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DISCUSSION & REVIEW QUESTIONS:

- Towards the middle of the video, Mr. Owens contends that, “Because of work I’ve never done, stripes I’ve never had, under a whip I’ve never known, these Progressives want to give me money I’ve never earned. The fact that this money will be forcibly taken from others, who also dreamed, worked, and sacrificed to earn it, I’m told is not my concern. But it is.” Why do you think that Leftists advocate so strongly for reparations? Explain. Why do you think that Mr. Owens feels that the unequitable taking of money from those who earned it and the redistribution of that money to those who have not earned it is his concern? Explain.
- After sharing his personal story, Mr. Owens explains that, “At the core of the reparations movement is a distorted and demeaning view of blacks and whites. It grants superiority to the white race, treating them as an oppressive people too powerful for black Americans to overcome. It brands blacks as hapless victims devoid of the ability, which every other culture possesses... to assimilate and to progress... This divisive message marks the black race as forever broken, a people whose healing can only come through the guilt, pity, and benevolence of whites. Tragically, we now see this playing out on our college campuses. As young white Americans acknowledge their skin color as a ‘privilege’, young black Americans, with no apparent shame, accept their skin color as one that automatically confers victim status.” Do you agree that the reparations movement belittles and devalues blacks? Why or why not? Why is it wrong to view white-skinned people as ‘privileged’ and to view black-skinned people as ‘victims?’
- Mr. Owens goes on to point out that, “Those who seek reparations have accepted the theory that skin color alone is capable of making one race superior to the other— that with no additional effort, values, or personal initiative, white Americans will succeed, while black Americans will fail. At its very core this represents the condescending evil of racism. It certainly does not represent black America’s potential.” Do you agree with Mr. Owens’ assertion that seeking reparations is racist? Why or why not? What do you think Mr. Owens means by ‘black America’s potential?’ Explain.
- Towards the end of the video, Mr. Owens notes that, “Forty percent of black households today live the middle-class American Dream... Many of our society’s most revered and celebrated citizens are black. The journeys of these [successful, black] Americans to wealth and prominence vary, like those of their white counterparts, but many benefited from having ancestors, like Grandpa Silas, who embraced the opportunities their country provided and who left behind a legacy of proud, productive, patriotic, and successful families. Why should white Americans - my neighbors, friends and fellow citizens — owe me anything?” Why do you think that Mr. Owens included the word ‘patriotic’ in his list of black family types? How would you answer Mr. Owens’ last question in the passage? Explain.
- At the end of the video, Mr. Owens concludes that, “If Grandpa Silas were here, I’m certain his message to everyone, whether Black or White, would simply be this: Good character cannot be bought by bribery.” What do you think Mr. Owens means by this statement? Do you agree with the assertion that reparations are a form of bribery? Why or why not?

EXTEND THE LEARNING:

CASE STUDY: H.R. 40

INSTRUCTIONS: Read the article “Mitch McConnell Says Slavery Reparations Aren’t Needed Because We Elected Barack Obama President,” then answer the questions that follow.

- What did Senate Majority Leader McConnell tell reporters at the press conference about reparations, and what was his reasoning? Why did he counter calls for reparations? What is H.R. 40, and what would it do? What did President Obama do about reparations? Which of the current democrats running for president endorse a program of reparations? Who is Marianne Williamson, and what has she proposed?
- Why do you think that so many democrats running for president advocate reparations? Do you think that the democrats campaigning to be president who support reparations are actually supportive of racist ideology, or that they just haven’t thought the issue through well? Explain. The article notes that the house Judiciary subcommittee will call expert witnesses in part to understand a ‘path to restorative justice.’ What do you think that the subcommittee means by ‘restorative justice?’ What do you think ‘restorative justice’ could and/or should be, if anything? Why do you think that Leftists tend to advocate for what sounds or feels good, rather than advocate for what actually does good? Explain.
- Since reparations are not a good solution, what might some better ways be to heal the nation from lingering racism and from other lasting effects of slavery? Explain.



QUIZ

WHY I DON'T WANT AND DON'T DESERVE REPARATIONS

1. When the older slaves escaped, they took Silas Burgess with them to _____.
 - a. South Carolina
 - b. Eastern Georgia
 - c. West Texas
 - d. None of the above.

2. How long did it take Silas Burgess to pay off his 102 acres of farmland?
 - a. within 2 years
 - b. within 3 years
 - c. within 4 years
 - d. within 5 years

3. Silas founded the first black church and first black elementary school in his town, and was a _____.
 - a. Republican
 - b. Christian
 - c. pillar of his community
 - d. All of the above.

4. The reparations movement minimizes the sacrifice of hundreds of thousands of white Americans and a Republican president who gave their lives to eradicate slavery.
 - a. True
 - b. False

5. What percentage of black households today live the middle-class American Dream?
 - a. 35%
 - b. 40%
 - c. 45%
 - d. 50%



QUIZ - ANSWER KEY

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<https://www.newsweek.com/mitch-mcconnell-slavery-reparations-obama-1444657>

Mitch McConnell Says Slavery Reparations Aren't Needed Because We Elected Barack Obama President

By Asher Stockler On 6/18/19 at 4:40 PM EDT

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell told reporters on Tuesday that he doesn't believe reparations are an appropriate remedy for America's centuries-long history of slavery.

"I don't think reparations for something that happened 150 years ago, for which none of us living are responsible, is a good idea," he told reporters at a press conference on Capitol Hill.

McConnell added that the country has tried to reckon with the "original sin of slavery" by passing "landmark civil rights legislation" and, more recently, by having "elected an African-American president."

The majority leader called America a "work in progress" and countered calls for reparations by saying it would be "pretty hard" to figure out how to distribute restitution.

McConnell's comments come on the eve of a historic hearing set for Wednesday, when the House of Representatives will convene a panel to discuss the continuing legacy of the trans-Atlantic slave trade for the first time in more than a decade.

The House Judiciary subcommittee will call witnesses from a broad cross-section of public life to better understand the institutional effects of slavery, including "its continuing impact on the community and the path to restorative justice."

The panel will examine H.R. 40, a bill repeatedly introduced by veteran congressman John Conyers which would create a commission to study the history of slavery in the United States and make recommendations about how to educate the public and meaningfully address its findings.

The hearing coincides with the holiday of Juneteenth, which was established to commemorate the 1865 abolition of slavery in Texas.



U.S. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) (C) speaks as Sen. John Barrasso (R-WY) (L) and Senate Majority Whip John Thune (R-SD) (R) listen during a news briefing after the weekly Senate Republican policy luncheon June 11, 2019 at the U.S. Capitol in Washington, DC. Alex Wong/Getty

While the question of reparations has long been sidelined by most prominent presidential candidates, including Barack Obama, a growing number of Democrats running for the 2020 nomination have begun to endorse a reparations program, at least in theory, to help address the lingering effects of slavery and Jim Crow.

Senators Kamala Harris and Elizabeth Warren and former HUD Secretary Julián Castro, all running for president, have come out in favor of reparations or an inquiry into how such a program would be implemented.

Senator Cory Booker has introduced the only reparations bill to ever receive consideration in the post-Reconstruction U.S. Senate. It would create a commission to study the impact of slavery and propose reparations-style remedies in response to its findings.

Marianne Williamson, a self-help guru who has received comparatively little attention for her 2020 bid, has proposed perhaps the most sweeping measure to tackle reparations. Her platform calls for a \$200 billion to \$500 billion investment, over 20 years, in various educational and economic projects to be selected by "an esteemed council of African-American leaders."

The current conversation can be traced, in part, to Ta-Nehisi Coates's influential 2014 essay for *The Atlantic* in which the author argued for reparations as a way for the country to reckon with its slave-owning legacy. Coates will appear alongside actor Danny Glover, documentarian Katrina Browne and other scholars at Wednesday's hearing.