

EVIDENCE OF HISTORICAL HARM

A Structural Record of Lineage-Specific Harm Across American History

INTRODUCTION

Foundational Black Americans (FBAs), the descendants of the formerly enslaved in the United States, are a lineage shaped by centuries of forced labor, state-enforced deprivation, and structural exclusion. The conditions imposed on this lineage were not accidental. They were produced through deliberate policy choices that shaped every *Social and Structural Determinant of Health (SSDH)*.

This document presents a clear record of those harms. It shows why FBA identity must be understood structurally and why *lineage-based protections* and restoration are required.

HISTORICAL HARM TIMELINE

A brief at-a-glance view for quick orientation

1619 — Lineage origin under slavery

1800s — Resistance, mutual aid, early terror

1865 — Emancipation without repair

1865–1900 — Black Codes, convict leasing, anti-Black violence

1900–1960s — Jim Crow restrictions on health, wealth, and mobility

1915–1970 — Great Migration and nationalized discrimination

1930s–1970s — Redlining, highways, urban renewal

1970s–2000s — Mass incarceration and economic extraction

2000s–Present — Displacement, closures, environmental injustice

This timeline provides a concise view of the *structural patterns* explored in greater depth below.

ERA OF ENSLAVEMENT (1619–1865)

For nearly 250 years, FBAs lived within a system engineered to extract labor, suppress autonomy, and control reproduction.

Structural Conditions

- Complete denial of bodily autonomy
- Forced labor and violent enforcement
- Chronic malnutrition and hazardous conditions

- Legal erasure of personhood
- Medical neglect except to preserve labor output

Impact

These conditions produced multi-generational physiological, psychological, and economic harm that still shapes outcomes today.

RECONSTRUCTION AND POST-RECONSTRUCTION (1865–1900s)

The end of legal slavery did not bring repair. Instead, states rebuilt new systems to control labor, mobility, political participation, and economic life.

Structural Conditions

- Failure to redistribute land
- Black Codes limiting movement, labor choice, and property rights
- State and vigilante terror suppressing political participation
- Early segregation limiting access to services and education

Impact

Forced labor campaigns such as convict leasing, combined with state-backed violence, undermined the first generation of free Black communities and blocked pathways to stability.

JIM CROW ERA (LATE 1800s–1960s)

Segregation was a national system of resource restriction and public health control.

Structural Conditions

- Legal segregation in schools, hospitals, and public services
- Exclusion from professional education and training
- Environmental dumping in Black neighborhoods
- Criminal codes designed to destabilize families and restrict mobility

Impact

Jim Crow hardened SSDH disparities and institutionalized unequal access to safety, health, mobility, and opportunity.

GREAT MIGRATION & URBANIZATION (1915–1970)

As millions of FBAs moved across the country, new forms of discrimination emerged to replicate earlier systems of control.

Structural Conditions

- Restrictive covenants and racial zoning
- Employment discrimination in northern and western cities
- School boundaries engineered to maintain segregation
- Denial of full GI Bill access

Impact

Disparities expanded geographically. Many communities faced displacement, racial terror, and barriers to wealth building and education.

MID-20TH CENTURY FEDERAL POLICIES (1930s–1970s)

Federal legislation reshaped neighborhoods, economies, and health outcomes nationwide.

Structural Conditions

- Redlining limiting credit and homeownership
- Highway construction destroying Black neighborhoods
- Urban renewal displacing families and community institutions
- Public housing policies concentrating poverty
- Environmental hazards disproportionately placed in Black areas

Impact

These actions cemented spatial patterns of illness, violence, economic deprivation, and premature death.

LATE 20TH CENTURY (1970s–2000s)

Structural harm shifted into new systems that weakened community stability.

Structural Conditions

- Deindustrialization eliminating stable employment
- Mass incarceration made possible by the 13th Amendment exception
- War on Drugs enforcement targeting Black neighborhoods
- Predatory lending practices stripping wealth
- Underfunded schools tied to unequal property tax structures

Impact

These forces created widespread instability and generational setbacks that no short-term intervention could reverse.

EARLY 21st CENTURY (2000s–PRESENT)

Modern policy continues historical patterns of displacement and resource loss.

Structural Conditions

- Rapid gentrification and residential displacement
- School closures in historically Black areas
- Hospital and maternity ward closures reducing access to essential care
- Housing costs rising without wage alignment
- Ongoing environmental injustice

Impact

Today's SSDH outcomes reflect a cumulative history of structural deprivation, not cultural behavior or individual choice.

CONCLUSION

This historical record reveals a continuous pattern of policy-driven harm that shaped every major determinant of health and opportunity for FBAs.

FBA outcomes today reflect the policies that shaped them. History makes the pattern unmistakable. The disparities arise from structure and not culture.

Evidence of Historical Harm affirms that:

- FBA identity is structural, not symbolic
- Disparities are rooted in policy design
- Restoration must match the scale of the harm imposed

This document supports lineage clarity, strengthens policy understanding, and provides the historical foundation for the FBA Lineage Rights Act and the broader USBA ecosystem.

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