centreville citizens community. One of the great divides in our society, as all of you all know, is the digital divide. This is a community where people don't have the resources to make their plight visible in the way that we at Harvard do.

[00:12:55.60] And so this is a website that was created by my students. It is actually hosted at Harvard. And it is a fundraising website and information website. And you have, I think, the link.

[00:13:09.66] And so now, this semester, I am teaching-- I realize that that's extremely distracting, so I'm just going to put this up for a second. I'm teaching a course, History 13C. In past iterations of that course, we've done oral histories of Centreville residents, trying to both amplify the aspects of their lives that are not simply contained by this disaster, but also to give them an occasion to articulate their attachment to the place, because so many of those who come in wanting to solve the problem, for them, the problem is, well, let's just move these people out of this crappy place.

[00:13:50.79] That neglects the fact that many of these people were moved out of their existing houses, their prior houses to make way for an interstate highway. So they've already faced one forced displacement. And it neglects the texture of the really, really powerful and, I guess I have to say, moving relationships that the citizens have to one another. And so the oral histories were meant to begin an archive to try to address that.

[00:14:21.18] This term, the class is working on updating the press kit, because there have been some tremendous organizing successes since we did the first one, and also to try to publicize a home repair campaign. If your house floods eight times a year, your furnace is likely not to work. And if your furnace doesn't work, then you're likely to be living through the winter in the back room with a space heater. And so there are very, very dramatic needs in this community that we're going to try to address in the short term. The other thing that we have supported was...

[00:14:58.98] We've done a lot of work, but the other sort of hallmark thing that we did was a fellowship for visual artists in St. Louis, for six young visual artists. And this was a fellowship that came out of talking to people in the community, in particular my friend and collaborator here on the right, Tef Poe, who is an artist in St. Louis and has been a fellow at the Warren Center, at the Hutchins Center, and was a real leader in the Ferguson uprising. And in talking to him, one of the things he said is, we have a lot of talent in St. Louis.

[00:15:38.02] We have a lot of musical talent. We have a lot of visual arts talent. But it has nowhere to go. And so this was an IAI project.

[00:15:46.56] We set up a fellowship to support, on a fairly modest stipend-- I think \$1,000 for a year-- six visual artists. And the idea was to help them put together a portfolio for an exhibit in St. Louis that would then come to Harvard for Arts Week, Arts Harvard, and they would be able to talk to critics about their work. That was a project that was-- I don't want to say it was destroyed by COVID, but it was derailed by COVID.

[00:16:15.75] And so what we ended up doing-- and this, again, involved financial support from Harvard-- was we got the exhibit put online at the Griot Museum in St. Louis, which is a museum that we collaborate with in St. Louis. So it debuted as a virtual exhibit. Now, part of the vision of that-- and this has been a vision of the whole project that has been, to some degree, derailed by COVID-- is to really try to work bilaterally, which is to say to take students to St. Louis to work and see St. Louis and to engage with people in the community, to engage with eyewitnesses, to learn, to listen, but also to bring people from St. Louis to Harvard, to have them-- many of the people with whom I work on a daily basis in St. Louis have never been outside of St. Louis. And so for them to come to Harvard is exciting. And for young artists to be able to talk to our faculty or our curators is exciting.

[00:17:21.60] And so we really do try to maintain that kind of spirit of interchange. I am fiercely committed to that vision of interchange, because I actually think, in many ways, I have learned more from those interchanges than I have been able to bring to St. Louis. I think that I'm a taker in that relationship. I think that has shaped my scholarship in the book that I wrote about St. Louis in 2020. I think it has shaped my vision of my mission at Harvard and my larger mission in the world.

[00:18:04.47] But it also-- I guess I want to finish with this-- has shaped the way that I understand the potential importance of, I guess, humanistic and soft social sciences knowledge in the world. And this is to come back to the notion of dialectical humanism, except that this time I'm going to talk about it as dialectical humanities-ism, right? I think that what I've come away with is a notion that I want to try to pursue and am actively trying to pursue, of the applied humanities.

[00:18:38.91] And what I mean by that is I don't mean just a set of internships. I don't mean just a kid having an internship in an art museum. What I mean is a reorientation of how we think about the role of universities in the world, and to really try to reorient at least part of the university, not around crunching people's data, with all due respect to everyone here, and going out and solving their problems for them, but on going and listening to people about what they think their problems are and then saying very simply, how can I help?

[00:19:19.68] Now, the fact about teaching at Harvard and teaching these extraordinary kids is that they can help in ways that I cannot help. My students bring skills and knowledge and creativity to the work in St. Louis that vastly outstripped the things I can do. And what I have seen again and again and again among people in St. Louis is an appetite for that kind of work with the students. And the students, then, rise to that.

[00:19:49.59] And for a lot of our kids-- I mean, I expect that you all know this as well as I do-- a lot of our students get to Harvard, and they lack a sense of purpose, because their purpose their entire life has been to get to Harvard. And once they get here, then all of that architecture of mission falls away, and they're a little bit lost. And it is my, perhaps, overblown feeling that some of them have really found purpose in this.

[00:20:24.57] I believe-- and if I look around at people teaching in prison, or I look around at activism, or different kinds of abolitionist mutual aid, or different kinds of aesthetic interventions in cities, that the arts and humanities are actually at the forefront of social transformation in a lot of on-the-ground urban spaces in the United States. And so it's my hope going forward to try to build on that, to try to build on some of the small projects that we've done here, or some of the projects that I have, in the meantime, learned about elsewhere-- arts collectives, for instance, different projects in Houston, in New Orleans, which I now wish that I had. Anybody who's interested, I can send you a whole bunch of links to these interesting projects.

[00:21:30.90] One would be the Displaced Project in New Orleans, which memorializes, in very, very plain black and white writing on spaces, like graffiti writing, but in a standard font, the places in New Orleans, where African-American communities have been displaced, which creates public memory, or the Heidelberg project in Detroit, which repurposes abandoned houses as art exhibits. I mean, one of the things you can get from just looking at this photo montage here is that North St. Louis is a atmosphere of abandonment. And I think that to try to use the arts to transform, as Michael Eastman does, to a certain extent here, in making these beautiful images of abandonment, but to use the arts to try to transform the urban space so that when a little kid walks out of their house in North St. Louis they don't see only, you're here because we have abandoned you.

[00:22:38.01] You have been abandoned. You've been abandoned to this situation. But they see a reflection back to them of the beauty that resides in them, a reflection, I guess-- and I'm going to close with this-- of what another activist in St. Louis, Sylvester Brown said to me at some point.

[00:22:57.66] He said, people say we're poor, but we're rich. Look at our children. And that's, in some sense, the spirit that I want to try to amplify and reflect back to the city. So I appreciate your time and your patience.

[00:23:15.65] LAWRENCE BOBO: Thank you so much, Walter. That was a terrific, terrific presentation. Those of you who have questions--

[00:23:25.01] WALTER JOHNSON: I'm trying to unshare my screen, so you can-- oh, there we go.

[00:23:31.14] LAWRENCE BOBO: I was saying, thank you, Walter. For those of you who have questions, I would try to recognize you if you raise your electronic hands here, for those who have questions for Walter. I guess the first name I have here is Alaysia?

[00:23:51.13] ALAYSIA: Yes. Yeah, it's like Malaysia without the M, so Alaysia. Yeah, and I did have a question. So I am a PhD candidate at the University of Missouri, so definitely have

frequented St. Louis. I'm familiar with the population there. So out of curiosity, and looking at these images, they seem kind of heavy, for sure. And so my question is, where do you think Black joy fits into all of this?

[00:24:20.19] WALTER JOHNSON: Yeah, that's a terrific question. And the images, apart from those, really from the Griot exhibit, are heavy. I think that that's part of the notion of what I think is important about the arts. And I think you're absolutely right that one of the things that it is most important to reflect and amplify is the beauty of everyday life in the United States in general, and in St. Louis. And I think, probably, that if the frame is inequality, than I skew a little bit towards the imagery of inequality.

[00:25:07.32] Oh, I set myself an alarm here, so I wouldn't go over. I think some of the most powerful experiences I have had are of-- I'm not certain that I would say joy, but I would say of the powerful mutuality that I've learned about from people in St. Louis. Maybe love would be a word that I'd use instead, but yeah.

[00:25:35.64] I just have to express to you how much joy it gives me that you're from the University of Missouri, since I grew up in Columbia and am a-- I'm a lifelong Mizzou fan. And I'm kind of a Mizzou person, myself. So let's stay in touch.

[00:25:52.44] LAWRENCE BOBO: Terrific, you will. She's going to be joining us as a postdoc, I do believe.

[00:25:56.08] ALAYSIA: All right. All right.

[00:25:58.92] LAWRENCE BOBO: All right. Glory Liu.

[00:26:03.07] GLORY LIU: Hi, thank you so much for this. Also, a shout out-- as a Rock Bridge Bruins alum myself--

[00:26:08.66] WALTER JOHNSON: Holy smokes, Rock Bridge is in the house! All right.

[00:26:14.62] GLORY LIU: Yeah, so I teach in social studies here. And I actually teach a course on interdisciplinary empirical and normative approaches to economic inequality in the United States. And I think that your research sits at a really interesting intersection between kind of distributional and relational approaches to understanding economic inequality. Do we just care about the distribution of resources? Or do we care about what that distribution says but how we relate to one another, how we stand in relation as equals in this country?

[00:26:49.51] And one question that I actually have a couple of students who are really interested in is whether or not, to what extent we reconceive, we need to rethink our approach to inequality is rather than being centered around what we owe individual people, what we owe places. And I think that your kind of interest in a specific region, right, St. Louis, raises some interesting questions about what do we owe places? And what does that open up for us, in terms of thinking about the possibilities for, not just job creations program, but how do we site the problem of

inequality when the focus is on places rather than distributions or people? Does that question make sense?

[00:27:39.57] WALTER JOHNSON: It's a beautiful question. I mean, first, I just need to say that what Gloria said at the beginning is that we went to the same high school in Columbia, Missouri. And so that's super cool for me that Columbia's super in the house today. So that's very exciting for me.

[00:27:56.30] I think the idea is very much an implication of work that I have done without me having realized that consciously, that's what I was saying. And I think that that's really interesting. And I think, certainly, that it would start to draw attention in very powerful ways to the spatial dimensions and the ecological dimensions of what I would call racial capitalism, right?

[00:28:27.49] And I think that it might also draw us out of imagining that income or even wealth are the best measures of human emancipation. And so I think that that's very powerful. Now, I haven't thought it all the way through. But it seems to me like a really, really fantastic, interesting idea.

[00:28:54.44] LAWRENCE BOBO: Can I intervene, Walter, as moderator with a, perhaps, final question?

[00:28:58.67] WALTER JOHNSON: Please.

[00:28:58.97] LAWRENCE BOBO: And that is, can you talk a bit about how this experience has changed either the postgraduate or career aspirations of the Harvard students who've joined in the project to this point? Are there clear signals about how it's modified where they're headed?

[00:29:16.64] WALTER JOHNSON: Yes, so yeah, I mean one of the young people in the photographs, Saul-- let me see if I can find where that photograph is. I'm just not finding it. So Saul Glist who's there in the back, the tall, tall man in the center, he has spent literally years-- COVID years-- and now is still, even as he's in school, working in St. Louis with different equal housing organizations. And so I think he's not only committed to equal housing, but he's committed to the city of St. Louis. And that was really part of my hope.

[00:30:08.07] I think I didn't share my screen, I guess, so you guys probably didn't see Saul. But I saw him there on the screen.

[00:30:15.48] The young woman who convened them and was a sort of a graduate student, I guess, like a sort of a den leader for the students who were in St. Louis first summer, Robin McDowell, is now a professor at Washington University in St. Louis. And she has, I think, both been drawn to St. Louis by this work, and was able, then, to talk to people in St. Louis in a set of terms that they really understood about what she would bring to the University. Also in that photo, just notably for the amount of extra work he did for us in St. Louis, was Kale Catchings, who is a senior captain of the Harvard men's basketball team, and who is, I think, is from St. Louis, and is very, very eager not to go back to St. Louis for all kinds of reasons, but really,

really meant a lot, I think, to the community, to have somebody who was not quite a Jayson Tatum sort of legend in St. Louis youth basketball circles, but was a really notable figure in St. Louis sports to be working there. So that interchange, again, has been really, really fruitful.

[00:31:39.75] LAWRENCE BOBO: Fabulous, but thank you so much, Walter. We are just now out of time. We're going to transition to Michèle Lamont and What We Value; Redefining Worth in the New Gilded Age.

[00:31:56.06] MICHÈLE LAMONT: Thank you so much, Larry. Can you all see my screen?

[00:32:04.35] JENNIFER SHEPHARD: Yes.

[00:32:04.81] LAWRENCE BOBO: Yes.

[00:32:05.27] MICHÈLE LAMONT: Yeah, OK. Good. So here we are. Actually, I changed the title a little bit.

[00:32:13.46] LAWRENCE BOBO: That's fine.

[00:32:14.69] MICHÈLE LAMONT: So first, thank you so much to the IAI for supporting my project. The support I received from Harvard was absolutely important as I was starting the project. And I also want to acknowledge all the research assistants who were involved in this project. Unfortunately, I cannot talk about them too much. But here we go.

[00:32:38.22] So there's a lot of connection between my talk and Walter's fascinating project, as you will see. So the first question I'm asking is who matters in society? How can we broaden who is defined as legit?

[00:32:51.50] So as a sociologist I study how we define who is most acceptable, why some groups are given more status or more recognition than others, and how can we go about expanding the circle of who matters? So this means that I study hope at a time when so many people are looking for it, where so many people are feeling unheard and invisible. So we need to think about the way forward, and I'm trying to basically think about what are the analytical tools that we may have and... to lift and make more visible through my book, so that people can think differently about how to move forward.

[00:33:30.12] So here's how I see it. Recognition is something that we all produce every day through the choices that we make and how we live our lives, in the messages that we teach our students and also our children, concerning how to treat other people. But if we don't do this by ourselves. Institutions and cultural references or cultural scripts that we create and live with make it more or less difficult or possible to dis or respect others. Institutions enable or disable this spread of recognition.

[00:34:09.40] So what does it mean exactly in practice? Well, I conduct my research through interviews. So let's listen to an interview I conducted with Joey Soloway. They are the creator and showrunner of the TV show Transparent.

[00:34:25.76] And now, Jennifer Shephard will try to give us this clip. We'll see if it works.

[00:34:31.55] [AUDIO PLAYBACK]

[00:34:32.02] - If you think about how your work has influenced the direction of what's happening in Hollywood now, I mean, there's not many shows that have--

[00:34:39.39] [END PLAYBACK]

[00:34:39.69] MICHÈLE LAMONT: I don't hear it, Jennifer. Do I need to stop share or not?

[00:34:45.18] JENNIFER SHEPHARD: You can try. It was playing on my machine. I'm sorry.

[00:34:49.20] MICHÈLE LAMONT: That's OK.

[00:34:50.85] HENRY GATES: Yeah, I could hear it, Michèle.

[00:34:52.77] MICHÈLE LAMONT: You can hear it? OK, here we go.

[00:34:54.95] [AUDIO PLAYBACK]

[00:34:55.32] - If you think about how your work has influenced the direction of what's happening in Hollywood now, I mean, there's not many shows that have trans people. So how do you think about things changing or?

[00:35:07.68] - Yeah, I do see a lot changing right now. I do see a lot of things sort of like Transparent out there. And yesterday, I was on a phone call with some philanthropists and some activists and some writers, where we were all talking about the political power of protagonism and the creating of your own propaganda, because you're making more people like you. And so we need to make a world where people focus on love for the other, rather than ridiculing the other.

[00:35:32.31] [END PLAYBACK]

[00:35:34.50] MICHÈLE LAMONT: Thank you, Jennifer. So the show presents the life of an advanced middle aged father who negotiates a new identity as a trans woman with her adult children. And the objective for Soloway is to make this reality known so as to make it more understandable and less abhorrent to those who might otherwise look down or ridicule trans people. So in short, the goal for this creator is acceptance. It's not moving.

[00:36:17.59] So here you have Jill Soloway on the right. And the focus of the talk here is recognition, which can be understood as a cultural process by which the positive worth of an individual or group is affirmed or acknowledged by others. And as a sociologist that's what I study, this cultural process, which is accumulation of micro actions, such as that show. So this is accomplished on an ongoing basis in the course of our daily life. And the counterpart of

recognition is stigmatization, which is the process of qualifying negatively, identities and differences.

[00:37:01.95] Both recognition and stigmatization define who matters, and they are very much at the center of the political agenda in the US today, and all over the world. It's about who is heard, who is seen, who belongs. And although not many people actually talk about it, much of what we see in current events has to do exactly with this.

[00:37:27.78] So many groups are now engaging in what social scientists are calling recognition claims, demonstrating and asking to be seen, heard, and valued. So this ranges from Muslims and Romas in Europe to Black Lives Matter and MeToo in the US and around the globe. At the other end of the political spectrum, we have Make America Great Again, a slogan adopted by working class men who feel like they're losing out. They are embracing patriotism as a way to feel valorized in their status as Americans. So we see that these recognition claims are happening at both ends of the political spectrum.

[00:38:13.58] So let's examine this in more detail. So for these workers who feel like they're losing, the solace is one of dignity of their sense of worth. So in my book, *The Dignity of Working Man*, I conducted interviews with white and Black workers in the US and white and North African workers in France. And in both countries, I found that these men who are experiencing declining income insecurity try to define themselves as valuable by presenting themselves as respectable moral people.

[00:38:46.98] They say that they are survivors who pay their bills, keep their kids out of trouble, pull their weight, and most importantly, they're self-reliant. They define their own identity in a position to those who they believe live off their hard work and sweat. So in the US, the opposition is often against the stereotypical image of the welfare recipients, and it extends to low income people, to groups that are perceived as abusing the welfare system, including African-Americans and in some cases, immigrants. So on the other hand, immigrants are often viewed as worthy of our respect if they embrace the American dream and pull their weight, although this vision, of course, has been challenged by Trump.

[00:39:31.17] In France, you have very different patterns, very strong antagonism toward Muslims, who are viewed as violating the sacred value of French society. And people are far less antagonistic toward Blacks and low-income people, although this has changed over the last 10, 20 years. So in recent decades, all this is, of course, exacerbated by growing inequality in both countries.

[00:39:55.27] So we know that upward mobility is now out of reach for the majority. Young people know it. More and more adults know it. So what will be the dreams, then, if the American dream is not delivering? This connects with Stephanie's work. Where can we find new hope in this context?

[00:40:13.87] So it's to answer this question that I conducted interviews together with my research assistant, with many college students, and what I call change agents, which includes cultural producers. So you will know them as stand-up comics, writers, artists, but also political

advocates, activists, and alike. And they're all informed in transforming how various stigmatized groups are being portrayed.

[00:40:42.15] They're producers and diffusers of scripts, of self-scripts, so forth. So people like Soloway, but I've also interviewed-- we've interviewed something like 190 people, which includes Nikole Hannah-Jones, creator of The 1619 Projects, Lyle Ashton Harris, an artist who aims to represent queer people with dignity and humanity. When I interviewed him, he said he wants to represent them the way they would want to be represented, with love, so not at all the usual more stigmatizing of queer people.

[00:41:19.54] So I've also conducted interviews with fundraisers and philanthropists, who are very central to the story, in that they are scaling up the messages. It is the case, for instance, for the Ford Foundation, that funded new narratives, in particular the Oscar-winning film, Roma. It collaborated with the National Domestic Workers Alliance.

[00:41:43.63] This film-- you may have seen it-- humanizes domestic workers. And it presents them in a more multidimensional way, as we see a young woman struggling with the decision to get an abortion. Just as does the film Maid, which was shown a few months ago on Netflix, which portrays the life of low-income whites, a group that is often invisible.

[00:42:07.15] So with my students, I also wrote another paper, where we compare different groups that don't have the same degree in success in their attempt to reduce their stigma. So for people labeled as obese, it's been a total failure. They're presumed to be lazy, self-indulgent, morally faulty, somehow. In contrast, people living with AIDS were very scary for many people in the 1980s. But now, they're largely viewed as fine. So how did this happen?

[00:42:38.48] So to understand, we identified who were the allies for the two groups, who are the people who were engaged over the few decades in changing the meaning of both groups and in this process, in reducing stigmatization. So we found that in the case of people living with HIV/AIDS, they had a large network of health and medical expert, legal expert who joined forces with social movement activists to reframe what HIV/AIDS is all about. People like Walter Johnson, if you will, knowledge workers are crucial to this. People labeled as obese did not have that. They didn't have many doctors who were ready to say, well, it's not their fault, although this is changing as, of course, the role of genetics is being discussed more and more.

[00:43:27.19] So in our work, we constructed a pathway to identify how the stigmatization occurs. So as we argue that it involves actors, knowledge workers, social movement activists, we're drawing on the environment, drawing on cultural resources, such as how we understand who belongs in American society, and engage in actions, such as removing blame, which results in very different views of these groups. So then, the key question is, how do we get an environment that is much more enabling of destigmatization? That's what I mean when I say scripts and institutions are enabling change or not. So how can we people our environment with more of these tools that we need?

[00:44:14.45] So the most important column here is the first one, and this is where, if you want, my work as a cultural sociologist is different from the work of psychologists. The point here is

not to say, let's encourage people to be empathic or nice. It's really about transforming the environment. How can our environment [be] structured, what can be done?

[00:44:35.14] So in a recent paper, we find that while middle class youth are now promoting kindness and empathy as a tool for social change, the working class [constituencies?] whom we interview are much more concerned with challenging the balance of power. One way or the other, the takeaway is that who matters is something that is in our hands. It can be changed. It is being changed, as I speak.

[00:45:03.49] That's why I'm writing a book for the first time [INAUDIBLE] try to [INAUDIBLE]. Recognition is not only about feeling good, although, of course, this matters. It's also about well-being.

[00:45:21.10] CLAUDINE GAY: Michèle, we're getting a lot of feedback, so we're not able to hear you.

[00:45:24.49] MICHÈLE LAMONT: Yeah.

[00:45:25.25] CLAUDINE GAY: It may be the paper that you're using is rubbing up against the microphone--

[00:45:28.78] MICHÈLE LAMONT: Ah, OK, sorry. I'll--

[00:45:29.03] CLAUDINE GAY: --on the computer.

[00:45:30.23] MICHÈLE LAMONT: OK.

[00:45:30.83] CLAUDINE GAY: So we're not able to hear you.

[00:45:31.79] MICHÈLE LAMONT: Yeah, I was--

[00:45:32.13] CLAUDINE GAY: OK.

[00:45:32.36] MICHÈLE LAMONT: Yeah. So now, recognition is not only about feeling good, although this, of course, matters. It's think about the LBGTQ kids who are thrown out of the house by their intolerant parents who don't accept their kids' self-definition, so they may end up homeless. So this is a case where stigmatization creates poverty, creates material inequality. So the causal arrow can go in that direction, from stigmatization to inequality. Think, also, about current disasters fed by loss of status, the opioid epidemic associated with the loss of job, or for far too many African-Americans who are a victim of COVID due to pre-conditions related to the wear and tear of living with racism.

[00:46:18.37] So stigmatization, in other words, affects our well-being in many ways. But it's not only about the well-being of the stigmatized. It's for the well-being of everyone, because who wants to live in a society of indifference, where some of us are treated as less than human?

[00:46:33.77] So here, I'm not at all arguing that economic inequality doesn't matter. But if we think about the pathways that are feeding into inequality, we have to consider not only distribution, but also recognition and stigmatization. And in more theoretical... and in papers addressed to my peers, sociologists, this is really what I'm working on, this process of-- through which culture feeds into inequality.

[00:46:59.87] So to conclude, what can be done to change the situation, and how can you and me contribute to changes? There's many different answers. And of course, it's not only on us. We have to think about how other groups can contribute to creating the change.

[00:47:18.95] So for politicians and policymakers, we can think about the cultural messages that is diffused by policymakers, in particular. Let's think about the same-sex marriage law, where we saw a notable decline in number of queer youth who attempted suicide in the high school after the passage of these laws in 32 states. So here, we learned that the laws contain messages that had a direct impact on their life and on their sense of well-being.

[00:47:51.16] Government are also promoting definitions of collective identity. So as some of you know, I'm Canadian. When I was growing up, there was a very strong polarization between French Canadian and English Canadian.

[00:48:02.86] The prime minister at the time, Pierre Elliott Trudeau, Justin's father, launched a program telling Canadians that, well, Canada is a multicultural society, where everyone belongs. And of course, many people responded to this news with a great deal of cynicism, but it truly made a difference in how we Canadians receive immigrants, for instance. So it helped foster a society with a bit more solidarity than the US.

[00:48:30.31] Now, to conclude, how can you and other citizens contribute to this? So we have to realize, I think, that stigmatization is not about human nature or about being hardwired, tribal, or having pro-social or less pro-social attitudes. It's about how to create societies that are conducive to extending recognition to the larger number, and how can we get more citizens to become more aware of what's happening?

[00:49:05.41] So many of us, for instance, face choices about do we send our kids to public school, private school? What kind of opportunity hoarding behavior do we engage in when it comes to helping our kids? Do we want our kids to live in a bubble, where we are obsessed with passing on privileges? Or are we more interested in giving them the kind of values that Walter was describing, to sustain a society that is more giving and more open to diversity of all sorts?

[00:49:36.53] So we know that in the context of separation, the current context, there is enormous growth in the extent to which the middle class and the working class do not interact with each other. So I think in a context of growing class segregation and racial segregation, and it's even more urgent than ever that we consider how we make these decisions on a daily basis. And you have states such as Minnesota, which has now created an important program to encourage people to send their kids to more integrated schools.

[00:50:08.71] So we need to learn to celebrate differences, which is certainly something that our students, Gen Zs and millennials, are trying to teach boomers to do, as I'm learning while I'm working on this book and also teaching a class on the book. So to conclude, social boundaries are produced socially. We can certainly transform them by making choices. It is happening already, as so many cultural producers are helping solidarity and recognition through protagonism, as in the case of Transparent, and as our nation learns the political price we pay for measuring a person based on his or her paycheck.

[00:50:47.18] So this is something that is high time to engage with in a collective conversation about why we do this and the social dead ends that we are creating, and that there are alternatives. So another world is possible, one with dignity and recognition for more people. And it is our job to create one step at a time as we make choices. And we have to remember that we all learn about how to do this, even if we make mistake in the process. Thank you.

[00:51:19.34] LAWRENCE BOBO: Thank you so much, Michèle, for that wonderful presentation. And once again, let me open it up to questions, if there are hands raised. I see one from Paul Buttenwieser.

[00:51:33.38] PAUL BUTTENWIESER: Thank you. Thank you so much, Professor Lamont. I'm asking a question out of practically total ignorance, or maybe total ignorance. But my impression is that gang membership among teenagers has to do precisely with dignity and recognition, and that it comes with a cost to the members and also to society because of other values that are espoused by many gangs, certainly not at all, in terms of violence and antagonism toward other people. And I wondered if your work could be applied to an effort to reshape the values of gangs in general, teenage gangs?

[00:52:25.61] MICHÈLE LAMONT: Thank you for this question. Yesterday night, I was watching the new version of West Side Story, which is exactly about that. I think this question has been framed, in part, in terms of oppositional cultures.

[00:52:39.59] We know that the people who belong to groups that live in an enclave often end up developing alternative cultures that can be a form of resistance and that also can have unintended consequence. So we can think of, for instance, hip hop culture, which has been an extremely prolific source of cultural change and a source of identification for people who felt very marginalized, socially. So I think we need to reframe our thinking about the impact of these cultures as dysfunctional.

[00:53:20.60] In fact, a lot of people who come from low-income backgrounds find that learning to bridge between cultures is what opens new possibilities for growth. Prudence Carter, former Dean of the School of Education at Berkeley, has proposed a concept of non-dominant forms of cultural capital to explore how different types of definitions of work can coexist. And it's often those who become culturally flexible, who can bridge between worlds, that are succeeding the best, for instance, in high school. So I would probably reframe a little bit, your question, in terms of thinking about how can we better create conditions for this kind of bridging as a solution for moving forward? Does that help?

[00:54:17.19] PAUL BUTTENWIESER: Thank you very much.

[00:54:19.17] LAWRENCE BOBO: And thank you, Paul. It's good to see you here. Cynthia.

[00:54:25.08] CYNTHIA: Thank you so much. So I just had two questions, but if there's not time, just let me know, and I'll just ask one. I now teach criminal and family law, but I was actually a public defender of juveniles. So I actually have a lot of thoughts about gang membership. But I would just say-- and this sort of leads to my question, is that I think it's a lot more about economic and material inequality than about values.

[00:54:47.99] But so yeah, my question was I'm trying to be optimistic. One of the things that's always frustrated me about family law is how people who are recipients of a certain kind of public assistance are stigmatized, and obviously, it's really racialized, whereas the mortgage deduction, the 529s, all these things are basically state subsidies to affluent people. So I'm wondering what you think of the child allowance. That was the first time-- I was very excited about it. Obviously, it didn't get really re-upped, but I think it was the first time in American history that we've given a straight-up subsidy to parents of every kind, which of course, other Western countries-- I'm also Canadian by the way, so yay-- have given.

[00:55:32.33] And, I guess, my second question, if there's time was I'm also a parent of a freshman. And one thing that has been a little disturbing to me-- and it's totally on a non-college related Facebook page, but I think over half the parents are on it. And there's a vocal minority who are like, lock the gates, lock the gates, especially after some recent-- anyway there's a real-- I just wonder, I know it might be beyond the scope of your guys' project, but about reaching out to families.

[00:55:58.19] I'm totally working with young people. I totally trust the students. I just wonder, sometimes, the families are sort of very much into keeping a separation between town and gown. And that's obviously a group that maybe needs some education themselves.

[00:56:14.24] MICHÈLE LAMONT: I so agree with you. The NIMBY reflex is extremely well-developed among upper middle class parents. They think that's what has given them their status and advantages, and many are extremely eager to pass this on to their kids. Then, on the other hand, there's a lot of very progressive parents, who are not necessarily aware of the unintended consequence of such behavior, and which is why I think the work I do is very important.

[00:56:41.66] I mean, you opened by saying it's basically economics. One of the problem is Americans have the tools to think about the economic part of the answer. The notion of scripts of self, which I didn't talk about, but which is crucial, individualism, the pursuit of the American dream, things that our bread and butter for all of us, these are cultural inventions. And to help people develop the tools they need to understand the world differently, to understand how these kinds of scripts are really feeding into the dead end that we're encountering now, including the support for Trump, is something that we really need to develop.

[00:57:17.76] So this is why my goal is to develop a much more multi-dimensional understanding of how inequality works and little by little, put down the seeds that will help

people reflect differently. And the example you give is perfect. You know, I should probably write an op-ed on this, why is it that people don't think about these, closing the gate in a slightly different way? And what would be the alternative? So thank you.

[00:57:43.95] LAWRENCE BOBO: All right, moderator's going to take a personal privilege here, again, and ask the final question. And here I'm going to trouble your approach. You've tried to emphasize ways in which destigmatization and crafting new scripts can become more inclusive. And I want to quickly inject a concern with power into your discussion and the many ways in which restigmatization or increasing stigmatization can occur, for example, when someone who's basically been convicted of racial profiling is pardoned by a president of the United States, or when people staging an openly racist march are declared to include good people, too. Can you speak to the potential symmetry of these processes for forces that are clearly not at all inclusive in their spirit?

[00:58:37.14] MICHÈLE LAMONT: Yeah. Thank you my dear colleague, Larry. I totally agree with you. Of course there's backlash. Of course, all of this is about power.

[00:58:45.15] That's where the language of recognition change is important, because diffusion of messages is supported by infrastructures. Ideas don't float by themselves. And my project has limitations, but it's also, now is an extraordinary moment in terms of production of discourse of cultural change.

[00:59:03.36] Skip Gates, our colleague, is among the people I interviewed. And the piece on The New Yorker two weeks ago on him, as someone who transformed the canon, that's exactly what our interview was about. So now, Skip has, in my view, you know canonized himself. But it didn't exist 30 years ago.

[00:59:21.94] So the point is exactly to trace-- I cannot do the whole ideological spectrum in this book. But at least I can tell part of the story while acknowledging your very question, Larry. And that will be for another book.

[00:59:36.40] LAWRENCE BOBO: Yep, thank you so much, Michèle, greatly appreciated this wonderful talk. Let's now turn to Nathan Nunn, who I think I have some broad characterization of the topic, correct, The Lasting Consequences of the Tulsa Race Massacre of 1921. So Nathan.

[00:59:54.42] NATHAN NUNN: Great. Fantastic. Thanks, Larry. It's a real honor to be here.

[00:59:58.72] And I'm super grateful for the Inequality in America Initiative, which I think is a fantastic initiative. And I've personally, and my co-authors have benefited from it. But more broadly, I think it's really great that it's promoting research in the direction that it is.

[01:00:16.50] OK, so let me first start by recognizing my coauthors, who are listed here. And so they're the co-authors on the paper, highlighting in particular Alex Albright, who's a PhD candidate in economics, and Laura Thorne Kincaide, who's a PhD candidate in the public policy school at HKS. So the paper is about the Tulsa Massacre of 1921.

[01:00:43.65] I could talk a lot about the background, but the very quick story is May 31, 1921, there's an individual who's a shoe shiner, named Dick Rowland, and there's an accusation of assault, basically, by another individual, who was an elevator operator named Sarah Page. So Dick Rowland was brought to the courthouse. And Dick Rowland was a Black individual. Sarah Page was a white individual.

[01:01:15.20] As is-- was common back then, there would be a group of white vigilantes outside the courthouse. And there was a concern that Dick Rowland was then going to be released, and he would be lynched. And so then, there was a group of about 75 Black individuals, who then came and were attempting to protect Dick Rowland if it was the case that he was released.

[01:01:39.81] Ended up being a gunfight that broke out. I think 12 individuals were shot. This started the Tulsa Massacre.

[01:01:48.30] And during the Tulsa Massacre, I think an important part of it was, I guess, for the protection of Black Americans, they were detained, basically. And kind of the image here tells you the nature of this detention. And they were detained in the local convention center, and I think, also, a sports field. And while they were detained, basically nearly all of their homes and businesses were looted first and then burnt.

[01:02:19.11] And so I'll talk about the specific numbers. And this was over a two-day period, basically. And that is basically the Tulsa Massacre.

[01:02:28.62] And here's kind of the aftermath. And it was about 35 square blocks of this neighborhood, which is called Greenwood, that was looted and then destroyed. So part of the funding, or the funding, allowed us to go to the archives in Tulsa and actually get information on the exact location of places that were looted and then destroyed. And these points here indicate these locations.

[01:03:02.94] And so these come from court records, insurance records, reports, so it's definitely an underestimate. I'm sure many individuals had their properties destroyed and knew they weren't getting remuneration and so didn't even bother filing insurance claims, for example. And so this is the area within Tulsa, which is Greenwood, often called Black Wall Street.

[01:03:23.36] If we zoom in, it just-- this gives you a finer look at this location. And so pretty much all of this area was destroyed. And this is all well known.

[01:03:33.38] And just in numbers of destruction, it's very unclear, but it's up to 300 people were murdered. There's some belief that there are mass graves which still haven't been found. There is over, probably, 1,200 homes were looted and burned, 35 square blocks destroyed, almost 10,000 people interned, almost 10,000 people left homeless. And then, the damage is very conservatively estimated at about \$50 million in contemporary dollars.

[01:04:03.20] OK, so why is this significant? As we all know, there's a lot of racial violence in US history. Why focus on the Tulsa Massacre?

[01:04:11.63] So I think the economist Lisa Cook put it really, really nicely that the Tulsa Massacre was different. According to her-- and she knows a lot more about US history than I ever will, particularly around race relations-- prior to this time, Black Americans really believed that if push came to shove and there was large-scale property destruction, that the government-- the federal government or the state government would come to their defense, right? And the Tulsa Massacre revealed that this was not the case.

[01:04:39.69] And so we can go into the details of the government being complicit and even helping out in the destruction, but it was a real wake up call, actually, according to her, to Black Americans at the time, that your property could be destroyed and there would be no recourse. It wasn't only a wake up call for Tulsans or even individuals from Oklahoma, but all across the country. And so this is information we've collected from digitized newspapers on the extent to which the Tulsa Massacre was in newspapers, basically from June 1 to June 4, so in the immediate aftermath of this. You can see the coverage-- it's basically an index from 0 to 1-- is pretty widespread and stretches all across the United States.

[01:05:28.79] And what was the content of these newspaper articles? So you might think, well, the articles just report factually, there was a massacre. It's terrible. But actually, once you start reading these articles-- I think I was probably quite naive, actually. It's just a surprise to me.

[01:05:43.76] But again, like others on the call, being a Canadian and having a different background and being naive and-- so I won't read through this. There's kind of the n-word blacked out many, many times in this. But the basic idea was the massacre is regrettable, not because it occurred, but because Greenwood existed in the first place.

[01:06:06.92] So individuals blamed city council. Why was it that we allowed a community of Black individuals to exist? And because we know that these communities are filled with crime, with drugs, and it's actually a great thing that the massacre occurred, because now we can rebuild. And so this is from the Tulsa Tribune just days later, "It Must Not Be Born Again." And then, this is from Fresno in California, so very far away-- exactly the same thing, so this same idea that, oh, this was actually for the betterment or the good of the community, and also, the good of the Black Americans or the Black Tulsans that lived in this area.

[01:06:50.39] So the idea is if you're in a community, which it was like Greenwood or like Tulsa in another part of the United States and you're hearing about these events and you see how society is reacting to them, this could have effects. And that's one thing that we study here. And in particular, just to foreshadow a little bit, we find really, really large effects on homeownership. So in this setting where your home could be destroyed if there was some disagreement, and there's going to be no recourse-- individuals didn't get any insurance money, others in the community, particularly whites didn't see this as necessarily a bad thing, and so you might be really, really, really hesitant to invest money in property. So we'll see that.

[01:07:38.91] So there's one point I want to make, is you probably heard of the term Black Wall Street. And so there is a bit of a narrative that Black Wall Street, or Greenwood, was really, really exceptional. And that's why the massacre happened.

[01:07:51.63] So if you actually look at the data, and so there's a lot of different measures here, but think of this as homeownership. So this is the proportion of household heads that own homes. And this is a histogram. So looking across all counties in the US, this is what the distribution looks like. So homeownership rate from 0 to about 0.5 is the span.

[01:08:14.19] And then Tulsa or Greenwood-- and this is for Black individuals-- is this red line here. So the point is Greenwood, in terms of homeownership or Black homeownership, is pretty similar. It's kind of in the middle of the distribution to other counties. In terms of white collar, it's a little bit to the tail, so it's higher than average. But it's not like Tulsa was so exceptional and if you were in another community, you'd say, oh, well, that's because Tulsa was so rich or because they had so much property or anything like that. There were other communities which were similar and could have been influenced.

[01:08:53.45] The one thing that Tulsa County is really different on is the level of segregation. And you saw it in that map, that it was one area that was kind of destroyed, rather than homes all over the place. And so you can see here the same thing, the full distribution.

[01:09:10.72] And so this comes from micro census. In the micro census data, we don't have information on addresses. But because the census taker or numerary went door to door, you can see who your neighbors are and see, are they the same race or a different race? In Tulsa, there's much, much more racial segregation.

[01:09:28.80] And so this is important, because if you think, we're going to destroy the homes of every Black individual in our town, if there's segregation, a neighborhood, it's super easy. If it's a Black home, white home, Black home, white home, it's very dangerous to light one home on fire and not have it spill over. So you're going to have different incentives from the rioters. They might not know whose home is whose. OK, so that's one thing that was unique about Greenwood, or Tulsa, actually.

[01:09:54.23] And so the questions we ask in this study, so what were the effects of the massacre on Black Tulsans in the decades that followed? So what were the economic effects? We're really restricted by what's available in the census, so we're going to look at a much narrower set of outcomes than I would like to have had, but we have plans to extend this.

[01:10:13.56] And then, I think one thing that's particularly interesting-- so for the first point, it might not be surprising, or it's not surprising we're going to find negative effects. But what about other communities all across the United States, other Black communities? Were there spillover effects? And were there spillover effects that depended on the amount of media coverage that an area was exposed to?

[01:10:36.03] And what we're going to do in the future is text analysis, so what if it's negative media coverage versus neutral media coverage? And then, what about the level of segregation in the community? So if you have an integrated community, you might think, oh, well, this could never happen here. But if you have a highly segregated community, kind of like Tulsa, you might think, well, this could very well happen here.

[01:10:55.65] And then, how persistent are these consequences of the massacre? So do these effects persist until today? This is particularly important, because just last year, for example, there is a court case which is led by a lawyer named Damarion Solomon-Simmons, trying to get reparations for those that live in the community of Greenwood today.

[01:11:19.43] OK, so empirical over here-- I won't go through all of the details, but it comes from census data. Before 1940, we have micro census data. So it's individual-level data. After 1940, only aggregate information are released.

[01:11:33.50] I talked about the newspaper data that we-- digitized data that we looked at, and then, the segregation measures. And I won't go into the details and put up a bunch of Greek letters to show you the estimating equation. I think the intuition is there's different dimensions.

[01:11:49.46] So there's race. We can compare individuals who are Black versus white versus other. There's location, so individuals in Tulsa and in other areas, or individuals in a location that received a lot of newspaper coverage versus not or highly segregated or not. And then, there's before and after.

[01:12:07.88] So basically, you're making all of these comparisons simultaneously. So you think of compare Black Tulsans to white Tulsans before the massacre versus after. And it's called a difference in difference in difference analysis. So I won't go into the details, but it's available on the paper which is posted on my website.

[01:12:30.82] I think more than the econometric details, people care about what's the bottom line? What's the answer? So the direct effect of the massacre, so this is what was the effect of the massacre on Black individuals living in Tulsa, you found a decline in home ownership of 45 percentage points. So if that means if homeownership rates were at approximately 20%, after the massacre they're at 10%.

[01:12:55.37] And this masks other effects, because you might still own property, or you might still own a home, but it's burned down. It's destroyed. And instead, you're living in a tent. So we really don't know about the quality of homeownership that was-- or you've rebuilt a shack or something worth much less. But we see a decline in home ownership of 45%.

[01:13:19.70] Employment and white collar occupations declined by an amazing 70%. So if you have 100 individuals, after the massacre 70 are no longer working in those white collar occupations. And these would have been things like if you owned a newspaper, if you're a lawyer, if you're a doctor.

[01:13:35.54] I think what happened, this typical story is your practice was then burned down. You need to survive. You're living in a tent during the winter. You engage in manual labor. And then, you get stuck, to some extent, in that occupation.

[01:13:51.05] Same thing with earnings. So that's white collar versus not. But if you just look at earnings, in occupation-based measure of earnings, that declines by 33%. And we see some evidence-- I don't have it listed here, but that women were kind of forced to work, as well-- or

not forced, but it had a positive effect on the employment of women, and I think the natural thing is because in order for the family to survive.

[01:14:14.00] The newspaper effects are interesting and striking. We find, actually, similar effects, much smaller in places that were exposed to information about the massacre and on home ownership. So people didn't choose worse occupations because they heard about the massacre, but they were more hesitant to own a home, to take a mortgage out and own a home relative to renting. And the average effect here is 12%.

[01:14:42.56] You can kind of compare that to 45%. That's for the average exposed location. And then, the effect ranges from 0%, to the least exposed, to 24% for the most exposed. And this is exposed to newspaper coverage.

[01:14:56.27] Similar for segregation, if you're living in a location that's highly segregated, then homeownership is 15% lower than it would have been otherwise. And it ranges from 0% to 31%. So the way to think of this is, if you're in a location, your community, your county looks similar to Tulsa, high segregation, and you have this exposure about the Tulsa Massacre, then afterwards, the Black Americans have a lower rate of homeownership.

[01:15:26.14] Longer run effects-- so this is important for thinking about policies, for thinking about consequences. What we find, and I'll show you these visually, the direct effect persists. And it actually even grows until today.

[01:15:36.67] So you might think, oh, there was the massacre, people were homeless, but then, they rebuilt. And that happened 100 years ago. The past is the past, and people bounce back. And so you don't see that, actually. I think the better way to think of it, the massacre put these individuals on a different trajectory, and the effects even grow over time.

[01:15:59.62] The newspaper coverage effect persists, actually, as well. And it doesn't grow, but it stays persistent. I'll show you this. The segregation spillover effect seems to have died out over time.

[01:16:11.95] If you look at the data, segregation in 1920, which is what this is based on, is actually not very correlated with segregation today. That's because we had things like the Great Migration, and then, white flight from the city centers. And so there's been a lot of movement in terms of race and homeownership.

[01:16:30.17] So let me just show you these before I conclude. This is the longer run direct effect of home ownership. We don't have data for this intermediate period here, which is 1950 to 1970. This is based on aggregate data, and this is the microdata.

[01:16:43.96] So you find these were the effects I was talking about before, which were up to 1940. And then, if we jump until 1980 and further, you see the effects are still there in 1980. And then, they're even growing. So the legacy of the Tulsa Massacre on homeownership of Black Americans seems to persist until today.

[01:17:08.65] And then, newspapers, similar. So this is the effect. So this is the effect in each year, and then it persists even in 1980, 1990, and 2000. And then, with segregation, this is what I said, is there's an effect here in '30 and '40, but then, it kind of dies out today, and yeah.

[01:17:28.94] So the very last thing is, and this is the real tricky part in what we're currently working on, is everything I've shown you is about locations, which is relevant. I mentioned the court case, which is focusing on location, specifically. But what about individuals who experienced the massacre and then left Tulsa? So this is more difficult. We have to link individuals across censuses, even when they move.

[01:17:55.70] But our preliminary evidence suggests if you compare movement in and out of cities, Black Tulsans that experienced the massacre were less likely to leave their city, compared to other Black individuals, which were just in their cities. But if you are wealthy-- so if you're wealthy in 1920, you experience the massacre, then, you were more likely to leave, actually.

[01:18:18.32] So it's basically those that had the financial means to leave Tulsa, did leave. And if you are able to leave, you're not really any worse off. But if, for Black Tulsans that weren't able to leave, they're worse off. And that's what we saw in the results I was just reporting.

[01:18:36.99] And we can actually link individuals, fathers to sons. And what you find is the sons of Black Tulsans that experienced the massacre are worse off by 1940. That's the last year in which we have the micro data. But the sons of those who left, who were able to leave, are not worse off. So this is one of the mechanisms behind the negative effects, the adverse effects for Black Tulsans, is to some extent, you had a selection of the wealthier, more entrepreneurial individuals leaving the location.

[01:19:10.50] So just to conclude, the findings suggest that the Tulsa Massacre has had lasting effects. It wasn't like it mattered for a decade or even two decades and that's it. There are effects which persist today. I think the massacre, and even other events-- there's a lot of racial violence, unfortunately, in US history-- potentially explains the low rates of homeownership amongst Black Americans today. And homeownership is the primary source of wealth, and so therefore, the enormous wealth gap between Black Americans and white Americans today.

[01:19:44.90] So that's what we have so far. We're continuing to work and to do research, particularly using the micro census. And again, I'd just like to thank the IAI initiative, because this would not have been possible without that funding, so.

[01:20:04.31] LAWRENCE BOBO: Thank you, Nathan, for the very innovative piece of work here. Dr. Gates has a question for you.

[01:20:13.91] HENRY GATES: Thank you, good brother. Thank you for your presentation. It was fascinating. I'm actually lecturing in Tulsa in about a month about the riots. This was very, very fascinating to me. In terms of the decrease in home ownership-- and remember I'm a lowly humanist here, so it might be a stupid question, but how do you disaggregate variables in terms of, how do you account for the decrease in home ownership from the effects of the Tulsa riot, as

opposed to other things that were going on simultaneously before 1940? And I'm thinking particularly of the Great Depression and also the Great Migration.

[01:21:06.67] NATHAN NUNN: Yeah, so I think the short answer is if the Tulsa Massacre occurred in the same locations in the same times as those other things, then you can't disaggregate it. But because you have the depression occurring in different locations-- it didn't only occur in Tulsa, so that's basically the way that you can do that. And there's a lot of other racial violence, but it occurs in different locations as well. So the key thing is you need to measure those things and include them in your regression to make sure that they're not being driven by that. And we try and do that as best we can.

[01:21:43.57] The Depression, it's a bit tricky, because you need to say, well, what was the intensity across different locations? And then, the other thing is these events, the massacre obviously hit Black Tulsans differently than white Tulsans. And some of these other events, like the Depression, hits both races. And again, that gives you some leverage to try and separately estimate these things. And so that's the intuition, basically, yeah.

[01:22:08.11] HENRY GATES: Great, thank you.

[01:22:09.21] NATHAN NUNN: Yeah, Thanks. Jaleh.

[01:22:13.35] JALEH: Yeah, thank you for this great presentation. I really enjoyed it. I have one question about-- I mean it's similar to Professor Gates' question, but something else that is kind of more systematic. I was thinking about redlining and how that really changed the dynamics of who could become a homeowner or have access to financial resources. Did you kind of consider that, or is the answer to this question similar to the previous one?

[01:22:45.03] NATHAN NUNN: No, we haven't considered that, actually. That's a whole other research agenda, which I'd love to do. I actually advised a senior thesis last year by Payton Dunham, who looked at redlining. And there's some really neat issues that you can look at, like there's the grades. So you can look at one side of the border or the other.

[01:23:03.30] But there's actually a city size threshold, where cities above a certain line had maps that had redlining, and others didn't. And so you could look at that, as well. So you can get within city effect versus the cross city. So yeah, so I think that's right.

[01:23:19.92] One could look at like, if all the cities above a certain size had these redlining maps, which are particularly detrimental to Black individuals, that's going to be captured, technically, by fixed effects in the analysis. So you have city fixed effects. And then, what you're doing is looking at changes over time. But I would say the big thing is that's a whole other research agenda, that at least quantitatively hasn't really been fully fleshed out and so to understand the effects, so yeah.

[01:23:51.96] JALEH: Thank you.

[01:23:52.90] NATHAN NUNN: Yeah.

[01:23:54.53] LAWRENCE BOBO: Again, moderator's prerogative, because I don't see any other hands up at the moment, but Nathan, what would you say to the idea out there that there's been reference to a kind of historical, cultural motif among African-Americans, that because of events like, say, the collapse of the Freedman's Bank or the Tulsa Massacre, that Black folks really couldn't count on being able to preserve their wealth, so that it changed a variety of strategies of adaptation? Do you see your results as reflecting this kind of cultural mode of adaptation, or is it really the more particular individual circumstances, those who had the wherewithal and the entrepreneurialness to leave versus those who stayed, if you can follow that question if it's clear enough.

[01:24:49.81] NATHAN NUNN: Yeah, Yeah, Yeah. Yeah, so I think, definitely, these are consistent with this cultural mode of adaptation, particularly the spillover effects. So the spillover effect, it's very unlikely those are because of economic linkages or people migrating or anything. There's no direct effect.

[01:25:06.54] But you're still seeing... But information and knowledge and stories, narratives are being disseminated, and that's affecting people's behavior. And it's completely rational, in some ways, but I think it's also cultural, that there are these instincts, this gut feeling that-- and people, you can't perfectly forecast probabilities, and so it's really-- I think it's this idea of culture affecting your values and beliefs. And it's actually consistent-- there's been some evidence of individuals who were forcibly displaced during World War I and World War II, and you get a similar effect, where you start to rely less on material goods and invest less in material goods, and you invest more in education, you invest--

[01:25:52.47] LAWRENCE BOBO: That's right.

[01:25:52.80] NATHAN NUNN: --more in people. Yeah, you place more value in people. You place more value in your relationships. And I think that's exactly what's happening. The census doesn't have questions on how much do you value people relationships.

[01:26:06.60] LAWRENCE BOBO: Right.

[01:26:10.38] NATHAN NUNN: But one idea we have is amongst individuals today who are descended from individuals who experienced the massacre, then maybe we can measure some of these things using surveys and that sort of thing. But yeah, I would agree. I think that would be my best guess based on the evidence is the story.

[01:26:26.49] LAWRENCE BOBO: Great. Thank you. Thank you. Really wonderful, innovative piece of work. With that--

[01:26:32.45] NATHAN NUNN: Thanks so much.

[01:26:33.69] LAWRENCE BOBO: Yep. Let me turn to our next speaker, is Stefanie Stantcheva, who is working on immigrant economic mobility and support for redistribution. Stefanie.

[01:26:45.45] STEFANIE STANTCHEVA: Thank you so much, Larry. And this is right in the continuation of what Nathan was saying, since it's actually a project that's also joint with him. And thank you so much for the support of the Inequality in America Initiative. It's been really, really critical for this project. And let me also say, since I'm the last one here, how impressed I am by the research of my colleagues at Harvard. It's really a privilege to be in such a group.

[01:27:12.68] So the starting point of this project is actually another recent project that I want to tell you about, just to set the stage. So let me take a little detour into it. So a few years ago, my colleague, Alberto Alesina and Edoardo Teso, who's now at Northwestern, we asked, what's the link between intergenerational mobility, or rather perceived mobility, and preferred redistribution policies. Think of policies like progressive taxation, social insurance, transfers to low income households, et cetera.

[01:27:44.89] And there are existing theories out there that suggest that if you believe in equality of opportunity, so if you think that everyone has the same chances to start with, then you're more willing to tolerate inequality of outcomes. Because if you think that, well, everyone has the same opportunity to start with, then outcomes are more likely to be the result of individual merit and vice versa. But we wondered whether people are even aware of actually mobility, what mobility really is. And so we conducted several large-scale surveys in five countries, France, Italy, Sweden, the UK, and the US. And we tried to elicit people's views on mobility.

[01:28:24.28] And so the way we did it is with this ladder design here, which was after quite a bit of trial and error, because eliciting things like probabilities, as many of you know, is quite difficult. So what we did is to explain to people that these ladders represent on the left, the income distribution of the parents. And so they're asked to imagine 500 families that represent, say, the US population. And these families are ranked from the poorest 100 at the bottom, to the 100 richest at the top, so representing the quintiles, essentially, of the income distribution.

[01:28:59.26] And to the right, we have the children's income distribution, again ranging from the 100 poorest to the 100 richest. So this is when children grow up, where do they expect to land in the income distribution? And so we asked, people take 100 kids from the bottom poorest families, and please allocate them to all these five rungs of the ladder. Where do you think these children will end up?

[01:29:21.32] And so we find a lot of interesting results across countries. Now, let me show you one of them, which is comparing across the different countries, what is people's perceived probability of this American dream idea, which is, what do people think is the probability of making it from rags to riches, from the very bottom to the very top? So you can see on this figure here, which shows you one dot per country in the sample. On the horizontal axis, you have the actual probability of moving from the bottom to the top. And then, on the vertical axis, you have the average perception of respondents in that country.

[01:30:00.34] So what you can see, first of all, is that in general, European countries are much more mobile than the US, even according to this American dream metric. And in addition, the European countries are slightly too pessimistic. So you see that I've labeled the bottom panel as pessimistic, because here, people tend to underestimate the chance of making it relative to

reality. And the upper panel is optimistic. So in the US, people are actually really overoptimistic about this American dream idea and this probability of really making it, so very, very starkly overestimate this.

[01:30:42.60] And we also found another puzzling thing, this time focusing only on the US, which is can you compare mobility perceptions across different places in the US? And you can see that actually, to the left, these are the true probabilities of making it from the bottom to the top, averaged for each state. So this is data from my colleague, Raj Chetty, at Opportunity Insights. And on the right, you have, on the same scale, same color scale, the average perception of mobility in these states.

[01:31:13.41] And first of all, you can see that the right is uniformly darker. So people are overoptimistic everywhere, pretty much. We see that. But they're particularly overoptimistic in exactly those places where mobility is the lowest, so for instance here, in the southeastern part of the US, where people starkly overestimate the chances. So this idea of the American dream seems to be very salient in places which actually are the least mobile.

[01:31:39.98] And then, some other things that we found is that people's views on how much effort, your own individual effort, shapes this mobility is very consistent across countries. So people tend to think that effort will get you sort of out of poverty and into the middle class, but it won't get you to the very top. The US tends to think more so than European countries that effort will help, but even there, people are not convinced that this is necessarily what will get you to the very top.

[01:32:10.34] And so how does this actually matter for policies? So what we found was that there's actually very strong, if you want, bipartisan consensus that lack of opportunity is a bad thing. So people agree, in general, that it's not great if children's outcomes are strongly correlated to their parents outcomes. But people's favorite solution to the problem looks radically different whether you're on the left or on the right.

[01:32:37.61] So in general, people who are more on the left and who are pessimistic about mobility, they want more government intervention through redistribution. So they want more social insurance, more progressive taxes, and especially more so-called equality of opportunity policies, things like spending on education or health. And this is confirmed, if you want, by an experiment. If you show people, a randomly selected subsample, information on mobility and telling them that mobility is actually pretty low, this increases their support for redistribution.

[01:33:11.17] But for right-wing respondents, that link is not there at all. And we can map this back to people on the right tending to view the government as part of the problem, rather than the solution. So people on the right tend to believe that a better way to improve equality of opportunity is actually less government intervention. Sort of let the market function, let things function without any government control. And this can be mapped, of course, to long standing attitudes about government and to other work that shows that your views about what the government should be doing and individual freedoms is really critical to influence your views on policies.

[01:33:48.05] And so this project actually, as a starting point, led us to think and try to dig further into these core ideas about mobility, opportunity, the role of effort and more generally, what you want to do about lack of opportunity or inequality. And we try to see whether we can dig a bit deeper and further into where these views come from. And that led us to the question about how your own history and your family's history and past experiences, basically your whole ancestry, shape your core views on these issues, like equality of opportunity, inequality, and redistribution. So merging a bit what Nathan's historical approach here with my own approach on surveys and views on policies, and trying to go back in time into history.

[01:34:39.25] And let me also take one slight detour into the method that we're using. It's a method that many of you here are familiar with, but that's basically large-scale surveys, surveys that are trying to go in depth into people's minds. And I really liked what Professor Johnson and Lamont said, because it's very much consistent with what I had on this slide. It's a way to listen to people. And it's a way to actually understand what people's considerations are, which are otherwise pretty invisible in other observational data.

[01:35:14.23] And this is actually very complementary to the approaches of in-depth interviews that we heard about earlier on, that are really important. This is a way to do things at a larger scale-- of course, less in depth, but still quite much more in depth than other data that we have, and to be able to combine it with quantitative data to actually analyze things in a very systematic way. And it's a way to get at things that are completely invisible in other data, like perceptions, attitudes, knowledge, and views. And so we're always paying a lot of attention to getting well-designed, carefully calibrated surveys that are deployed on appropriate samples.

[01:35:56.47] So let me tell you how far we've come on this project, despite the COVID challenges, which actually were non-trivial here. So what we do in this survey is to launch this on nationally representative samples, which are asked about these following key blocks here listed. So we asked people about their location history, so where they've lived through time.

[01:36:22.21] We asked them very detailed question about their ancestry, so about their parents and also their grandparents in terms of where they were born, where they spend time, and also, what their level of education, occupation, and income is. And although the information that people remember is not perfect, we end up with very good information. And we let people the chance to write things, sort of in open text boxes, so that if they give us just the city name, but they don't know a county or something, we can actually map it back to where the parents or the grandparents were from.

[01:36:57.05] And then, we asked people a range of questions about mobility, their views on mobility, about key government policies on redistribution, something that I'll talk about which turned out to be very important, the idea of zero-sum mentality, which is, do they tend to view groups in competition with another, whether it's income groups, groups by nationality, by race, et cetera? Or do they tend to have a non-zero-sum mentality, where they view things as being cooperative and things being a positive sum, groups contributing to one another? And then, a whole range of other views in different modules of the survey about your views on race, on immigration, on gender, et cetera. So the goal was very much one of big data collection here on someone's personal and family history and their detailed views on a range of issues.

[01:37:50.66] So far we've done four waves, and we have a bit more than 11,000 respondents. And we're able to assign a lot of people, as I said, although it's not perfect, to their own location, to their own history, but also their parents' and grandparents' history. And so if we look at the samples we cover in the US, and that's something that we're basically still working on, is to cover the regions which were not able to get too many survey respondents yet in, the states here, which appear in lighter, that's basically what we're trying to do these days. Or if you look at the county level even, where we have actually quite a bit of counties represented, and again, struggling in some of the states and some of the areas which we definitely have to fill with more survey collection.

[01:38:40.35] But given the data we already have, we can already see some really interesting results. And so let me show you some of the key findings we have, starting from that core idea about historical immigration that was the topic of the paper and how that shaped your views. So we can look at what happens if you or your parents or your grandparents lived in counties that had an inflow of immigrants at the time when the big immigration waves happened, between 1860 and 1920. So the first graph here is if in your own county of birth, there is this big history of immigration. So the horizontal axis tells you the foreign share in your county of birth.

[01:39:25.26] And then, we're going to look at the relationship between this foreign share and a range of views that you may hold. So the most natural is, perhaps, do you think that the number of documented immigrants coming to live in the US should be increased, or should there be more immigration? And you see a very strong positive correlation between the county's share of foreigners and then your own views on that.

[01:39:48.66] If you look at your own views and then your parents' county of birth, so where your parents basically grew up, how many immigrants were there, or how many foreigners were there in those big waves of immigration, that's also positively related to your views. And if we go back one generation in the right panel, to the grandparents' generation, that is also very strongly related to your own views today. So this is just a correlation. And I'm going to tell you in a second how we're going to make this more causal, but where your family spent time and what they witnessed is very much shaping the views of several generations down.

[01:40:27.93] We can see the same relation for other types of perceptions, so for instance, this idea about how much your hard work and effort will pay off. That's very related to mobility. That's strongly positively related to the foreign share, as well. Essentially, people who lived among, historically, in countries [counties?] that historically had a lot of immigration, are people that believe in the effect of hard work and effort quite a bit.

[01:40:56.60] Similarly, do people believe that the government should reduce inequality? Yes, people are more willing to help others that are worse off in these counties that had historically higher immigrant shares. And again, the relation is very strong, even going back to your grandparents' county of birth.

[01:41:15.47] And then, if we look at this idea of zero-sum thinking, are you a zero-sum-thinking person, do you think groups gain at the expense of others, there's really no relation. It's very flat. And in fact, if we split this into components, so if we start quizzing you about zero-sum thinking

along different dimensions, so is there a zero sum between immigrants and non-immigrants, is there zero-sum among different racial groups, is there zero sum among people of different incomes, you actually see that when it comes to citizens and non-citizens, so when you ask people, if non-US citizens do better economically, is this at the expense of US citizens, people who have been surrounded, historically, by immigrants say no. They're less likely to say that it's a zero-sum game between sort of foreigners and US citizens. So that relation is very much there.

[01:42:11.15] And then, I could show you more graphs, but there's a lot of views that are very strongly related to this, ranging from support for universal health care to other government interventions to equalize opportunities for poor and rich children, and so on. And so, as I promised, these are all correlations, but we have a way to actually make this much more causal, which we're working on, and for which we actually need to fill up some more counties here, to get better variation.

[01:42:39.03] But in the preliminary results, it very much holds. We are just lacking a bit of power. So we can use the historical railroads network, that has been spreading throughout these counties and in the US geographically, as a shifter of the immigrant share that was brought during those immigration waves. And that's a way to actually vary, if you want, the local immigration share, and get us at this effect more causally.

[01:43:05.87] And so after looking at these things, which was sort of the original goal, we realized there are so many things that are correlated with the history of your family that we would like to look at, as well. And although we're not, by any means, not done with it, we decided to dig further into some other patterns. And so let me just give you a very brief glimpse of the type of things that we're exploring.

[01:43:30.86] One of them is, for instance, this idea of, and something that's, again, very peculiar to the US experience, is this idea of having been at the frontier of the US. So have you spent time, or are you in a county that has spent time on the American frontier? The American frontier has shifted over time, and we know exactly which counties at which time were at the frontier and how long they spend there. And we can see, if you are born in a county that used to be a frontier county, or again, if your parents were born in a county that used to be in a frontier county, does that shape your views? And we actually see that it shapes some of their views quite fundamentally.

[01:44:10.97] So for instance, one of them is, I know, a topical issue for so many years now-- should there be stricter laws covering the sale of firearms? And people who are basically from frontier counties say no, are very strongly against more gun control. And you can see that this holds whether we look at their parents' county of birth or their grandparents' county of birth. So several generations down, that frontier experience is clearly still shaping people's ideas. And then, if we ask them about should we increase the number of immigrants, well, contrary to the people who are in high-immigration counties, historically, people who are on frontier counties say no, very strongly against more immigration in the US.

[01:44:57.78] We can see other relations, for instance, here, this idea of the zero sum between citizens and non-citizens. Well, people in frontier counties are significantly more zero-sum. They

tend to think if non-US citizens do better, it's at the expense of US citizens. So if you want, a very, very different sort of family experience that shapes your views in almost the opposite direction of people who were historically in counties with more immigrants.

[01:45:26.63] And then, some other things we looked at are the effect of veteran status. So there's been a lot of wars over the time when the parents, the grandparents, and even the respondent themselves was alive. And so we can look at your own veteran status on your views, and also whether your parents or grandparents were enrolled in the wars that happened. And again, here, there's actually ways to make these statements more causally by actually looking at the draft rules and whether people were in a given age group, from a given state, et cetera. So that's what we're working towards.

[01:46:03.21] But even if we just look at the correlation, and we look at, for instance, the various outcomes here in each of these three panels-- on the left, do you have a zero sum thinking in general? Do you think success is your own merit? Is it it's mostly effort rather than luck?

[01:46:21.17] And then, should the government try to reduce income differences? We can see that in the earlier wars, so the wars which were basically through draft and where people, the parents or the grandparents were enrolled, those tend to make people less zero-sum. They make them think that it's not your fault if you're doing poorly, there's a lot of things that are outside of your control, and make them, also, less supportive of government intervention.

[01:46:48.60] On the other hand, there's completely opposite effects of your own veteran status, which we think is related to the nature of the more recent wars being completely different from the previous ones, and there not being a draft anymore. So this makes you think in very, very different directions. So another thing that is clearly very, very important in shaping people's views and that we also want to explore.

[01:47:16.01] So in a nutshell, the data collection has been the major effort so far. We think it's really exciting to have detailed information on someone's family history, and together with a range of core policy views and fundamental attitudes. And much more work to do, but the patterns so far are really interesting. And it seems that many attitudes and views are influenced by your family's history, sometimes in radically different directions.

[01:47:42.74] And we're very excited to keep pushing this further. And thank you so much, again, for the support of the IAI. Thank you.

[01:47:51.73] LAWRENCE BOBO: Thank you so much, Stefanie. That's utterly fascinating, and as you know, very close to my own heart, having done a lot of work on these issues. Let's see if there are questions around the Zoom. Professor Gates, is that a new hand or a residual hand?

[01:48:08.53] HENRY GATES: Yes, sir, Mr. Dean, it is a new hand.

[01:48:11.09] LAWRENCE BOBO: OK.

[01:48:12.07] HENRY GATES: Stefanie, it was fascinating, really riveting. My question has to do with history in relationship to ancestry, I mean broad stroke history. Your map of actual and perceived probability, if we chopped off the area of west of the Mississippi, looks like a map of the Civil War.

[01:48:31.84] STEFANIE STANTCHEVA: Mm-hmm.

[01:48:33.55] HENRY GATES: All the whites states, the blank states were the Confederacy, with West Virginia having branched off from Virginia in 1863, with that exception, more or less. I mean, what's that about?

[01:48:48.09] STEFANIE STANTCHEVA: Yeah. No, I think, I mean, this is actually the map that started us on that, in a sense, because it seemed to indicate this is not about today. This is stuff that goes way back in time. And we really want to explore that further.

[01:49:06.16] I did some recent work on, if you tried to split this by Black and white respondents and also try to split it by what do people think about Black mobility versus white mobility, you also see very different patterns there. So basically, white respondents tend to drastically overestimate how easy it is for Black children to make it, very starkly. And then, Black children also tend to-- sorry Black respondents also tend to overestimate mobility for white children. They're too optimistic about that, too. But the furthest from reality is basically how easy people think it is for Black children to make it, which is completely offline.

[01:49:48.04] And that could be also pushing up this average data relative to the reality, which is people are just not aware of the lack of opportunity for Black children in those areas. So I think plenty to do. And I don't have the answer for you. But I think history is one of the, definitely, things to go in.

[01:50:07.06] I didn't show it here, because we didn't have great results yet, but we did ask people about their family's history as relates to slavery, including what they know about their ancestors having enslaved other people or themselves having ancestors that were enslaved. And we have a range of questions on racial attitudes today as well. So we do want to create the map between those. So yeah, not enough time in a day, and really things we want to explore. Thank you.

[01:50:39.93] LAWRENCE BOBO: Yeah, well, maybe as moderator, I will leap in again and ask, what implications do you see this work as having for the kind of argument made in the book Deep Roots-- How Slavery Still Shapes Southern Politics? And if I remember at the beginning, are you working with Avidit Acharya? Is he involved with this project? No, he's not, neither Matt Blackwell or Maya Sen, none are connected to this?

[01:51:03.78] STEFANIE STANTCHEVA: Maybe we should involve them all. Yeah.

[01:51:08.64] LAWRENCE BOBO: OK, because it-- aspects of what you reported strongly resonate with the story that they try to tell in their book.

[01:51:18.72] STEFANIE STANTCHEVA: Absolutely. I think there's a lot of connections here. And I think what we're trying to do is bring, basically, bigger data to this, to all these questions, having the detailed data on, at the individual level, really, of where someone was, where their ancestors were, what they did, and their views today. A lot of the studies, because of a lack of data that combines this whole family history and your views today, has to be at, for instance, the county level or a much more aggregated level. And so I think the stories will not necessarily be new at all. Probably, they will actually confirm a lot of the research that people have done to trace this back. But actually at the very fine individual level, which will also hopefully help us make more causal statements, the way that Nathan showed for the Tulsa Massacre, when you have fine grain data, you're able to control for many things. And hopefully that will help us get at the causality as well.

[01:52:18.93] LAWRENCE BOBO: Yeah, thank you. Well, let me open it up and in particular, ask first, if panelists have any questions for one another, if we can allow that to happen, or if the whole session, the full kind of gestalt sinks in, if there are other questions generated from the audience that may connect talks or the thoughts that are sparked by having seen the four presentations. Hi, Cynthia, back to you.

[01:52:59.05] CYNTHIA: Yeah, sorry, I don't want to take away if panelists have time. But I was wondering, I know I missed a little bit of it. I'm sorry I had to be in and out a little bit. But I know a couple of people talked about interaction with students. And I was just wondering if the panelists could talk about if there has been impact in the classroom, specifically, think ways that you can bring these lessons or questions even into the classroom.

[01:53:26.14] LAWRENCE BOBO: Yeah.

[01:53:27.47] STEFANIE STANTCHEVA: I can maybe say a word quickly on this. I think in terms of this type of work, that actually tries to survey people on a range of attitudes and perceptions, I feel like that has opened a lot of possibilities for students who are really excited about it. Basically, it doesn't constrain them to use existing data, which has limitations in terms of getting at these invisible things, and I feel like has motivated a lot of them to actually dive into these core questions that they're really interested in. I mean, so many students are shocked by the inequality, by the disparities, and really crave a way to answering these questions, and I think, felt very constrained by, at least speaking for economics by our usual methods, in a sense. So I feel a lot of enthusiasm for this.

[01:54:20.25] LAWRENCE BOBO: Great. And Michèle, I was going to cold call you anyway, Michèle, so I'm glad you put your hand up.

[01:54:27.39] MICHÈLE LAMONT: I can always count on you, Larry. Thank you for-- yeah. I'm teaching a new course, Sociology 1190, where actually, the term paper is they're supposed to do research on an agent of change that is influencing them and talking about the ways in which this cultural producer or activist or whatever is producing new scripts that is doing the kind of work that I talked about today, in terms of giving different scripts of hope.

[01:54:59.25] And it's been quite interesting to teach this course this semester. Of course, it's a perilous exercise, because the fine distinctions they make in terms of the kind of words that you should use and not use. It's a very complex landscape, especially when you talk about recognition, which is something extremely dear to them. And they think that they really own this. So it's very easy for me to put my foot in it.

[01:55:27.75] And there was a session last week on Gen Zs, and this is extremely complicated, because they just don't want a boomer to talk about Gen Zs. It's their topic. So I can tell you, it's baptism by fire, very complicated.

[01:55:43.48] But anyway, I think it's a great learning experience for me and for them. And it's really helping me to develop my book. I'm in the process of finishing it. I'm in the last two months.

[01:55:53.73] And I must say, what happened on campus over the last few weeks has really also taught me the ways in which they think about how institutions enable and constrains recognition. The constraints part has become much more salient. So I'm not going to talk about this too much, but I think it's worth mentioning the reflexivity element of the course in the context in which I'm teaching now.

[01:56:18.11] LAWRENCE BOBO: All right, thank you, Michèle. I encourage you to get a Chaka Khan album and play "Through the Fire," and you will make it.

[01:56:25.97] MICHÈLE LAMONT: If you took the class--

[01:56:27.59] LAWRENCE BOBO: But listen--

[01:56:27.71] MICHÈLE LAMONT: --that's what you would rock.

[01:56:30.39] LAWRENCE BOBO: Let me thank you all, Walter, for the job you've done, Michèle, Nathan, Stefanie. This was a fantastic realization of the investment the Inequality project has made in your work. And I think we're coming up now on what will be our fifth cohort of postdoctoral fellows who we've just selected. There have been four rounds of research support. And we are underway with the new one now.

[01:57:03.24] And so these are truly exciting times. And so I will ask each of you, but especially Nathan and Stefanie, if your projects have any room for a modestly statistically skilled sociologist. But this is fabulous.

[01:57:22.40] Thank you all so much. Thank you all for joining us today. And I don't know if Dean Gay, if you wanted to make any final comment?

[01:57:31.10] CLAUDINE GAY: No, that was fabulous. Thank you so much for sharing that work and also for just the clear engagement of the audience here. These are terrific questions.

[01:57:41.34] LAWRENCE BOBO: Excellent. So till next time, everyone. Thank you all so much. And this will be put online on the Division of Social Science website, the transcript.

[01:57:51.36] STEFANIE STANTCHEVA: Thank you all.

[01:57:51.77] PRESENTER: Thank you.

[01:57:52.07] NATHAN NUNN: Bye.

[01:57:53.21] LAWRENCE BOBO: Bye- bye.