

Black Lives Matter

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What I will and will not talk about

- This talk is about racial inequality in mortality and how we value lives.
- The talk is *not* about the movement BLACK LIVES MATTER.
- It's about *how* "lives matter".
- I'll contrast two points of view on the value of lives: Epidemiology and Politics.
- **WARNING**: There will be disturbing images.

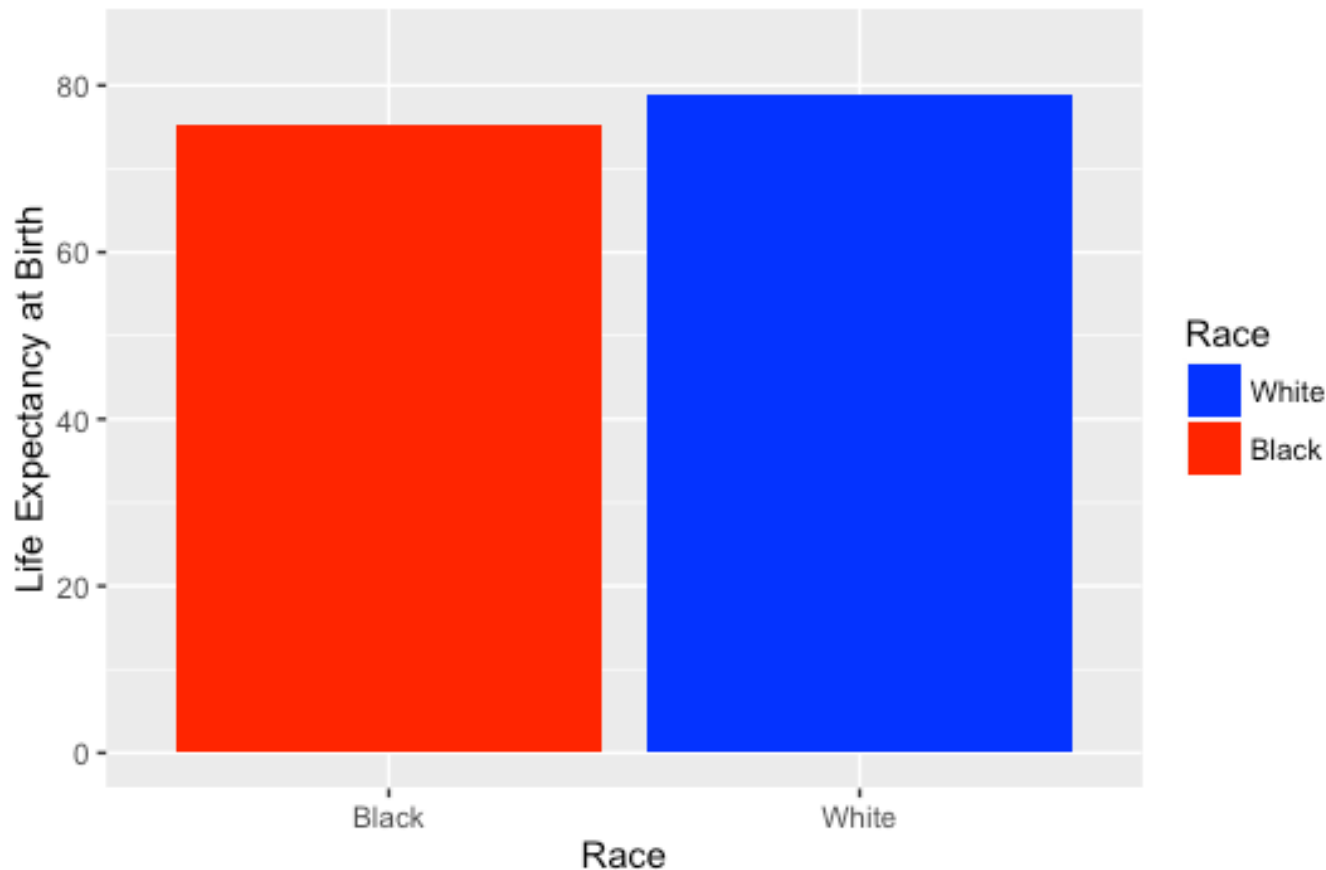


Eric
Garner;
NYC;
July 17,
2014.

The Epidemiological Point of View

- We count deaths and measure the lengths of lives.
- We compare populations on these measures.
- All lives count equally, regardless of how they die.

Life Expectancy by Race: 2011



Blacks had 3.7 fewer years life expectancy (5% less than whites).

CDC (2015).

http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr64/nvsr64_11.pdf

But:

$$\frac{640,000 \text{ births}}{\text{cohort}} \times \frac{3.7 \text{ years lost}}{\text{birth}} \approx \frac{2.4 \text{ million years lost}}{\text{cohort}}$$

This is roughly twice the total years of life lost each year due to smoking for the entire US population.

Moreover,

$$\frac{2.4 \text{ million years lost}}{\text{cohort}} \times \frac{\$100,000}{\text{year of life}}$$

$$= \frac{\$240 \text{ billion}}{\text{cohort}}.$$

This is greater than the total property damage attributable to automobile accidents each year.

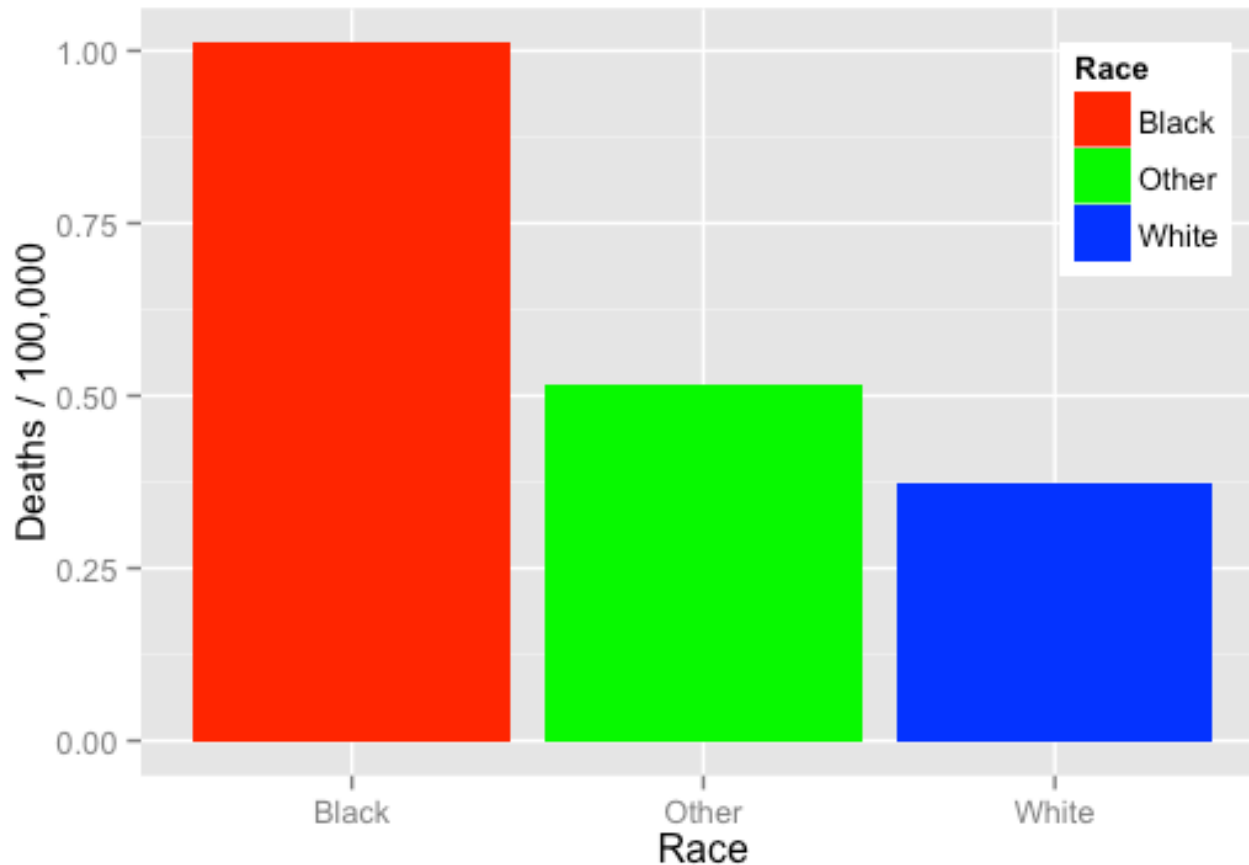


**Total damage of Hurricane Katrina
= \$135 billion.**

So:

$$\frac{\$240 \text{ billion/cohort}}{\$135 \text{ billion/Katrina}} \approx \frac{1.8 \text{ Katrinas}}{\text{cohort}}.$$

Killed by Police as Cause of Death: 2015

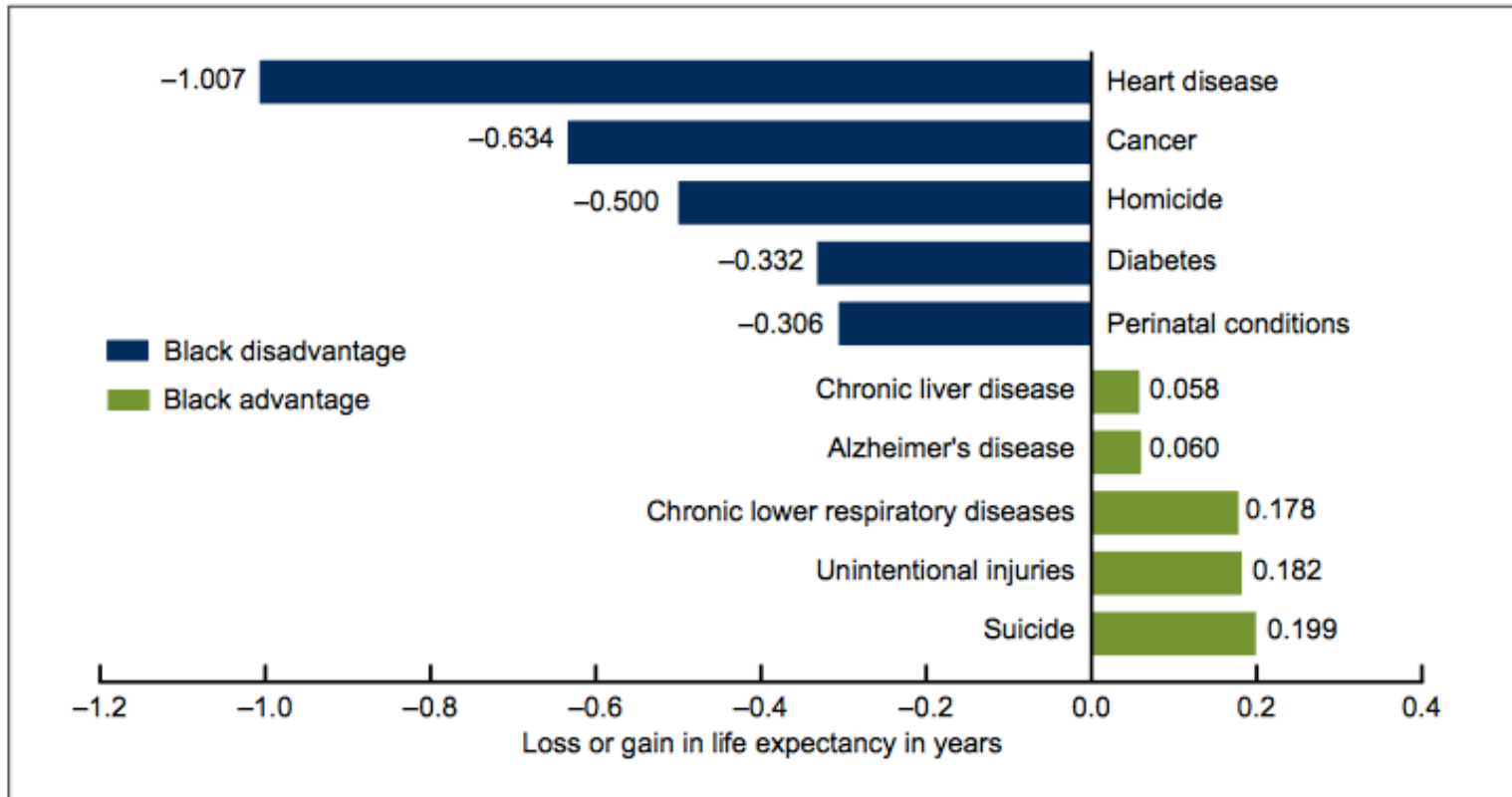


Relative Risk Blacks / Whites = 2.7.

But: death by police is only 0.1% of black deaths.

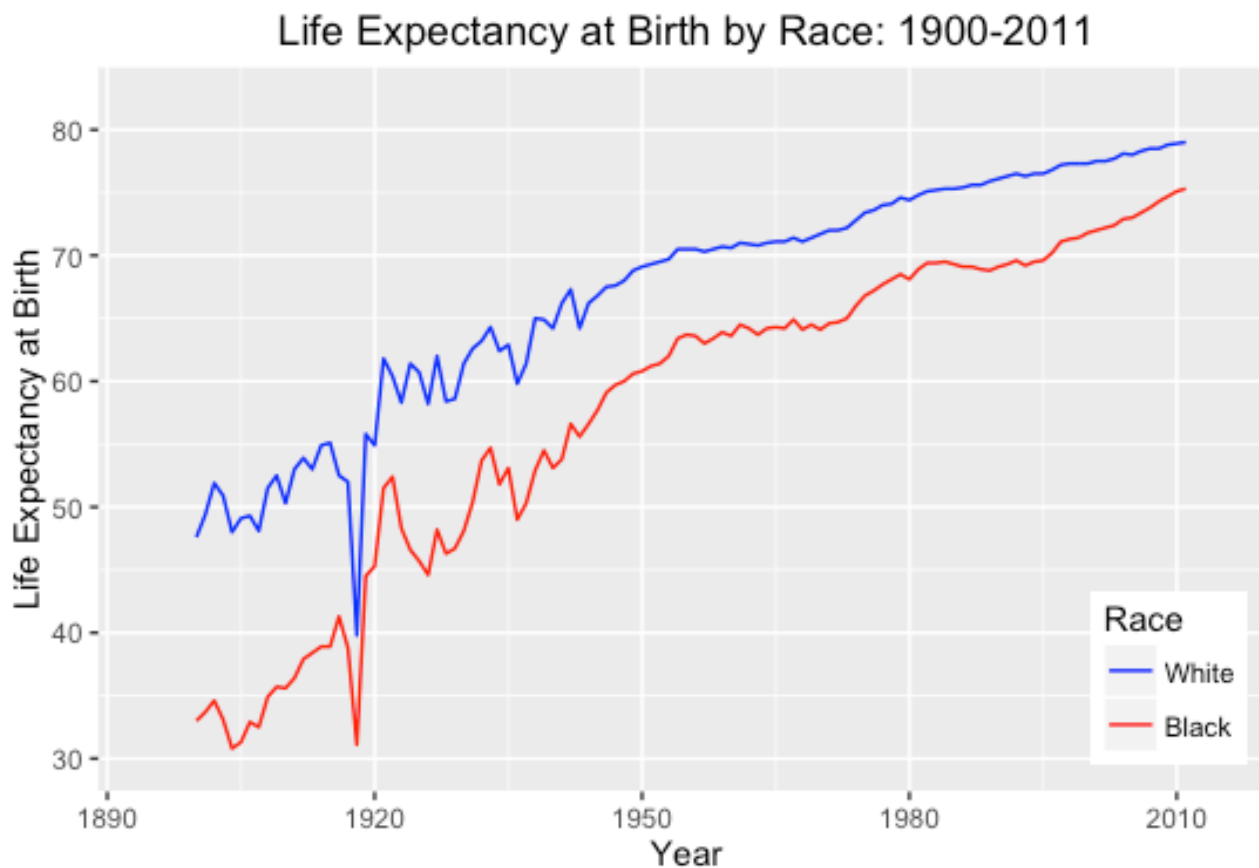
Race and Causes of Death: 2010

Figure 3. Contribution of the leading causes of death to the difference in life expectancy between black and white persons: United States, 2010



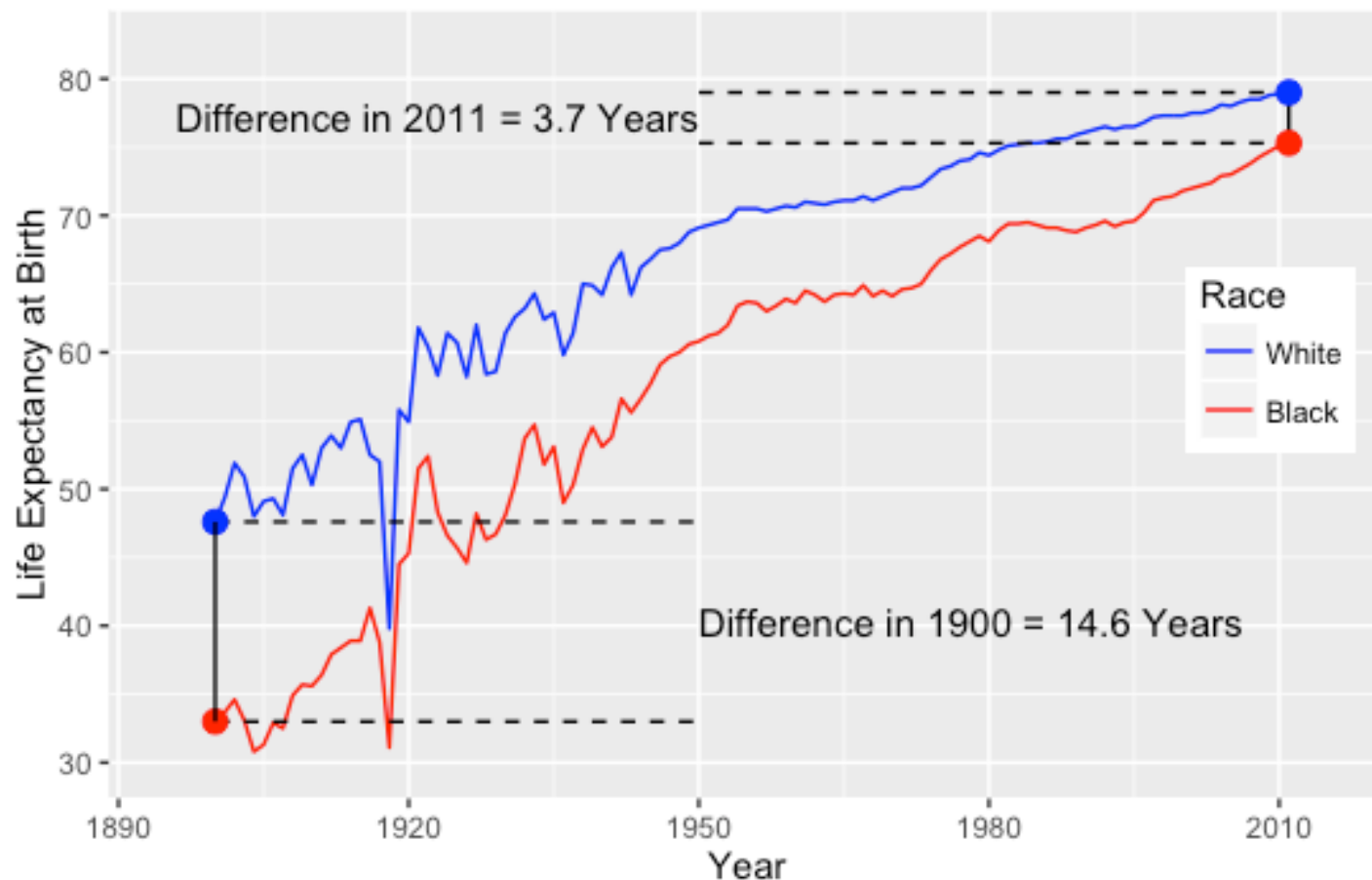
SOURCE: CDC/NCHS, National Vital Statistics System, Mortality.

Life Expectancies Are Rising

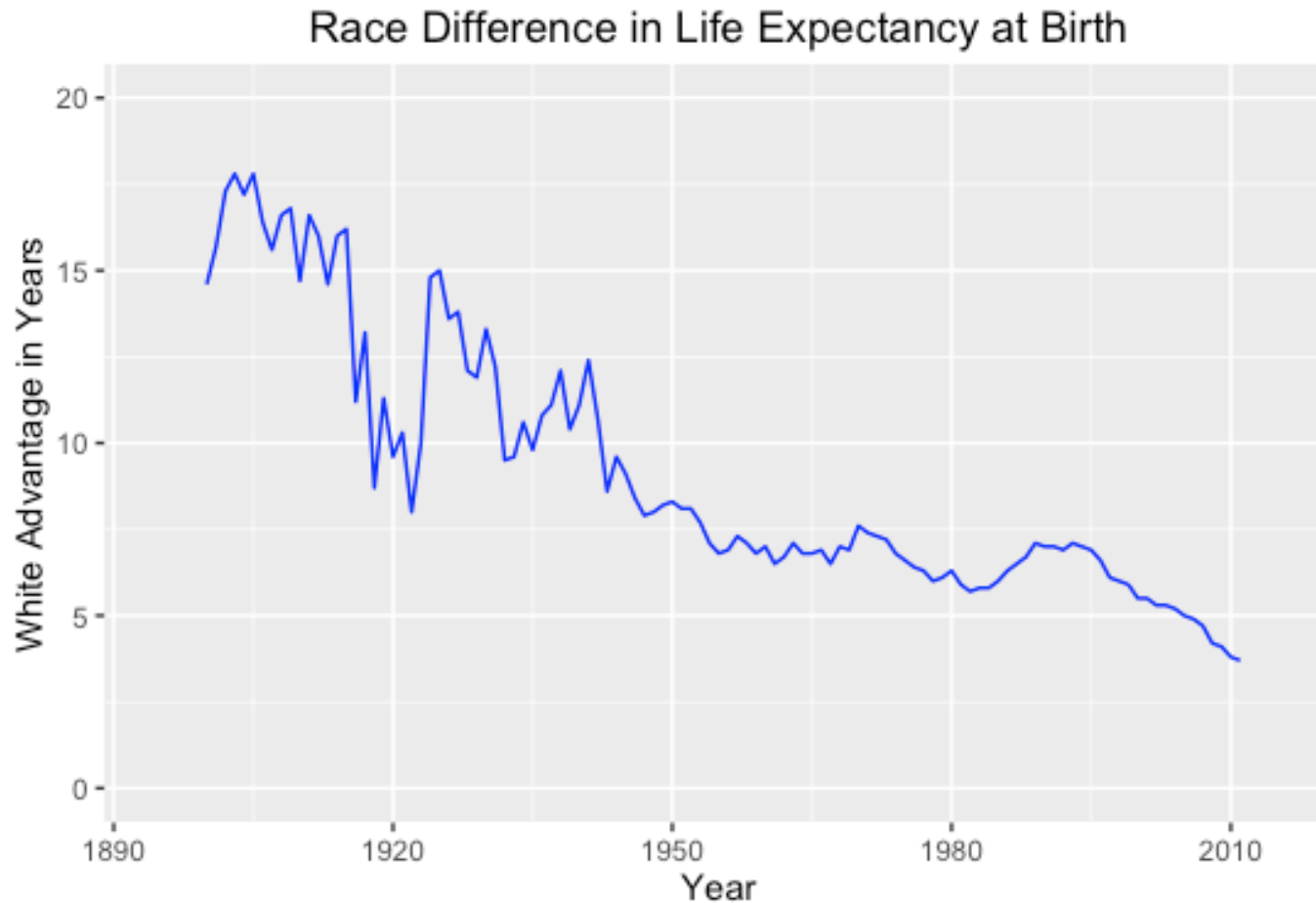


Race Differences in LE Are Falling

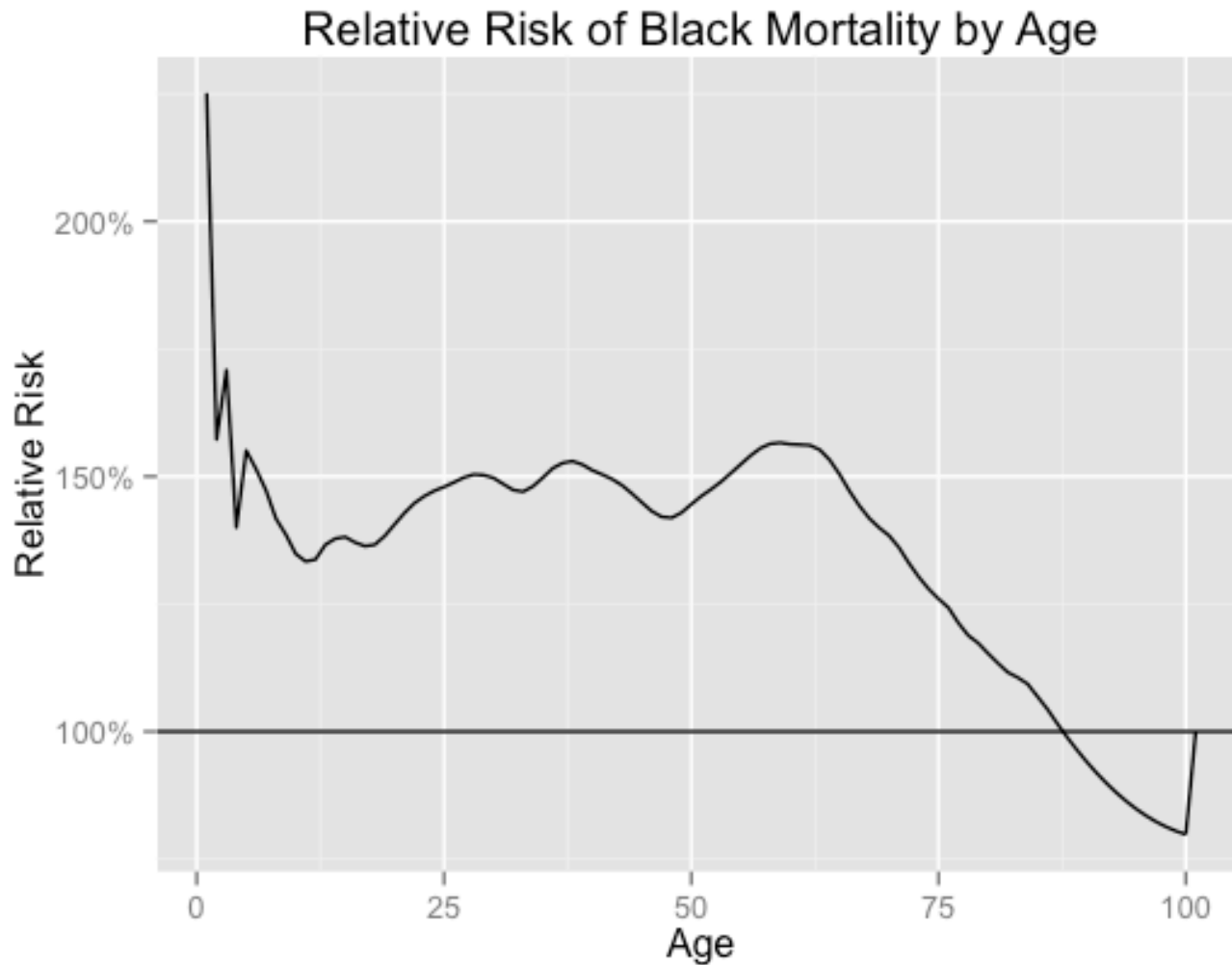
Life Expectancy at Birth by Race: 1900-2011



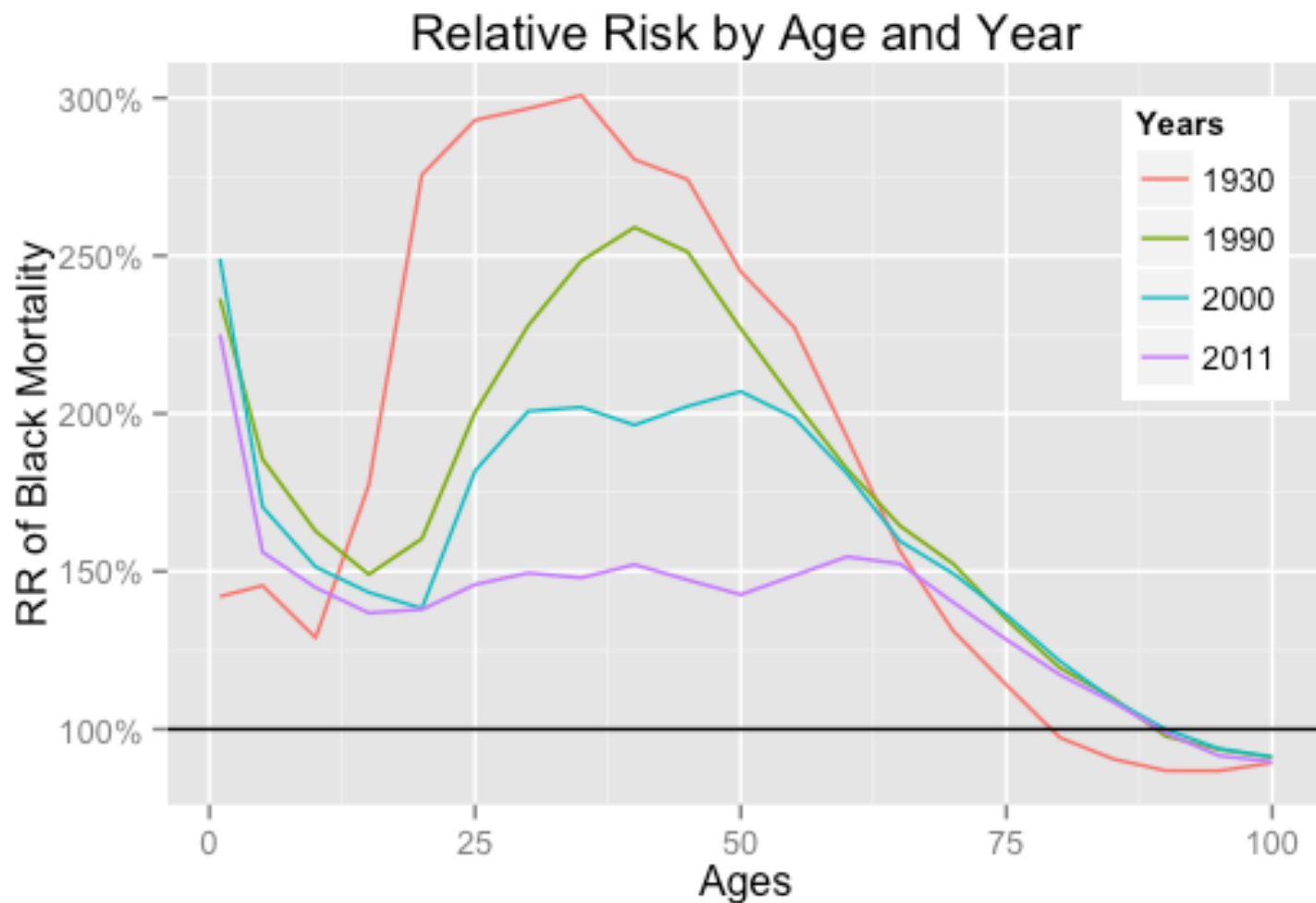
The Arc of the Moral Universe



Relative Mortality Risk by Age: 2011



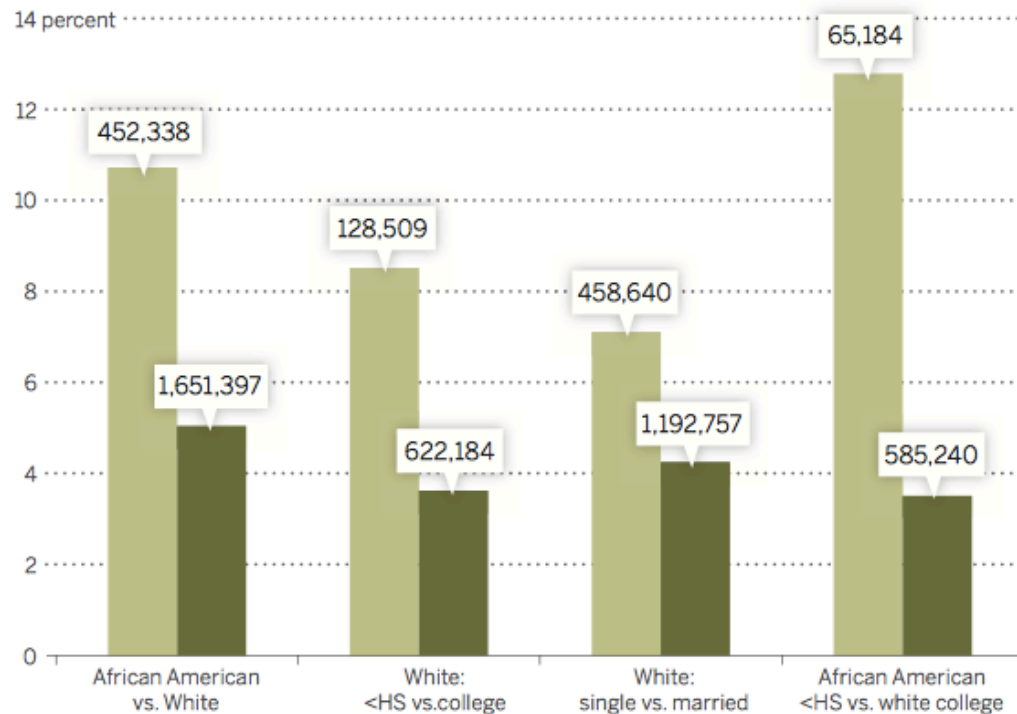
Historical Change in Relative Risk



Low Birth Weight: Race & Education

Differences in the percent of U.S. infants with birth weight <2500g, by maternal characteristics, 2011

Low birth weight



Alzer & Currie
(2016).
Science.

The Political Point of View

- Life is more than just how long it lasts. We have to think through what makes it valuable.
- The most important value in politics is freedom.

Freedom as Non-Domination

“a person is free to the extent that others do not stand over him or her, able to interfere at will and with relative impunity in his or her affairs.”

- Philip Petit

Domination and Respect

“A dominates B if A and B are embedded in a systematic relationship in which A takes advantage of his power over B... in a way that is disrespectful to B.”

- Nicholas Vrousalis



Torture of unknown slave by Captain John Kimber, 1793.



Prisoners at
a work
camp in
Thomasville
GA, 1870s.



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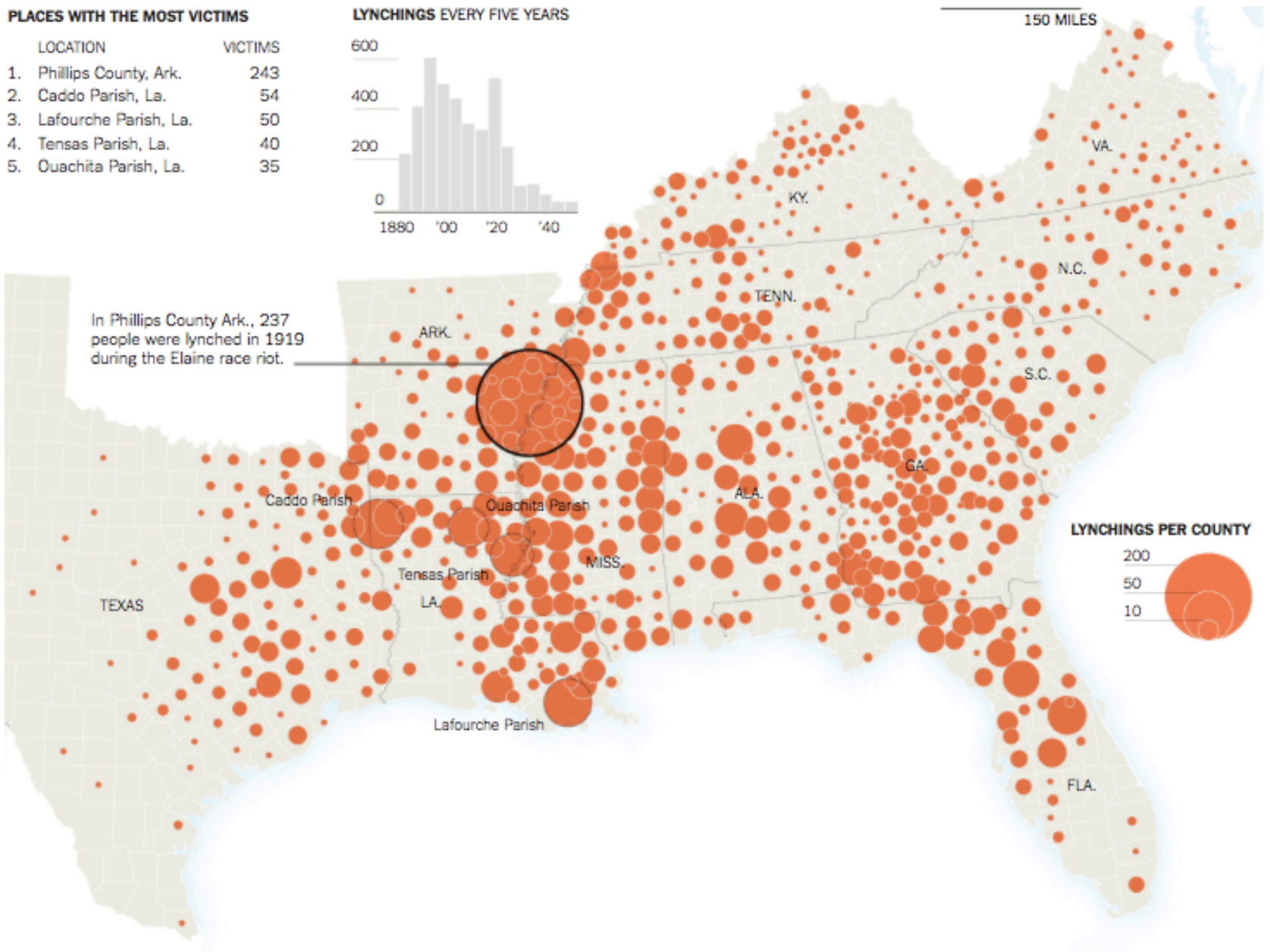
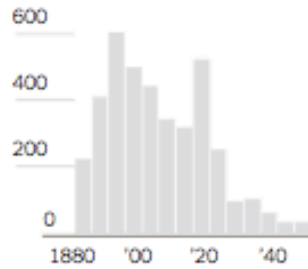


Elaine,
Arkansas;
October
1, 1919.

PLACES WITH THE MOST VICTIMS

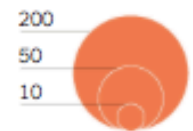
LOCATION	VICTIMS
1. Phillips County, Ark.	243
2. Caddo Parish, La.	54
3. Lafourche Parish, La.	50
4. Tensas Parish, La.	40
5. Ouachita Parish, La.	35

LYNCHINGS EVERY FIVE YEARS

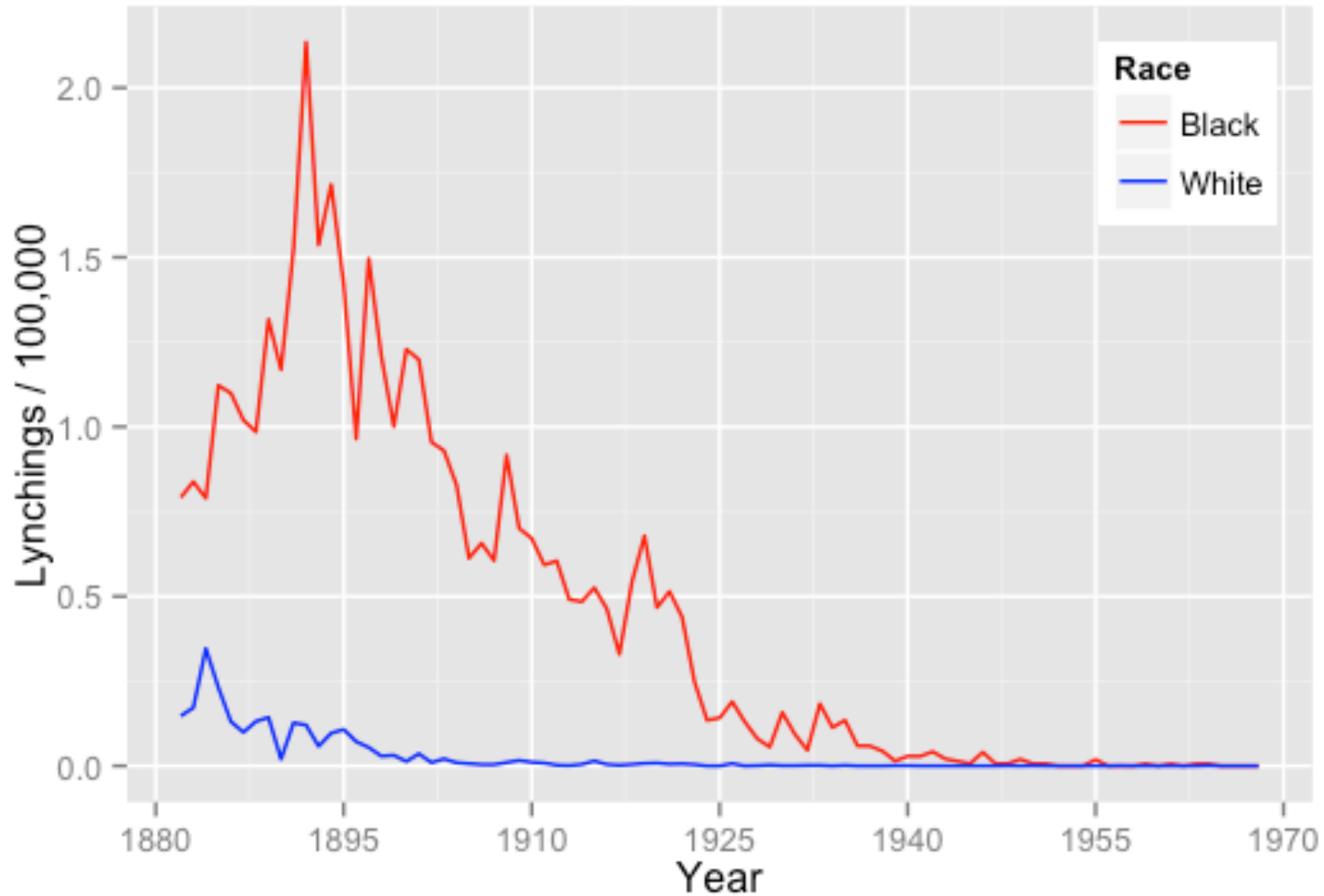


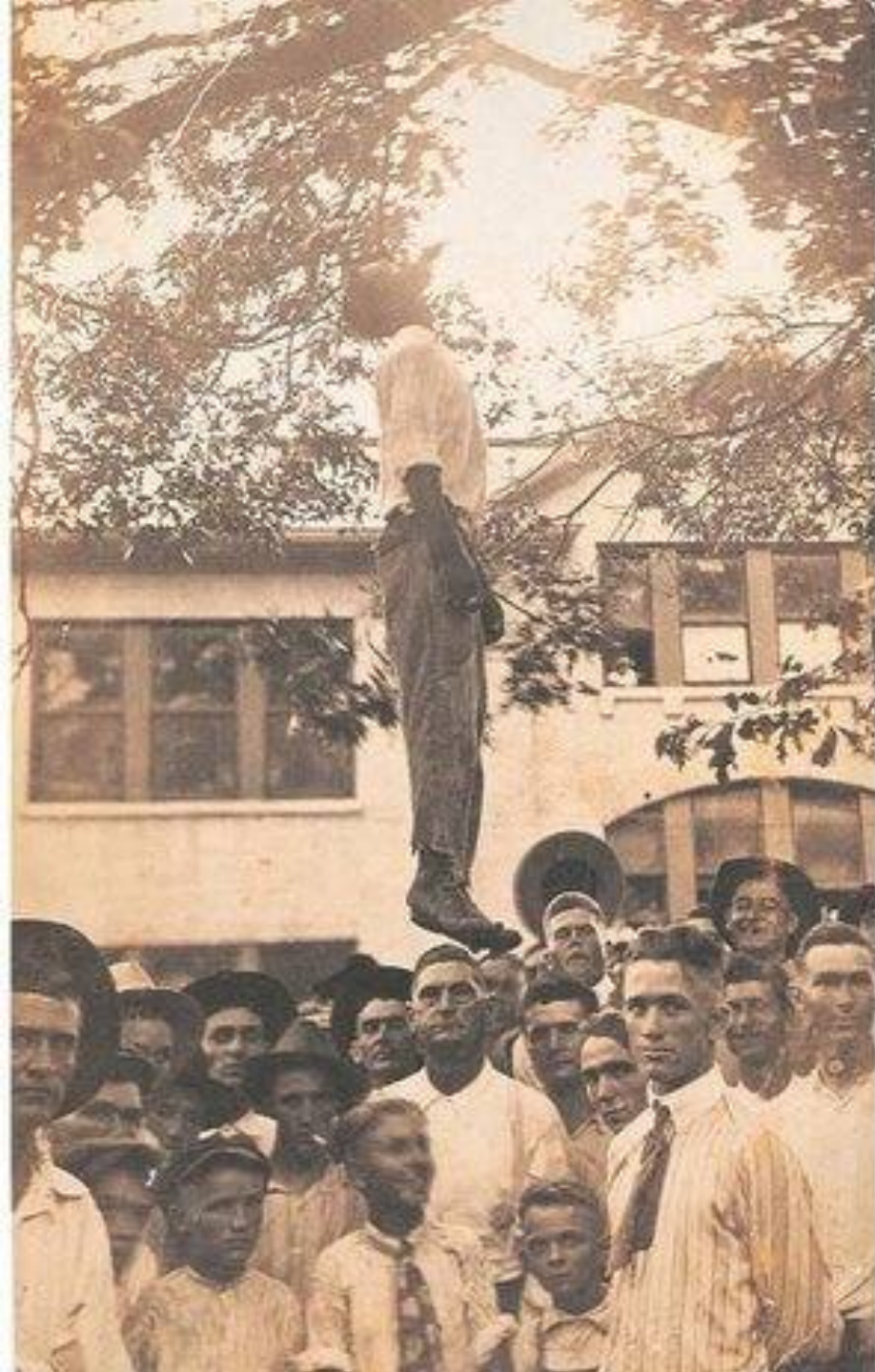
In Phillips County Ark., 237 people were lynched in 1919 during the Elaine race riot.

LYNCHINGS PER COUNTY



Lynchings by Race of Victim





Lige Daniels;
Center, Texas;
August 3, 1920.



Jesse Washington;
Waco, Texas; May
15, 1916.



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CHICAGO DEFENDER

Emmett
Till; killed
in Money,
Mississippi;
August 28,
1955.

Equal Justice

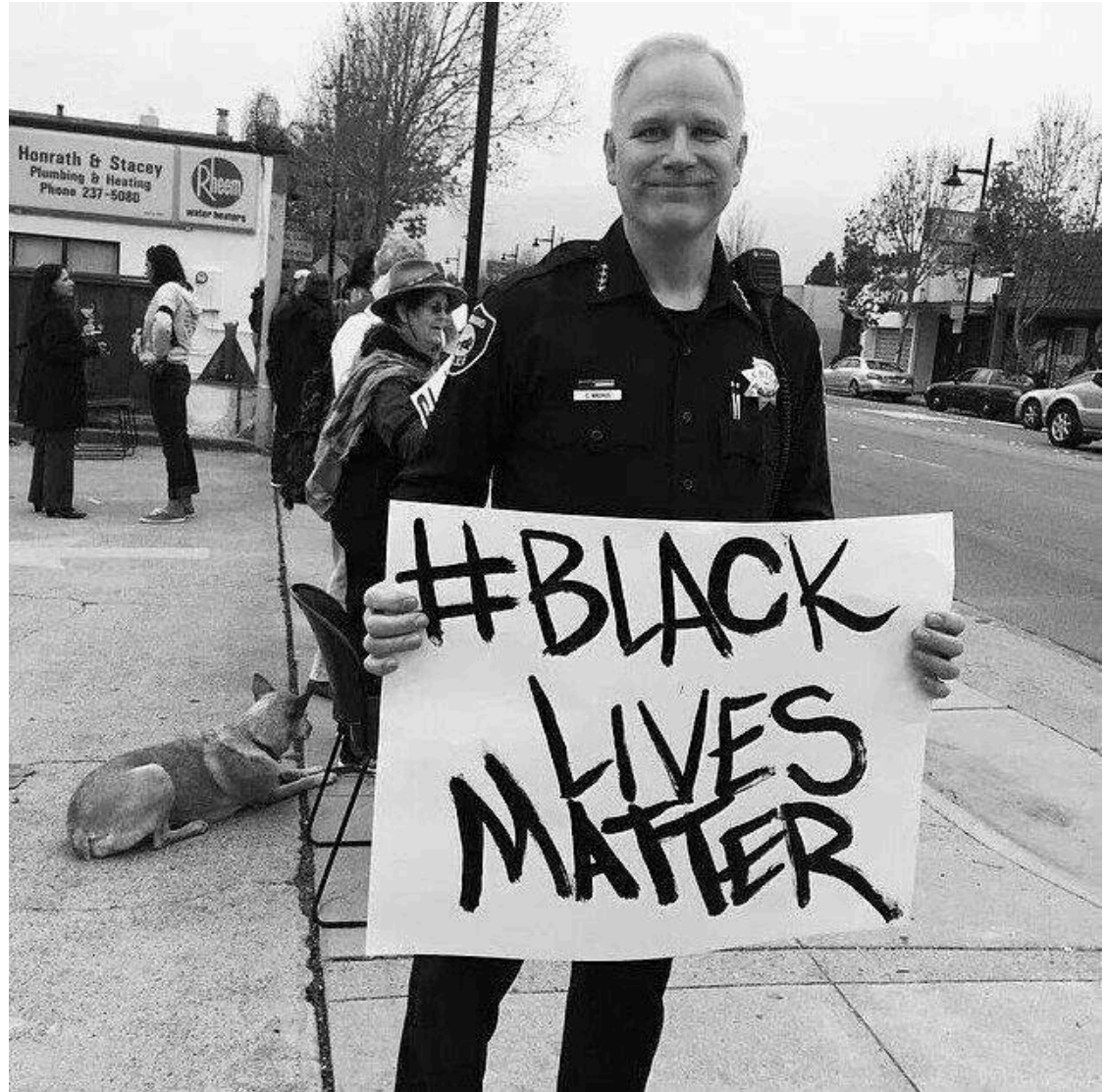
"If we look to the laws, they afford equal justice to all."

- Pericles (431 BCE)

"nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws."

- 14th Amendment, see also
Caldwell v. Texas.

Chief of Police, Richmond VA.





Thank you.

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