



What's Race Got to Do With It?

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Session Outcomes

At the end of this session, the goal is that we:

- **Feel more connected to one another**
- **Feel clear about our role in making change/making history**
- **Know more about the history of race/class and schools in our country in a way that allows you to make more sense of the world for yourself and the people you lead**
- **Be able to discuss the present situation in public schools with the history of race and class at the center of the story**

Norms



- Move up/Move back
- Be good to each other
- Respect facilitators
- Commit to learning

What you're about to hear has roots

- Black Liberation Movement
- Movements for Racial Justice/Autonomy
- Labor Movement
- Educators' Movements
- Feminist Movement
- Queer Liberation Movement



Ella Baker



Cesar Chavez



Marshall Ganz

3 Main Takeaways

- 1. Change happens when we can effectively utilize more power than our opposition**
- 2. Organizing multiracial majorities is the key to our power**
- 3. When multiracial majorities use power to win, everyone benefits**

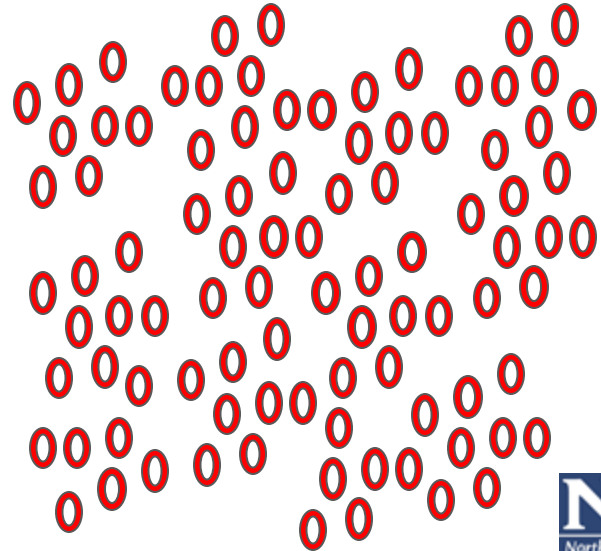
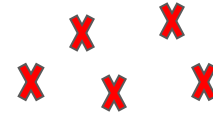
Small Groups (20 minutes)

- **Imagine a community without the powerful divisions imposed by racism, sexism, etc → what would the life of a family look like?**
 - Imagine and describe things like values, mental and physical well-being, work, school, social connections, etc.
- **Use butcher paper to write/draw to depict your groups vision**
- **Report out - tell us about a day in the family's life in 90 seconds or less**
 - Emphasize things that feel different than they do now

Some basics before the history

Fundamental Problem in Our Society

- **People's basic needs are not guaranteed to be met**
 - Some people **own the things they need**, or **can trade the things that they own** for those things (owning classes)
 - Most people **don't own things** and can only **trade their time and labor** in exchange for the things that they need (working classes)
 - This leaves most people more vulnerable to exploitation



Land Acknowledgement

Many of the people who inhabited North America prior to European colonization organized their societies much differently:

- Basic needs were met
- No one's needs could be met at the expense of the needs of others' or the natural world

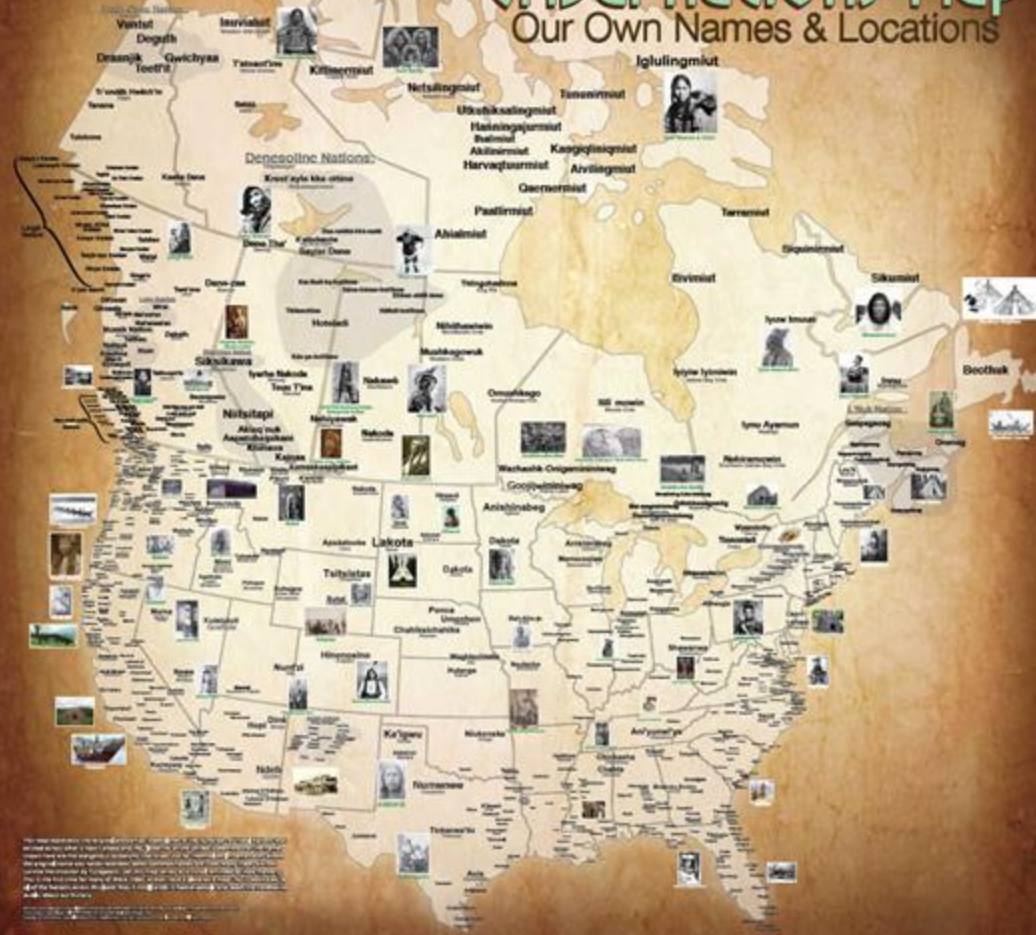
British/American Solution = Genocide

- Murder
- Forced removal
- Put in conditions that would prevent them from thriving
- Stripped of their culture
- Only 237,000 Native people remained in U.S. 1900



Tribal Nations Map

Our Own Names & Locations

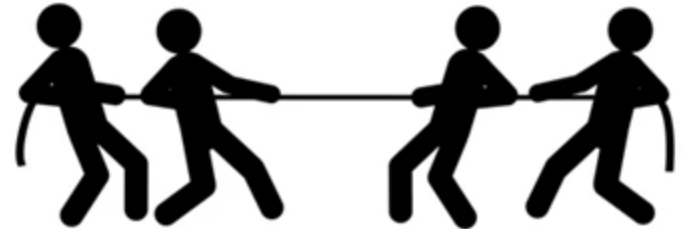


**Hegemony = Fish in the Water
(i.e. “it’s always been like this”)**

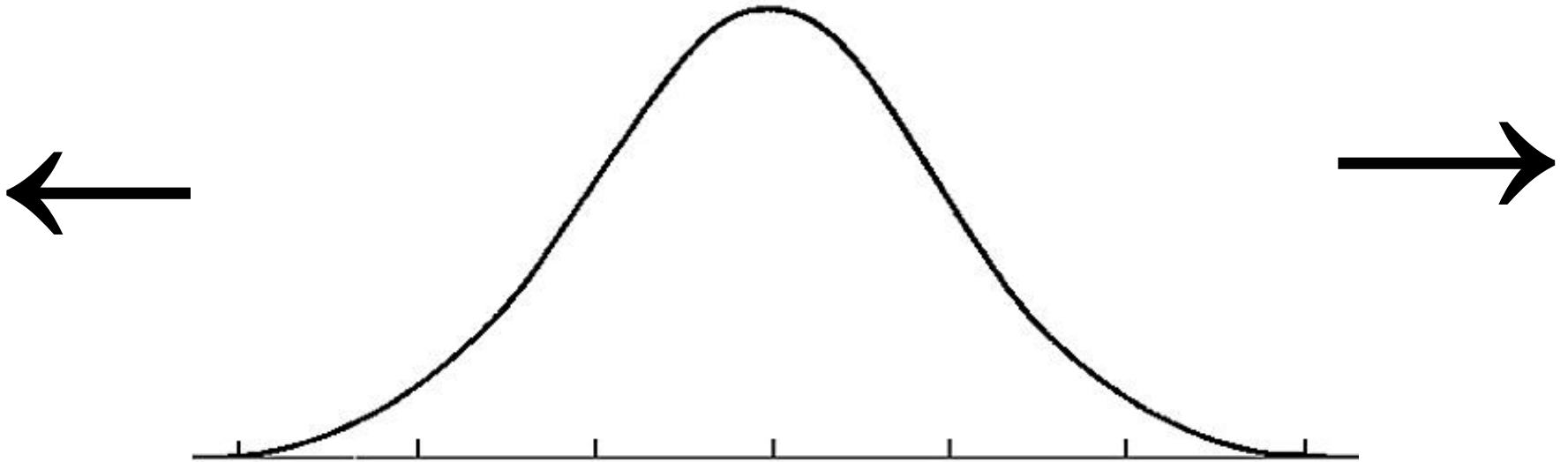


It is a Reflection of POWER

- **Power**→ The ability to achieve purpose (despite opposition)
 - Power
 - Over
 - With/to/within
- **The ability to frame/shape/reshape the “common sense”**
 - Common sense = something 9 out of 10 people agree with
- **The ability to move:**
 - People into action
 - Money and resources where they need to go
 - Ideas through the mainstream



**Power = Who can move “the middle”/
the MAJORITY**



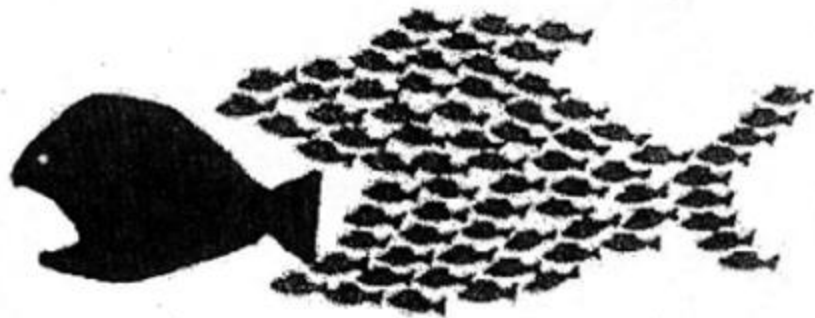
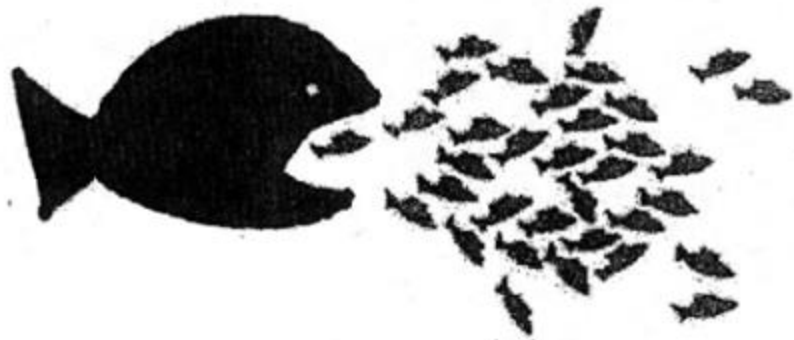
Power is Always Contested



Our Power

Which of these forms of power seems most accessible to our people?

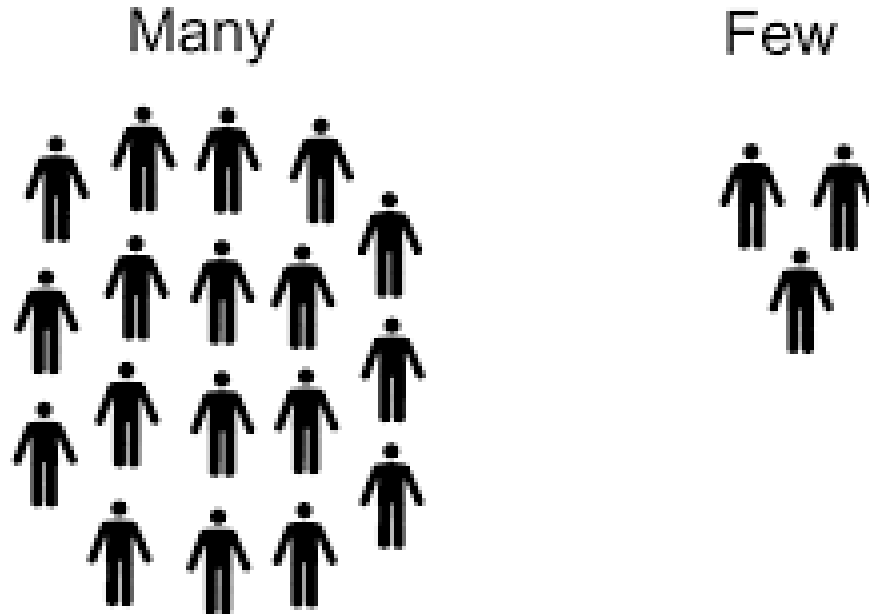
- People into action
- Money and resources where they need to go
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WE MUST MOVE MAJORITIES



Every “ism” → *Created to Divide Up Our Majority and Exploit Us*



White Supremacy, Race, & Class

White supremacy - an historically based, institutionally perpetuated system of exploitation and oppression of continents, nations and peoples of color by white peoples and nations of the European continent; for the purpose of maintaining and defending a system of wealth, power, and privilege.

Definition from the Challenging White Supremacy Workshop

**But things haven't
"always been like
this"...**

It was made up

- Genocide → Breaking up the working class
- John Punch
- Development of the White Supremacy System in the Colonies



Development of Race in the Colonies

Colonial Virginia in the 17th Century

- 4 groups of people
 - Indigenous
 - Rich Europeans
 - Poor Europeans
 - Africans



Development of Race in the Colonies

Bacon's Rebellion

- Conflict in the ruling class
- Bacon led an uprising to gain power
- Poor Europeans and Africans, armed and together, burned Jamestown and almost defeated the colonial Governor



Development of Race...they made it up

Created “white”

- **Created a shared identity between Europeans - rich & poor**
- **Predicated on:**
 - Privileges
 - Freedom after a period of servitude
 - Opportunity to own land, vote, own a weapon
 - Enforcing oppression of Black people

Created “Black”

- **Legally defined as property in perpetuity**
- **Children of Black mothers would be enslaved**

1st Racial Regime - Common Sense

- Until 1865, economic and political life in the US was organized around the institution and racial relationship of slavery
- Constantly contented, especially over the role of the federal government
- Schools & Education



1st Racial Regime -Disrupting the Common Sense

- **Civil War & the Abolition of Slavery**

- A movement, led by Black people, won over enough White people to win it's main demands and reorganized life in the U.S
- Confederacy was defeated for a time



Reconstruction

A moment of possibility

- Destruction of the racial regime of slavery
- Southern states, with resources and commitment from the federal government reshaped Southern society for all people (schools, health care, housing, jobs)
- Black men went from being enslaved to running state legislatures



Reconstruction

Origin for Public Schools in South

- **First demand of newly freed Black people during Reconstruction**
 - A little North Carolina history



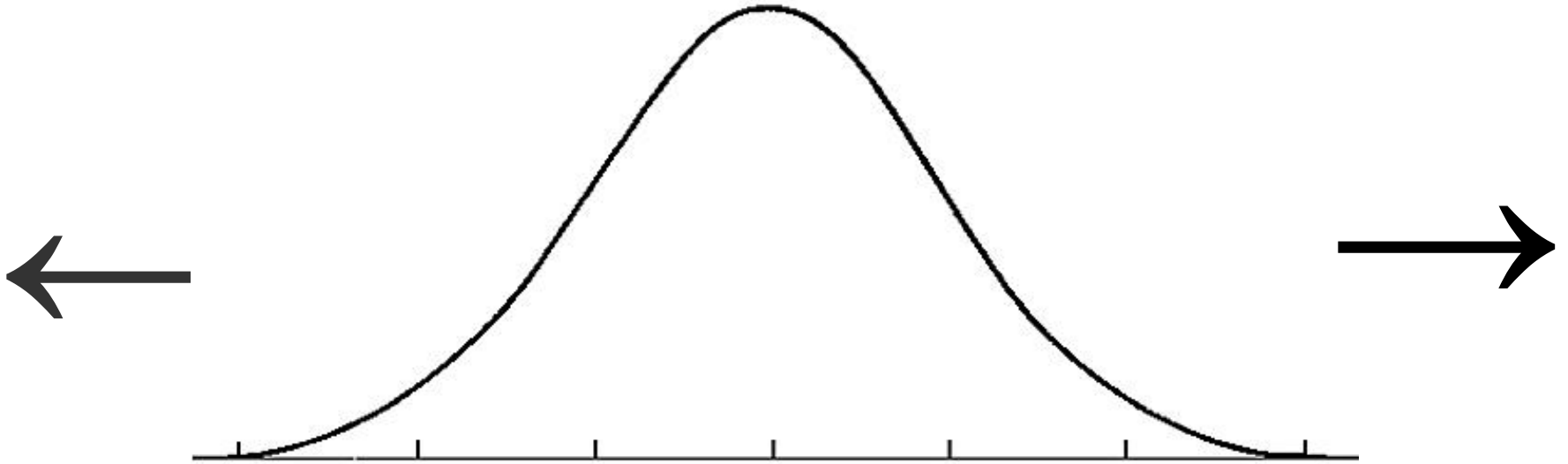
Reconstruction

When multiracial majorities use power to win, everyone benefits

- Best period of history for poor white people in the South



What's up for grabs?



How do you think wealthy whites responded to the multi-racial democracy of Reconstruction?

Deconstruction of Reconstruction

White Privilege and White Supremacy

- **Murdered/threatened leaders (Black & White) who challenged White Supremacy**
- **Denied voting rights and other forms of political and economic power from Black people**
- **Wealthy white Southerners offered small privileges to poor whites in return for political loyalty**



2nd Racial Regime - Jim Crow

Complete reorganization of a white supremacist state under new means

- Economic
- Political
- Social
- Military

Limited the power of the federal government



2nd Racial Regime - Jim Crow

Jim Crow Schools

- **Promise of public schools but insufficient in commitment and practice**
 - Black students
 - Other students of color and immigrant students
 - Girls
 - Kids with disabilities
 - LGBTQ+ students



2nd Racial Regime - Jim Crow

Movement to end Jim Crow

- Black led movement that other people joined in
- Early focus on education



Civil Rights Era

The defeat of Jim Crow - another moment of possibility

- Defeat of the racial regime of Jim Crow is marked by legislation, executive action, and court decisions of the 50s, 60s, and 70s
- The federal government was forced to play a significant role
- It was now illegal and enforceable by law to discriminate based on race



Movements From All



Better Funded Public Sector

- Stronger social safety net
- More resources for enforcement of legal protections won by movements
- Lots of public jobs (public sector quadrupled from 1950 to 2009)
- Rise of public sector unions



Process + Pair + Share (10 minutes)

Process - Imagine your own family's life had the movement of the 60s / 70s sustainably continued their successes. What would be different? What would be the same? [3 minutes]

Pair - Find a partner and share about your families' lives [3 minutes each!]

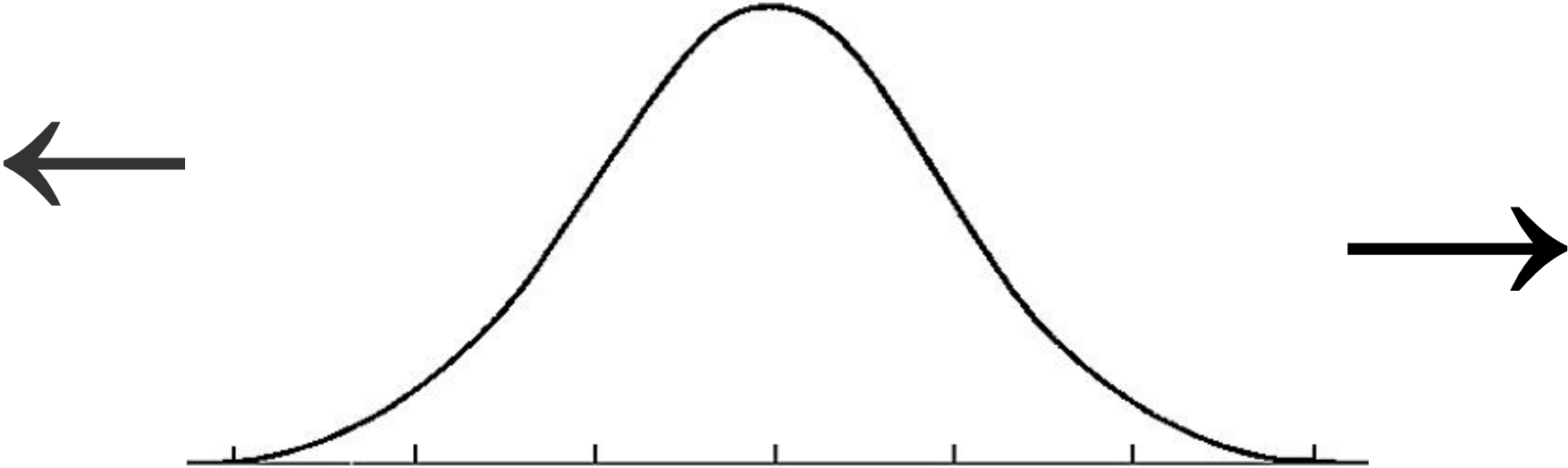
**Who is a strong
public sector better
for?**

Wealthy elites?

or

**Working class people
(across race)?**

What's up for grabs?



And Again



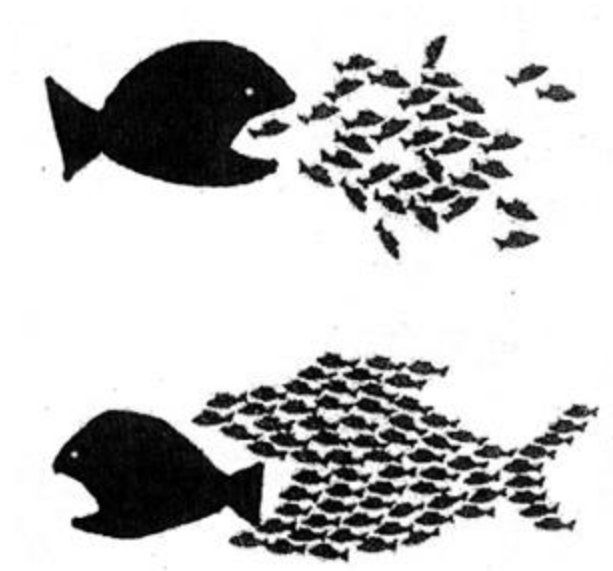
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Organizations are the Source of Our Power

Ability to move:

- Money
- Majorities
- Our ideas in the mainstream

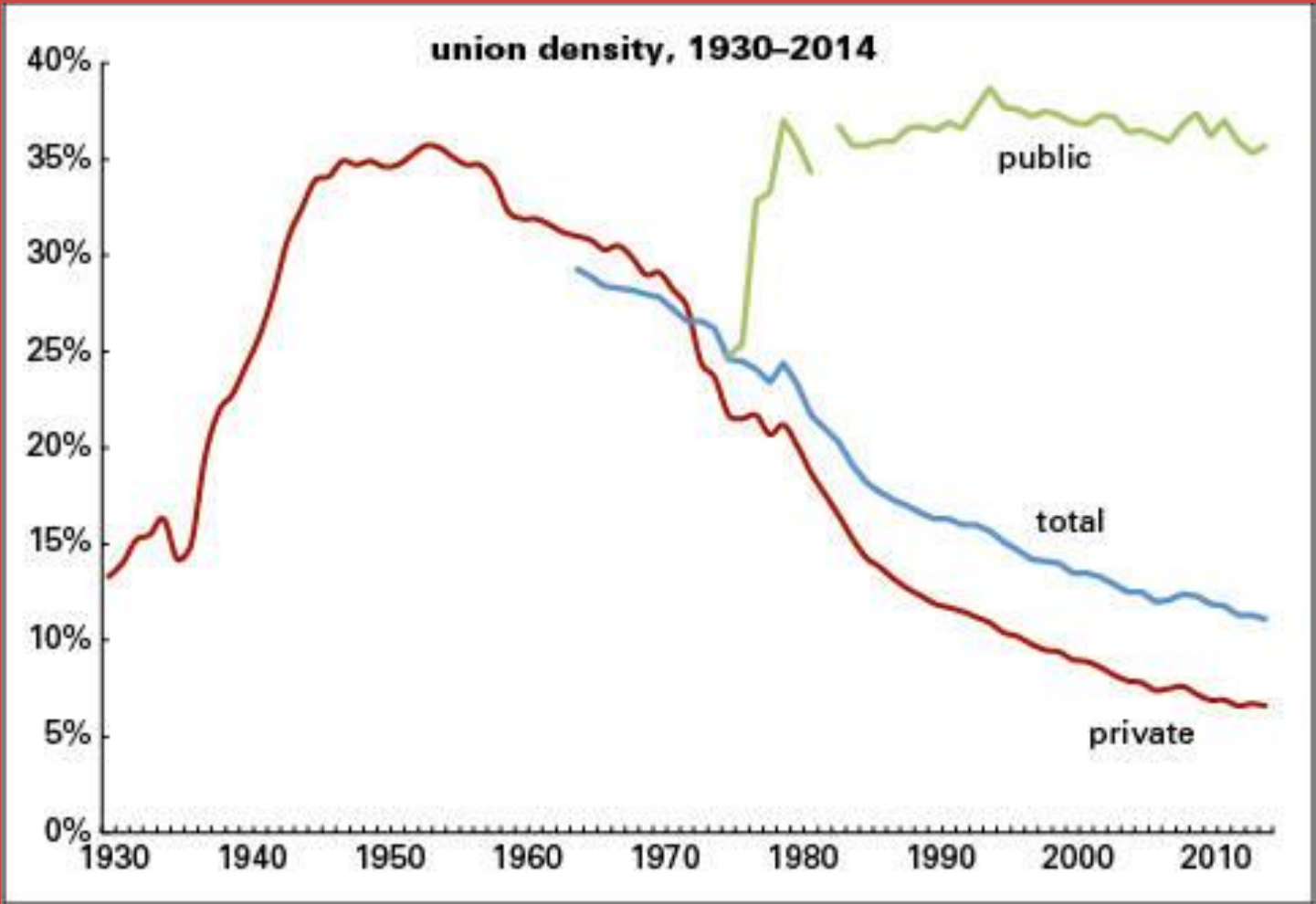


Destroy Our Organizations = Destroying Our Power

Attacked our organizations through legal and illegal means

- Black Freedom Movement
- Other movements for social justice
- Labor Unions





Rise of Neoliberalism

- **Conservative political movement and economic ideas have gained strength across a variety of institutions**
- **Main components**
 - Tax breaks for the rich
 - Increased spending on military, prisons, and police
 - Cuts to social programs
 - Privatization and deregulation → SHRINK THE PUBLIC SECTOR



Main Argument → **An economy with no rules except
INDIVIDUAL CHOICE**



3rd Racial Regime - The New Confederacy

- **Massive transfer of wealth from the bottom to the top of society**
- **Mass incarceration of Black and Brown people**
- **Widening the Wellness/Health/Achievement Gap**
- **Deindustrialization / Urban Decay / Gentrification**
- **Privatization of nearly everything → SHRINK THE PUBLIC SECTOR**



New Jim Crow Racism: Changing the Common Sense

- It was no longer as acceptable to be openly racist in public
- Created “colorblind” racism
 - Criminalization → “Law & Order”
 - Attacks on affirmative action
 - Charges of “reverse racism”
- Focus on diversity rather than power
- Win white people back over through fear (again)

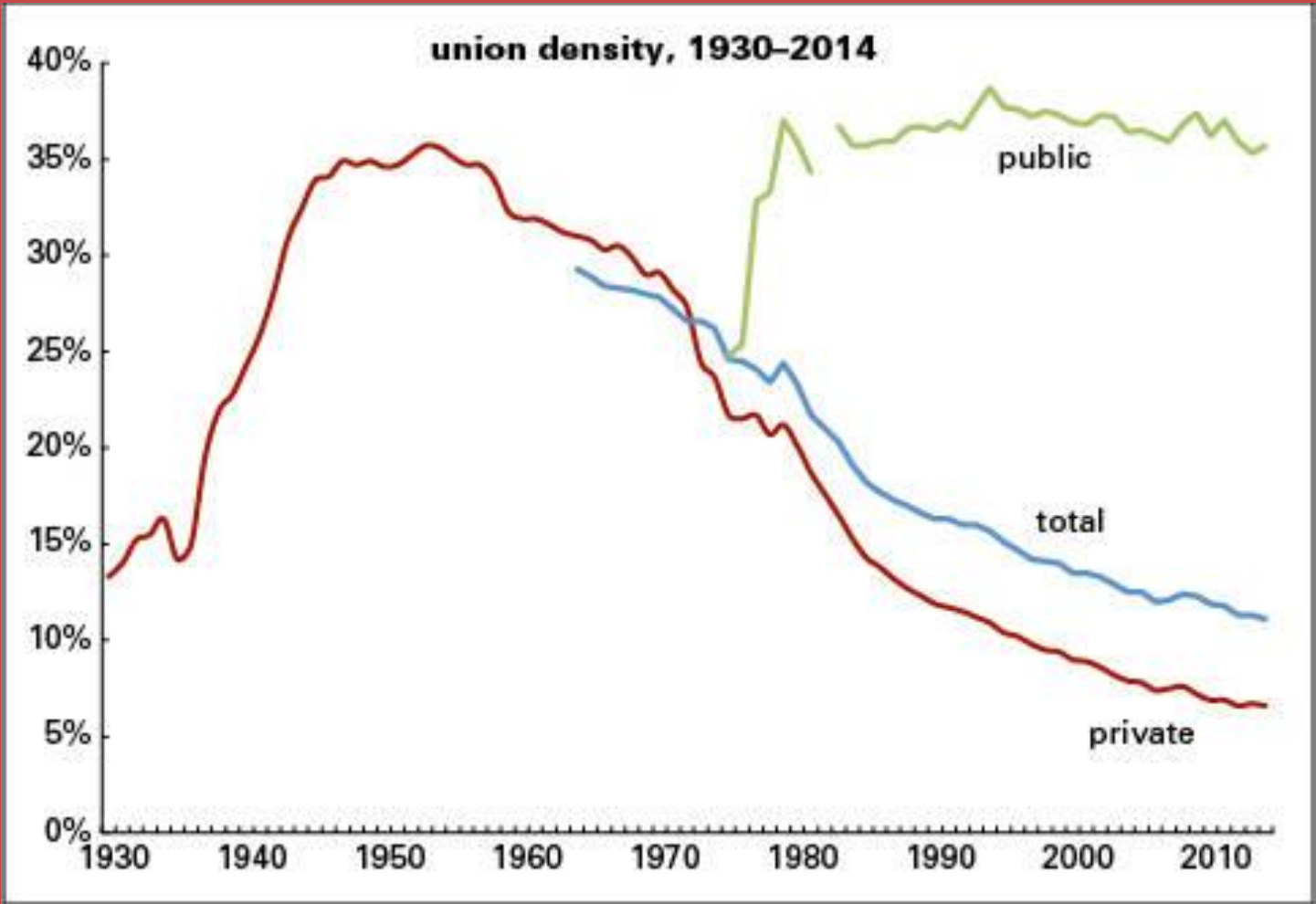


Changing the Common Sense on Unions

Unions...

- Promote laziness
- Slow down the economy
- Stifle creativity
- Result in wages that are “too high”
- Breed corruption





Educators are Still Organized

- **Most Organized workers in the Country**
 - NEA→ 3+ million
 - AFT→ 1.5+ million
- **Have the power to defend (and transform) the most significant public institution in our society**



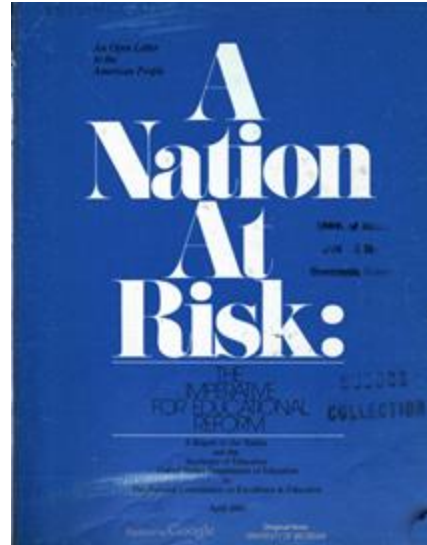
Which Makes Us Dangerous

If you want to destroy the public sector (and public schools), you have to destroy public sector unions



Weaken Support for Public Schools

- A Nation at Risk
- Teach for America
- No Child Left Behind
- Waiting for Superman
- Race to the Top



Attack Our Unions

Wisconsin (2010) → Janus (2018) → Now

- Spread of “non-political teachers organizations”--> PENC
- “Give yourself a raise” campaigns
- Janus→ “Right to work” is EVERYWHERE
- State laws preventing dues deduction



TEACHERS:

Want a \$500 raise?

.....
LeaveNCAE.com

PAID FOR BY THE JOHN LOCKE FOUNDATION

Deadline: September 30

LAMAR

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Where does this go?



Movement Around the Country

- Wisconsin in 2011
- Chicago strike in 2012
 - The Schools Chicago Students Deserve
- Red 4 Ed Movement (2018)
- UTLA Strike in 2019



Our New Unions & The Schools Our Students Deserve

From Wisconsin→ now:

- Increased inclusion of student/ community- centered demands in contract fights
- Strikes that win resources specifically put aside for the good of students, families, and communities (Bargaining for the Common Good)
- Community Schools (NEA institute with 6 NC locals)



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