



TRANSCRIPT:

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BILL MOYERS: Welcome to the Journal.

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice rose to power and influence against odds that must have seemed insurmountable at the time to a young black woman from Birmingham, Alabama. She was only eight years old when, in 1963, four young girls, including Rice's friend Denise McNair, were killed in her hometown by a bomb planted in their church by white supremacists. This week Secretary Rice pronounced herself, "...gratified, but not surprised", by Senator Obama's victory in the Democratic presidential primaries. She said, "As an American, it's a great thing. As a black American, it's a great thing." And she went on to express her belief that America is slowly but surely overcoming what she calls the country's "birth defect" of "racial inequality."

BILL MOYERS: But we're not there yet. Despite the success of Americans like Rice and Obama, we're still coping with the legacy of slavery and segregation. That's the subject of this broadcast, with my guests who think we may be at a defining moment in our history.

We begin with a preview of a moving film that will premiere next week on the public television series P.O.V. Be sure to watch it. You will see a story of how the descendants of one of America's first families discovered their own kin's complicity in the slave trade. "Traces of the Trade" is narrated by its producer and director, Katrina Browne.

KATRINA BROWNE: Every year my family would get together for July Fourth in Bristol, Rhode Island. It was a big deal 'cause Bristol boasts the longest running Fourth of July parade in the country. We'd watch the parade from the lawn of Linden Place. This big white mansion used to belong to my relatives. It's right in the center of town. This is me age two with my mother and grandmother. Here's me age three bossing my brother around.

KATRINA BROWNE: My DeWolf ancestors were known as the "Great Folk" in Bristol. There were professors and writers, artists and architects, and many Episcopal ministers. I was proud to be related to them. It never occurred to me to ask how we got so established.

KATRINA BROWNE: What no one in my family realized was that the DeWolfs were the largest slave-trading family in US history. They brought over 10,000 Africans to the Americas in chains. Half a million of their descendants could be alive today.

BILL MOYERS: Katrina Browne asked members of her extended family to meet at Bristol's Episcopal church to begin a journey into the past.

KATRINA BROWNE: The church was pretty much new to me because I grew up in Philadelphia, where I was steeped in America's democratic ideals. In Bristol, it seems like the DeWolfs were the founding fathers. They were everywhere in the church; they even paid for the stained glass.

BILL MOYERS: Some in the family and even the town itself were reluctant for the story to be told.

KATRINA BROWNE: Linden Place was also concerned about our journey. The mansion was built in 1810 by George DeWolf, one of the two most prominent slave



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YOURCOMMENTS

"My dream for the American Dream is simply this: that we adhere to the vision of our founders. ..." - *David Thayer*

traders in the family. Linden Place stayed in family hands until 1989 when it was turned into a museum. Some museum board members were worried about advertising this connection of Linden Place to slavery. They didn't let us film inside. So we just passed by.

KATRINA BROWNE: Down at the harbor is James DeWolf's warehouse. This is where rum went out and sugar and molasses came in. James is the one who really masterminded the family take-over of all aspects of the trade. By the end of his life in 1837 he was supposedly the second richest man in the United States.

KATRINA BROWNE: At the Bristol Historical Society, tucked away in a corner on the second floor, there was a file cabinet, full of DeWolf papers. These eerie records revealed the details of the logical economic model that the DeWolfs developed from 1769 to 1820. Here's how they made it work.

KATRINA BROWNE: First they got the financing together. They recruited fellow townspeople to buy shares in their voyages and eventually started their own bank. They also started an insurance company to cover the risk. Rum was the prime currency of the slave trade, so James acquired a distillery from his father-in-law. The DeWolfs also purchased ships, mostly from builders in Rhode Island and Massachusetts. The ships took rum to the Guinea Coast to trade for Africans. "July 4th, 1795, bought nine prime slaves, one woman and eight men and paid for them tobacco, rum, hats, bread, mackerel." Many of the enslaved Africans were brought to work on plantations that the DeWolfs established in Cuba. These plantations supplied sugar and molasses needed to make the rum back in Bristol. They also served as holding places for Africans while the DeWolfs waited for slave prices to go up at auction. "Havana, Sept. 11, 1806, John DeWolf of Bristol, Sale of 121 Negroes." Total income: 36,300 dollars, which today equals 553,000 dollars.

KATRINA BROWNE: The largest number of slaves were sold in Havana and Charleston. But Rhode Island slavers did business in more than 40 markets in the West Indies, North and South America. Rhode Island became the state most complicit in the American slave trade. Rum, Africans, sugar, rum. The efficient wheels of the Triangle Trade were set in motion again and again.

KATRINA BROWNE: And then there's one more detail. The slave trade was illegal for most of the time the DeWolfs were practicing it. To maneuver around the law, they secured a political favor from none other than President Thomas Jefferson, whose campaign they'd supported. Jefferson appointed their brother-in-law as Bristol's customs official. This man always happened to be looking the other way as DeWolf ships went in and out of harbor.

BILL MOYERS: That was just a portion of the film. When "Traces of the Trade" airs on P.O.V. next week, Katrina Browne and several of her kinfolk follow the path of those ships to the West Coast of Africa, on to Cuba, where the DeWolfs owned a huge slave plantation, and then back again to new England, where an orderly economy run by pious, church-going people prospered from their bargain with the devil. You'll hear those modern DeWolfs struggling to come to terms with what they've learned about their "crazy partnership" with silence between the present and the past. Denial of course was not unique to the DeWolf family. Every time I walked downtown where I grew up in Texas, I passed the statue of Johnny Reb, facing east toward Richmond, the capitol of the Confederacy, reminding us of the bravery of gallant men who fought and died to protect a way of life. Tragically, it was a way of life built around slavery.

BILL MOYERS: At one time there were thousands of slaves in our county. And after Richmond fell to Union troops, my home town became, briefly, the military headquarters of the Confederacy. But in twelve years of public schools I cannot remember one of the teachers I deeply cherished describe slavery for what it was. Nor did they, or anyone I knew, talk about how our town's dark and tortured past in restoring white supremacy after the Civil War, prevented the emancipated slaves from realizing the freedom they had been promised. Across the South, from Texas and Louisiana to the Carolinas, thousands of freed black Americans simply were arrested, often on trumped up charges, and coerced into forced labor. And that persisted right up into the 1940s, when I was still a boy.

BILL MOYERS: Look at these pictures. Those photographs are from one of the most stunning new books you'll read this year, *Slavery by Another Name*. The author is Douglas Blackmon, the Atlanta bureau chief of the Wall Street Journal. His articles on race, wealth and other issues have been nominated for Pulitzer Prizes four times. His reporting on U.S. Steel and the company's use of forced labor was included in the 2003 edition of *Best Business Stories*, and his contribution to the Journal's coverage of Hurricane Katrina received a Special Headliner Award in 2006. Welcome.

This is truly the most remarkable piece of reporting I have read in a long time. I honestly cannot recommend it highly enough. What you report is that no sooner did the slave owners, businessmen of the South, lose the Civil War, then they turned around, and in complicity with state and local governments and industry, reinvented slavery by another name. And what was the result?

DOUGLAS BLACKMON: Well, the result was that by the time you got to the end of the 19th century, 25 or 30 years after the Civil War, the generation of slaves who'd been freed by the Emancipation Proclamation, and then the constitutional amendments that ended slavery legally this generation of people, who experienced authentic freedom in many respects tough life, difficult hard lives after the Civil War but real freedom, in which they voted, they participated in government.

BILL MOYERS: They farmed?

DOUGLAS BLACKMON: They farmed. They carved out independent lives. But then, this terrible shadow began to fall back across black life in America, that effectively re-enslaved enormous numbers of people. And what that was all about, what that was rooted in, was that the southern economic, and in a way, the American economy, was addicted to slavery, was addicted to forced labor. And the South could not resurrect itself.

And so, there was this incredible economic imperative to bring back coerced labor. And they did, on a huge scale.

BILL MOYERS: You said they did it by criminalizing black life.

DOUGLAS BLACKMON: Well, and that was that was a charade. But the way that happened was that, of course, before the Civil War, there were Slave Codes. There were laws that governed the behavior of slaves. And that was the basis of laws, for instance, that made it where a slave had to have a written pass to leave their plantation and travel on an open road.

Well, immediately after the Civil War, all the southern states adopted a new set of laws that were then called Black Codes. And they essentially attempted to recreate the Slave Codes. Well, those that was such an obvious effort to recreate slavery, that the Union military leadership that was still in the South, overruled all of that. Still, that didn't work. And by the time you get to the end of Reconstruction, all the southern legislatures have gone back and passed laws that aren't called Black Codes, but essentially criminalized a whole array of activities, that it was impossible for a poor black farmer to avoid encountering in some way.

BILL MOYERS: Such as?

DOUGLAS BLACKMON: Vagrancy. So, vagrancy was a law that essentially, it simply, you were breaking the law if you couldn't prove at any given moment that you were employed. Well, in a world in which there were no pay stubs, it was impossible to prove you were employed. The only way you could prove employment was if some man who owned land would vouch for you and say, he works for me. And of course, none of these laws said it only applies to black people. But overwhelmingly, they were only enforced against black people. And many times, thousands of times I believe, you had young black men who attempted to do that. They ended up being arrested and returned to the original farmer where they worked in chains, not even a free worker, but as a slave.

BILL MOYERS: And the result, as you write, thousands of black men were arrested, charged with whatever, jailed, and then sold to plantations, railroads, mills, lumber camps and factories in the deep South. And this went on, you say, right up to World War II?

DOUGLAS BLACKMON: And it was everywhere in the South. These forced labor camps were all over the place. The records that still survive, buried in courthouses all over the South, make it abundantly clear that thousands and thousands of African-Americans were arrested on completely specious claims, made up stuff, and then, purely because of this economic need and the ability of sheriffs and constables and others to make money off arresting them, and that providing them to these commercial enterprises, and being paid for that.

BILL MOYERS: You have a photograph in here I have literally not been able to get this photograph out of my mind since I saw it the first time several weeks ago, when I first got your book. It's a photograph of an unnamed prisoner tied around a pickaxe

for punishment in a Georgia labor camp. It was photographed some time around 1932, which this is hard to believe was two years before I was born.

DOUGLAS BLACKMON: Well, that picture was taken by a journalist named John Spivak, who took an astonishing series of pictures in these forced labor camps in Georgia in the 1930s. He got access to the prison system of Georgia and these forced labor encampments, which were scattered all over the place. Some of them were way out in the deep woods. There were turpentine camps. Some of them were mining camps. All incredibly harsh, brutal work. He got access to these as a journalist, in part, because the officials of Georgia had no particular shame in what was happening.

BILL MOYERS: That's a surprising thing.

DOUGLAS BLACKMON: Well, and but what the picture also demonstrates was the level of violence and brutality, the venality of things that were done. And so, this kind of physical torture went on, on a huge scale. People were whipped, starved. They went without clothing. There were work camps where people reported that they would arrive looking for a lost family member, and they would arrive at a sawmill or a lumber camp where the men were working as slaves naked, chained, you know, whipped. It was it's just astonishing, the level of brutality.

BILL MOYERS: You have a story in here of a young man who a teenager who spilled or poured coffee on the hog of the farmer he was working for. He was stripped, stretched across a barrel, and flogged 69 times with a leather strap. And he died a week later. But that's not a unique story in this book.

DOUGLAS BLACKMON: No, that was incredibly common. And there were on the there were thousands and thousands of people who died under these circumstances over the span of the period that I write about in the book. And over and over again, it was from disease and malnutrition, and from outright homicide and physical abuse.

BILL MOYERS: You give voice to a young man long dead, whose voice would never had been heard, had you not discovered it, resurrected it, and presented it. He's the chief character in this book. Green Cottenham, is that is.

DOUGLAS BLACKMON: Yes, that's right.

BILL MOYERS: Tell me about Green Cottenham.

DOUGLAS BLACKMON: Green Cottenham was a man in the 1880s born to a mother and a father who, both of whom had been slaves, who were emancipated at the end of the Civil War. Imagine, a young man and a young woman who've just been freed from slavery. And now they have the opportunity to break away from the plantations where they'd been held, begin a new life. And so, they do. They marry. They have many children. Green Cottenham is the last of them.

He's born in the 1880s, just as this terrible curtain of hostility and oppression is beginning to really creep across all of black life in the South. And by the time he becomes an adult, in the first years of the 20th century, the worst forces of the efforts to re-enslave black Americans are in full power across the South. And in the North, the allies, the white allies of the freed slaves, have abandoned them. And so, right at the before of the 20th century, whites all across America have essentially reached this new consensus that slavery shouldn't be brought back. But if African-Americans are returned to a state of absolute servility, that's okay.

And Green Cottenham becomes an adult at exactly that moment. And then, in 1908, in the spring of 1908, he's arrested, standing outside a train station in a little town in Alabama. The officer who arrested him couldn't remember what the charge was by the time he brought him in front of the judge. So he's conveniently convicted of a different crime than the one he was originally picked up for. He ends up being sold three days later, with another group of black men, into a coal mine outside of Birmingham. And he survives there several months, and then dies under terrible circumstances.

BILL MOYERS: You write, 45 years after Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, Cottenham was one of thousands of men working like a slave in these coalmines. Slope 12, you call it.

DOUGLAS BLACKMON: Slope number 12.

BILL MOYERS: What was slope number 12?

DOUGLAS BLACKMON: Slope number 12 was a huge mine on the outskirts of Birmingham, part of a maze of mines. Birmingham is the fastest growing city in the country. Huge amounts of wealth and investment are pouring into the place.

But there's this again, this need for forced labor. And the very men, the very entrepreneurs who, just before the Civil War, were experimenting with a kind of industrial slavery, using slaves in factories and foundries, and had begun to realize, hey, this works just as well as slaves out on the farm.

The very same men who were doing that in the 1850s, come back in the 1870s and begin to reinstitute the same form of slavery. And Green Cottenham is one of the men, one of the many thousands of men who were sucked into the process, and then lived under these terribly brutalizing circumstances, this place that was filled with disease and malnutrition. And he dies there under terrible, terrible circumstances.

BILL MOYERS: And you found the sunken graves five miles from downtown Birmingham?

DOUGLAS BLACKMON: It's just miles away. In fact there are just two places there, because all of these mines now are abandoned. Everything is overgrown. There are almost no signs of human activity, except that if you dig deep into the woods, grown over there, you begin to see, if you get the light just right, hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of depressions where these bodies were buried.

BILL MOYERS: You say that Atlanta, where you live now, which used to proclaim itself the finest city in the South, was built on the broken backs of re-enslaved black men.

DOUGLAS BLACKMON: That's right. When I started off writing the book, I began to realize the degree to which this form of enslavement had metastasized across the South, and that Atlanta was one of many places where the economy that created the modern city, was one that relied very significantly on this form of coerced labor. And some of the most prominent families and individuals in the in the creation of the modern Atlanta, their fortunes originated from the use of this practice. And the most dramatic example of that was a brick factory on the outskirts of town that, at the turn of the century, was producing hundreds of thousands of bricks every day. The city of Atlanta bought millions and millions of those bricks. The factory was operated entirely with forced workers. And almost 100 percent black forced workers. There were even times that on Sunday afternoons, a kind of old-fashioned slave auction would happen, where a white man who controlled black workers would go out to Chattahoochee Brick and horse trade with the guards at Chattahoochee Brick, trading one man for another, or two men. And-

BILL MOYERS: And yet, slavery was illegal?

DOUGLAS BLACKMON: It had been illegal for 40 years. And this is a really important thing to me. I was stunned when I realized that because the city of Atlanta bought these millions and millions of bricks, well, those are the bricks that paved the downtown streets of Atlanta. And those bricks are still there. And so these are the bricks that we stand on.

BILL MOYERS: Didn't this economic machine that was built upon forced labor, didn't these Black Codes, the way that black life was criminalized, didn't this put African-Americans at a terrific economic disadvantage then and now?

DOUGLAS BLACKMON: Absolutely. The results of those laws and the results of particularly enforcing them with such brutality through this forced labor system, the result of that was that African-Americans thousands and thousands of them worked for years and years of their lives with no compensation whatsoever, no ability to end up buying property and enjoying the mechanisms of accumulating wealth in the way that white Americans did. This was a part of denying black Americans access to education, denying black Americans access to basic infrastructure, like paved roads, the sorts of things that made it possible for white farmers to become successful.

And so, yes, this whole regime of the Black Codes, the way that they were enforced, the physical intimidation and racial violence that went on, all of these were facets of the same coin that made it incredibly less likely that African-Americans would emerge out of poverty in the way that millions of white Americans did at the same time.

BILL MOYERS: How is it, you and I both Southerners, how is it we could grow up right after this era, and be so unaware of what had just happened to our part of the country?

DOUGLAS BLACKMON: Well, I think there are a lot of explanations for that. The biggest one is simply that this is a history that we haven't wanted to know as a country. We've engaged in a kind of collective amnesia about this, particularly about the severity of it.

And the official history of this time, the conventional history tended to minimize the severity of the things that were done again and again and again, and to focus instead, on the idea, on a lot of false mythologies. Like, this idea that freed slaves after emancipation became lawless and sort of went wild, and thievery, and all sorts of crimes being committed by African-Americans right after the Civil War and during Reconstruction. But when you go back, as I did, and look at the arrest records from that period of time, there's just no foundation for that. And the reality was there was hardly any crime at all. And huge numbers of people were being arrested on these specious charges, so they could be forced back into labor.

BILL MOYERS: Another reason -- I just think, as you talk -- another reason is that anybody who raised these allegations or charges, or wrote about them when I was growing up, were dismissed as Communists. If it had been from The Wall Street Journal, it might have been a different take.

DOUGLAS BLACKMON: Well, I think there's some truth to that. Anyone who tried to raise these sorts of questions was at risk of complete excoriation among other white Southerners. But that's also what's remarkable about the present moment. And one of the things I've discovered in the course of talking about the book with people is that there's an openness to a conversation about these things that I think didn't exist even ten or 15 years ago.

BILL MOYERS: What has been the response to it? Americans don't like to confront these pictures, these stories.

DOUGLAS BLACKMON: They don't. But over and over and over again I've encountered people who've read the book, who e-mailed me, or they come up to me after I talk about it somewhere, particularly African-Americans, who African-Americans know this story in their hearts. They may not know the facts. They may not know exactly what the scale of things were. But they know in their hearts that this is what happened. And so, people come up to me and say, "Gosh, the story that my grandmother used to tell before she died 20 years ago, I never believed it. Because she would describe that she was still a slave in Georgia after World War II, or just before. And it never made sense to me. And now, it does."

BILL MOYERS: It is amazing that this was happening at a time when many of the African-Americans retiring today, were children.

DOUGLAS BLACKMON: Were children, exactly. Exactly. And so, again, these are events unlike Antebellum slavery. These are things that connect directly to the lives and the shape and pattern and structure of our society today.

BILL MOYERS: Does it explain to you why there might be so much anger in the black community among, let's say, African-Americans who are my age, 73, 74, who were children at the time this was still going on?

DOUGLAS BLACKMON: Well, there's no way that anybody can read this book and come away still wondering why there is a sort of fundamental cultural suspicion among African-Americans of the judicial system, for instance. I mean, that suspicion is incredibly well-founded. The judicial system, the law enforcement system of the South became primarily an instrument of coercing people into labor and intimidating blacks away from their civil rights. That was its primary purpose, not the punishment of lawbreakers. And so, yes, these events build an unavoidable and irrefutable case for the kind of anger that still percolates among many, many African-Americans today.

BILL MOYERS: If people want to know more about not only your book, but about all of this, for research and so forth, where do they go?

DOUGLAS BLACKMON: Go to my website, or the book's website, www.slaverybyanothername.com.

BILL MOYERS: Douglas Blackmon, thanks for being with me.

DOUGLAS BLACKMON: Thank you for having me.

BILL MOYERS: Today, inequalities between the races remain deeply embedded in our social, political, and economic structures. The Pew Research Center reported last November that black Americans are more dissatisfied with their progress than at any time in the past quarter century. Furthermore, Pew found that almost half of African-Americans born to middle-income parents since the late 1960s have fallen into poverty or near poverty as adults.

So let's talk now about race, class and this moment in history with two old friends whose contrarian and often controversial ideas have provoked debate on both the left and right.

Orlando Patterson is Professor of Sociology at Harvard University and the author of several major books ranging from *Slavery and Social Death* and *The Ordeal of Integration to Freedom* in the *Making of Western Culture*, which won the National Book Award for non-fiction. He's also written three novels and most recently was a guest columnist for the *New York Times*.

Glenn Loury was the first black tenured professor in the Economics Department at Harvard University, and is now a professor at Brown University. He's published over 200 essays in dozens of journals and his books include *One by One From the Inside Out: Essays and Reviews on Race and Responsibility in America* and this one *The Anatomy of Racial Inequality*.

Welcome. It's good to have you on the Journal.

GLENN C. LOURY: Welcome.

ORLANDO PATTERSON: Thank you.

BILL MOYERS: Have we ever had a real conversation in this society about what to do about so large a number of people who have been deliberating assigned to the margins, so that it's virtually impossible for them to climb out on their own. That is, they only have a minimal possibility of getting themselves out of the hole into which history and policy and other considerations have placed them. Have we ever had that real conversation?

GLENN C. LOURY: Well, you know, I'm thinking here about the speech that Lyndon Johnson gave, and I know you know it very well, Bill, in 1965 at Howard University. A commencement address. In which he said, in effect, that it wasn't enough for the civil rights statutes, which had only just been enacted, the Voting Rights Act and the Civil Rights Act of 1964, it wasn't enough to level the playing field.

You don't hobble a man, he said, in a metaphor with hundreds of years of deprivation and unfairness and then bring him to the starting line and shoot off the gun and say it's a fair race.

ORLANDO PATTERSON: There are two aspects of the problems that blacks face from the horrendous past from slavery and Jim Crow. One is the public exclusion of blacks, the systematic public exclusion of people, black people, of not belonging to the society. Not being real citizens. Even though they've been here longer than most whites as a group.

And that exclusion is in politics, in civic life, in the economy. As late as the late '50s. I love to illustrate the point with my students. Pick up any of the major weekly journals, even *The New Yorker*, and flip through it. You wouldn't see a black face. I mean, black problems weren't even considered worthy of discussion. This is a white country.

And with the laws, Jim Crow and elsewhere, I mean, were reinforced that. The major objective of the civil rights movement was to, of course inclusion. To insist that blacks are an integral part of this society. In its laws, in its public life, in its civil life, in its culture. In its conception of itself. And in that, it succeeded mightily. Blacks-

BILL MOYERS: So that now we see blacks in the public square. We-

ORLANDO PATTERSON: That's right. Absolutely. I mean, the most influential woman in America, the two most influential women in America are black. The Secretary of State and Oprah Winfrey.

In that sense, what was inconceivable in America, as late, I'd say, as '59, '60, is now, I mean, we are an integral part of this society. And I'd say for the typical white person, America's definition of itself is no longer a white society. It's recognized as that, however there's another side of what slavery which is exclusion from the private domain.

Blacks were people who lived separately. People we did not marry. People who were simply seen as apart. And that had major consequences because you're excluded from the cultural capital of the society.

GLENN C. LOURY: I think this is exactly correct. I think it's a very important distinction, this distinction I call discrimination in contract, the formal exclusion, and the discrimination in contact, the informal exclusion. I think the emphasis on social capital is exactly right. The fundamental question is what are the resources available for human development for people?

And some of those resources come through formal channels. But many of those resources come about as the indirect byproduct of social life that's just played out in communities and in families and so forth. But the thing that I would like to add to what Orlando just said is that there are public and political implications of the informal, as well as the formal derogation and subordination of blacks.

The public implications of the formal were manifest in reforms like the Civil Rights Act. That made it illegal to discriminate in employment and in housing and so forth. But there are also public implications of the informal. I want to say that massive urban communities that are almost exclusively black and that are troubled, are a public product. They came about as a result of policy.

They are partly the reflection of people not wanting to be around the people who live in those communities. And they're, therefore, recuse a responsibility to our political institutions to redress those consequences.

And what I mean practically is this. You go to the inner city school systems and you look at who's teaching the children there. And it's a labor. I respect what people are doing. But I have to say this, often, the most talented and pedagogically gifted and qualified of the people that we have available to teach our children, are not teaching the children who are most in need of that kind of instruction. And there's a zero sum element to a lot of this. People are thinking it's the education of my kid or the education of somebody else's kid

And to my mind, the solution to that problem is to make them not have to fight over the same dollars. We could invest a lot more than we are investing.

ORLANDO PATTERSON: Well, I agree with all of that. But there's another side to it. There are two sides to it. black Americans face one enormous internal problem. And that's the nature of their families. Historically we know the reason why black Americans, I mean are in the situation they're in. It's a fact that there are 270 years in which the primary focus of slavery was the destruction of the family. Whatever historians may say. And historians are quite deluded about this.

Then we have a long period in which this persisted. Now what I'm saying, then, is that we have to address not only the schools, but we also have to address and the state has a role here—this is where I differ from the conservatives radically- the state has a role in it. How can we help to fix the fragile state of black American families? And because, you know, I mean, with young kids, especially young boys you know, without growing up without fathers, in which welfare laws have made it essential that their mothers work. Sometimes two jobs.

They're not being parented. And the streets, then, capture them. Gangs, we know now, every study on gangs have indicated that gangs have become a substitute for families, for parenting. And the gang leader is often a father substitute. We have to, and the state has a big role here, and we're talking big bucks, in address directly how we can help these mothers who are doing a heroic job, but failing because they just don't have the time. They're just human.

In terms of our making provisions available from very early. I'm going back to infancy.

GLENN C. LOURY: When we talk about this- as when Senator Obama spoke about this on Father's Day recently in his speech in Chicago on the family- when we talk about this we're kind of doing a two pronged discourse. We're talking about we, the American people, and we're also talking about we, or them, the African-American people. We're talking about what must we do as a polity, what should our laws be, what should our policies be? Nurses that come home with indigent mothers to help them learn how to take care of their children. Preschool programs so that kids, who otherwise aren't getting the cognitive stimulation, have a chance to develop their young brains.

After school programs so that kids are not wandering the streets aimlessly and all the rest. Public policy. But then we're also talking about moral judgment. About the sanction of unacceptable behavior. About cajoling. About identifying deadbeat dads and fathers who won't take care. And then lecturing them that they ought to do better.

Now, I'm not against a lecture. But I don't want the fact of the lecture to get in the way of the development of the program of public action, which is absolutely necessary to solving the problem. And the difficulty is that people are too satisfied with the lecture. They're too satisfied to hear Bill Cosby or Barack Obama stand up and say what they've been wanting to say all these years about Black Fathers not taking care of their responsibilities. And then they're done. And they ought not to be.

BILL MOYERS: What would you like us to know about the dynamics, the mechanics of the African-American community or family that is producing what everyone recognizes is a catastrophe for those families? So many children born are not raised with fathers. What should we know about why that is happening?

GLENN C. LOURY: What I think people, I would most want them to understand is that they're not any different from you, okay? Culture matters, okay?

I'm not saying all communities are the same. I'm saying that if you and your forebearers had been subjected to the same historical forces, you would likely be finding yourself pretty much in the same fix, okay? So judgment ought to wait a more subtle consideration of how we have collectively wrought the situation that we're imputing to this community.

I say "we," I mean Americans. Of course, many people weren't here 100 or 200 years ago, their ancestors weren't here. Nevertheless, they joined a going concern, and that going concern has one way or another helped to bring about a contemporary situation in which they are implicated.

They're not any different from you. These little knuckle-headed gang-bangers running around with pistols, robbing people and selling drugs? They're not any different from you. If you'd grown up in a public housing project, your kid might well be out there with them. They're not any different than you. They are our children. It's our problem. That's what I want people to understand.

BILL MOYERS: Was it a good idea for Obama to make this speech? You called it a lecture. To make this speech, because he has been criticized for underscoring what Patrick Moynihan said almost 40 years ago about the black family. He's been criticized for highlighting what, to many African-Americans, is a shame that they would like not to have publicly disclosed. Do you think he made a mistake in-

ORLANDO PATTERSON: I don't think he did. Sociologists and social scientists generally think that black Americans are ashamed of this situation and don't want to talk about it. And for a long time, in fact, I mean, people didn't even stare the family because they were so terrified that this would be seen as blaming the victim.

But study after study has indicated that black Americans recognize that there is a problem. A few years ago, I was at a conference, an all-black conference in Miami on the family in a cathedral down that. Two thousand, ordinary working black Americans took their precious day off to attend that conference. And they were talking about, they wanted to address the issues. They see it as a problem.

So it's among intellectuals that there's this feeling that we don't, Barack Obama's got his, is dead on in realizing that, no, it's not you losing any votes about it. Because the typical black American view is we do have a problem.

GLENN C. LOURY: Well, that may be right. I mean, I think the speech was smart politics on many levels. And I could come back to that. But I don't entirely agree with

Orlando about this. In that of course, African-Americans, for many years, have been saying you know, there's a lot of problems that within our community, that we have no one to blame but ourselves. And we need to, you know, these young men, these little knuckleheads, they need to, you know, these gang bangers, they need to, you know, these little boys going around havin' babies they can't take care of and so forth.

There's nothing new. Sermons have been preached about that for a very long time. And, again, I want to say, I'm not against those sermons. But I don't regard them as politics. Okay? Politics is different. The political questions are about mutual obligation. They're about how the taxing authority and the cohesive authority of the state, which shapes our institutional environment, ought to be deployed on behalf of legitimate public goals. Now, the state of the African-American family can't be a public goal. Communal exhortation mentorship religious and spiritual training, leadership that comes from within community, what does it mean to be an African-American parent in the 21st century?

What are our responsibilities to our forbearers, to our successor generations and to ourselves? What does God, if it comes to that, tell us that we must do? Those are important communal conversations, but they're not political conversations. And it's, as I say, the possibility of undermining the achievement of political goals. Now, I saw that speech in Chicago and I thought that Barack Obama needed to go into a black church. And--

BILL MOYERS: This was in a black church.

GLENN C. LOURY: Yeah, this was--

BILL MOYERS: It was not Trinity United. It was an Apostolic.

GLENN C. LOURY: Right.

BILL MOYERS: A Pentacostal Church.

GLENN C. LOURY: A mega church with, I don't know, 16,000 members or whatever the number is. A huge church. He needed to go into a black church on Sunday, given the backdrop. He needed to try to undermine this critical narrative about him as being, somehow, not sharing the values of typical Americans because of his pastor and so forth. He needed to establish his independence and to shore up his credentials as a leader by taking on a taboo topic and courageously addressing it. But did he advance the ball in doing so toward the achievement of these public and political goals that we're talking about?

BILL MOYERS: But we won't know that, will he, unless he's elected President.

GLENN C. LOURY: Well, so that's the argument. The argument is he will be elected. And in his election, good things will come. But, you know I'm afraid about-

BILL MOYERS: Afraid of what?

GLENN C. LOURY: Afraid that he might lose. But the center of the conversation will be shifted in such way that black people will be paying a price for years to come.

BILL MOYERS: What do you mean? Why would black people pay a price for that speech?

GLENN C. LOURY: In this campaign I think the Reverend Wright controversy and the speech that Obama gave in Philadelphia after it was the beginning of this process. The implicit racial contract is being renegotiated. The sort of, consensus view about collective American responsibility around racial questions is being renegotiated.

Now, I'm not saying that that's necessarily a bad thing. Okay? Barack Obama is actually more important to the future of affirmative action than was Sandra Day O'Connor, in my opinion. If Barack Obama comes out in October or September and gives this speech that says affirmative action should be class based and not race based, it will be so. Now, I'm not nece-

BILL MOYERS: It will be so. You mean?

GLENN C. LOURY: It will materially affect the consensus understanding politically in the country about affirmative action if he decides to redefine it in that way.

BILL MOYERS: So how do you change the metaphor when you do that?

GLENN C. LOURY: Well what's at stake here for me is the extent to which current generations of Americans understand a historical obligation to deal with racial inequality. Ok? To make sacrifices on behalf of it. To bend themselves out of what they would otherwise would do in order to mitigate racial inequality.

Now I'm not saying Obama's program is anything other than progressive around these questions. I think that it is progressive. Okay? But I think that the country as a whole is looking for a reason to get out of the mire of racial politics and racial discussion. And I think Obama's offer to the country is that his very person, his very success in his electoral ambition, is a kind of expiation of collective racial sin. It's a kind of confirmation of what's, as he said, good about America. As opposed to what's bad about America.

ORLANDO PATTERSON: That all good. But there's something which he's done. His policies. Look, there's always a huge problem in policies with respect to black Americans. And that is on one side, whether they're going to be targeted towards blacks. So if you have a poverty program, you make sure that it's for blacks and so on. Or whether it's gonna be universal. That is, you take the view that it is not a black problem. This is a problem of poverty and the majority of poor people are white.

BILL MOYERS: And that's what happens when you transfer it from race to class.

ORLANDO PATTERSON: That's right. And one of the problems that took place since the '60s. And is that the targeted policy people have won. The danger with that is that poverty was racialized. It was easy for conservatives to say, "Okay, we'll give them some crumbs." But it's not a national problem. And by the way, the same thing happened in Europe for the welfare state legislations were kept at bay as long as they're seen as, for the poor.

The welfare state in Europe and Esping-Andersen and others who have written on the history of it indicate that only won political support when it was seen as universal. And middle class people said, "Oh, I'm going to get something out of this, too." And what Obama has proposed is a shift from the targeted approach to a universal approach. In which, yes, affirmative action will be for the white poor, as well as the black poor.

Poverty and poverty programs are not going to be targeted just for blacks. But for Appalachians and others. And then, that strategy will indeed, lead to a shift in support for the kind of quite radical sort of end of poverty initiatives which we'll have to engage in. And that and he's made it quite clear in his biography, in his autobiography, as well as in his program. And-

GLENN C. LOURY: I've read this, but I'm not persuaded, Orlando. And I think the distinction that you make between targeted and universal doesn't go far enough. That's an old distinction. You know, affirmative action is race based and its racial preference versus something that's universal like a class based thing, from which blacks could also benefit.

The point I want to make here is that within universalism, there are many houses. There can be universalism that is more or less felicitous of advancing the interest of particular groups. So the Columbia University political scientist, historian, Ira Katznelson, has a book called *When Affirmative Action Was White*. And what it's about is the GI Bill. And it's about the New Deal. And he's making the point that in the 1930s and '40s and '50s massive transformation of American institutions and huge investments were made. They were universal, primarily.

BILL MOYERS: For whites.

GLENN C. LOURY: Yeah, but the consequences of the design and structure of these universal programs, the New Deal programs, agricultural supports the rewriting of labor laws- the GI Bill, the consequences of these programs, which were on their face universal, was to massively disproportionately benefit white working class vis-À-vis black working class for a variety of reasons that he goes in, into the book.

And likewise, likewise, if we say affirmative action at leading American universities is

now open to poor people, regardless of their race, no more of these middle class blacks who have lower test scores getting into places like Princeton or Harvard or any place like that. The result of that, the actual result of doing it, just like that and nothing else will be for every black that might have benefited, there are going to be ten poor whites who could potentially benefit.

It will be a significant reduction of the number of blacks at these institutions. Now, maybe that's okay. Maybe that's not okay. But to reach that result without explicitly engaging the question, what will happen to the racial representation of African-Americans if we make this shift, will be to do blind universalism. And I'm not for that.

BILL MOYERS: Whether Obama wins or loses, does his campaign symbolize the great changes of the last 50 years? You talked about those. And is this a defining moment for race in America?

ORLANDO PATTERSON: Absolutely. What he embodies one America, I call ecumenical America. I see not one but three Americas. There's a traditional America, there's a multicultural America-

BILL MOYERS: How is ecumenical America different from multicultural America?

ORLANDO PATTERSON: Oh, multicultural America is a salad bowl in which everyone does their own thing and couldn't give a damn about what's going on elsewhere. Identity politics is almost mean-spirited about, you know, we'll attend the parade on St. Patrick's Day but, you know, we don't want to know you.

And a genuine intercultural America, it knows the other, and is involved with the other. And in a way, Obama embodies that. And it's very appealing, especially to a younger generation of America now, there's a huge divide in terms of age in America. Between people under, say, 45 and people above. And, I mean, it can be it comes out in every poll done. But you see it visibly.

I used to live a block away from a public school which you looked at, Cambridge Rindge and Latin, which is a very diverse multicultural school genuine. And I used to just love walks through that school because you see these young kids, their interaction with each other is like nothing a person over 50 can understand. And the reason for the appeal to younger people is that indeed he represents this intercultural America, I call it ecumenical, because there is a common culture there, a common culture which black Americans contribute to enormously, even as they were excluded. And--

BILL MOYERS: Through music, and art, and-

ORLANDO PATTERSON: Yes. And styles of living-

BILL MOYERS: Sure. Language-

ORLANDO PATTERSON: --language.

BILL MOYERS: --yes, language.

ORLANDO PATTERSON: Fist-bumping and arm, what have you. I mean, it's

BILL MOYERS: Fist-bumping?

ORLANDO PATTERSON: I mean, and the over-50s don't know about that. But, I mean you know, that's their problem. So and he embodies that and represents that. Now he's going to have also an enormous effect on the black community. Already we see that. Remember the beginning, Hillary Clinton was 40 points ahead of him because of the blacks just didn't see that he was possible. Until Iowa, and so on. Now, I see a tremendous change already in the black communities. My God, we are accepted. We are part of the system. And I-

GLENN C. LOURY: So is it an ecumenical or multicultural development, this change within the black community rallying around Obama?

ORLANDO PATTERSON: Yes, but it-

GLENN C. LOURY: Is it in a multicultural but not an ecumenical development?

ORLANDO PATTERSON: No, it has to go, it's gonna go beyond identity politics now, which accepts the others, but which sort of simply say, "I do my thing and you do your thing." What it's saying is that these people are accepting him as their leader. We are part of this--

GLENN C. LOURY: Yeah, but-

GLENN C. LOURY: I would say that in--

ORLANDO PATTERSON: I see it in the barbershop. My sense is that-

GLENN C. LOURY: No, no, I know what you're talking about. I see it in my inbox from e-mails from people writing in when they don't like what I say on some blog or something. But-

BILL MOYERS: But you're skeptical of what?

GLENN C. LOURY: Well-

BILL MOYERS: Orlando is-

GLENN C. LOURY: Yeah, I am. Because well on the first thing I wanna say is I think Obama's candidacy is an extraordinary event, and I see it not mainly through the generational lens or even through the racial lens. I see it through the way that he frames conflict, political difference.

He wants to transcend and not litigate some of these open questions from our culture wars and out past political wars.

It's not as if he's saying we have to extirpate every remnant of the Reagan era, we have to go after every right-wing this or right-wing that. It's as if he wants to say, "It's a whole new day, let's redefine the questions and let's change the agenda."

But the other thing that I wanted to say about Obama is with respect to blacks is who are voting to Barack Obama in 90 percent levels in the primary season, and who constitute a very important element of his political coalition. I don't know that they recognize that they're voting for the end of race as we've known it in the country. I don't know that they recognize and I don't mean to belittle them. I'm just asking a question. I'm not sure they recognize that--

ORLANDO PATTERSON: Why would they?

GLENN C. LOURY: In the success of-

ORLANDO PATTERSON: But-

GLENN C. LOURY: Obama's candidacy will be a complete redefinition of the racial landscape.

ORLANDO PATTERSON: And there's no reason why they should.

GLENN C. LOURY: Well, because they're caught up in the emotion of a black guy runnin' for President. It's the first chance to support them without perhaps thinking through all the implications of what that might mean.

ORLANDO PATTERSON: Right. But, you know, that's the way things happen in America. During the Revolution those Revolution leaders didn't know they were running a Revolution. I mean you know, you read their diaries, you know, I mean, Adams at one point said, "My God. I mean, I'm a conservative lawyer. What am I doing?" I mean. And, you know, things emerge in context, you know. The logic of the situation forces people to think anew-

BILL MOYERS: Now, you--

ORLANDO PATTERSON: --and that's what's happening here.

BILL MOYERS: Orlando Patterson, Glenn Loury, Thanks for being here.

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