

"BLACK REPARATIONS FILM PROJECT: DESCENDANTS OF SLAVERY AND  
INSTITUTIONAL RACISM"

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Thesis Prepared for the Degree of

MASTER OF FINE ARTS

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS

August 2016

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Hodge, Tuarean. "*Black Reparations Film Project: Descendants of Slavery and Institutional Racism.*" Master of Fine Arts (Documentary Production Studies), August 2016, 54 pp., works cited, 44 titles.

*Black Reparations Film Project: Descendants of Slavery and Institutional Racism* is a character driven film that sheds light on the consequences of slavery in the U.S. Through a personal narrative, the viewer comes to understand how these consequences support the argument for slavery reparations. The purpose of the film is to bridge the generational gap in awareness of reparation history. The film can be used to enlighten young Americans of all ethnicities to encourage them to find their purpose in this country, help build better race relations, and work towards building a true democracy.

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## INTRODUCTION

### Title, Medium, and Length

- A. *Black Reparations Film Project: Descendants of Slavery and Institutional Racism*
- B. Medium- RED 4K
- C. Length- 22 minutes

### Short Description

Growing up, public education glamorized our forefathers for their courageous acts to become independent of Great Britain in the late 1700s. The vision then was democracy. The Declaration of Independence stated, "All men are created equal." But who was considered a "man" in 1776? Would I, a Black<sup>1</sup> male without any real estate, have been considered a man? Would I have had rights and full access to the wealth and resources of America? If not then, how about after the Emancipation Proclamation<sup>2</sup> of 1863, or more likely, at the end of the Civil War<sup>3</sup> in 1865? Did my ancestors have access to the great opportunities available to other immigrants? What was to be their contribution to this country after the Civil War? Even later, at the height of the Civil Rights<sup>4</sup> era in American history, did the racial group I belonged to, have a fair shot at being innovators in this democracy? These were some of the thoughts I had as I began research to a much bigger discussion about reparations.

With these thoughts heavy on my mind, my next task was to contact experts on the topic of reparations. I first spoke to Cheylon Brown, the director of the Multicultural Center at the University of North Texas at the time. She recommended the organization N'COBRA

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<sup>1</sup> Black - a person with dark skin who comes from Africa (or whose ancestors came from Africa. Also known in the United States historically as Negro, Nigger, Nigga, African American, Colored, African Slave, and Black.

<sup>2</sup> Issued by Abraham Lincoln on January 1, 1863, the Emancipation Proclamation declared, "all persons held as slaves within any State or designated part of a State, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free." -Library of Congress

<sup>3</sup> The American Civil War, widely known in the United States as simply the Civil War as well as other sectional names, was a civil war fought from 1861 to 1865 to determine the survival of the Union or independence for the Confederacy. -Wikipedia

<sup>4</sup> Civil right are the rights of citizens to political and social freedom and equality.

to me. N'COBRA or the National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America is a mass-based alliance organized for the sole purpose of obtaining reparations for descendants of African slaves in the United States. Eventually, I met James Rodgers, a local leader of the Dallas chapter of the organization. After many conversations with him, Mr. Rodgers insisted I expand my network of activist in the reparations movement. So I took his advice and went to Atlanta, Georgia, where I connected with another member of N'COBRA, Jamoka X. He also increased my knowledge of the reparations movement and the history of Blacks in the United States. I researched some of his recommendations and developed an ongoing relationship with him. The relationship thrived and eventually I was invited attend a reparations conference in Harlem, New York City.

At the reparations conference I saw many Black people from all around the world. Blacks in the Americas<sup>5</sup>, United Kingdom<sup>6</sup>, and parts of Africa<sup>7</sup> may speak many different languages, but we all share a larger story in common; we all are the descendants of Africans, who were wrongfully tortured and enslaved in the past. These people of African descent were the economic backbone of the European colonies in the New World<sup>8</sup> and were never compensated for their labor. During the conference I noticed that the many attendees were members of Generation X, born between 1965 and 1980, approximately, that is my own generation. Although I learned much about slavery, racism, Jim Crow,

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<sup>5</sup> The Americas, or America, also known as the Western Hemisphere and the New World, comprise the totality of territories in North America and South America. - Wiki

<sup>6</sup> The United Kingdom (U.K.), made up of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, is an island nation in northwestern Europe. -Wiki

<sup>7</sup> Africa is the world's second-largest and second-most-populous continent. At about 30.2 million km<sup>2</sup> including adjacent islands, it covers six percent of Earth's total surface area and 20.4 percent of its total land area. -Wiki

<sup>8</sup> New World definition. A name for the Americas, especially during the time of first exploration and colonization of the America as by Europeans. (Compare Old World.) The American Heritage® New Dictionary of Cultural Literacy, Third Edition.

housing discrimination, self-hate, systematic White supremacy, and the reparations movement, I began to reflect on the fact that very few of my contemporaries were broadly aware of this knowledge. That's when it dawned upon me that the *Black Reparations Film Project: Descendants of Slavery and Institutional Racism*, could focus on me as an individual representing Generation X in search for knowledge of my ancestral background as it pertains to slavery and its effects, this will be the framework for awareness of reparations.

Now I understand that reparations is a huge topic, and that narrowing it down to reparations for Americans who are descendants of enslaved Africans does little to reduce the scope of the project. But one way it seemed that I could fruitfully develop an angle to explore it in a film would be to make the film's focus almost autobiographical – I could look at this topic through *my own* developing awareness of the history of a movement that I had hitherto known little about.

### Purpose

*Black Reparations Film Project: Descendants of Slavery and Institutional Racism* is a self-driven film that sheds light on slavery and its descendants while addressing the ignorance of one generation about reparations. The purpose of the film is bridge the generational gap revealed by lack of knowledge of self and the reparations movement within the Black community. It will do this by taking the city of Dallas, Texas as a case study and concentrating on the racially biased policies and practices of the U. S. housing market from the early 1900s and how they affect modern day living conditions amongst Blacks in communities living below poverty. The film can be used to enlighten young Americans of all ethnic backgrounds and it will help to create meaningful conversations



among and between racial groups with the ultimate goal of building better race and social relations, institutions, in the United States from the vision of the oppressed.

#### Intended Audience

This film will be useful for African American studies, United States, and World history classes where students see historical events of slavery and precedent for today's behavior and economic issues within systematic racism. This film will be valuable to groups, individuals, and members who fight against oppression and race based practices on people of color. Through the form of Members of generations X<sup>9</sup> and Y<sup>10</sup> of all races with interests in reparations and historical crisis can find value in this film as well.

#### Feasibility

Slavery in the U.S. States began almost 400 years ago, but the laws and behavior patterns still affect Americans today. I recently came across a portion of a speech Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. gave in 1968 about reparations (Dyson). I was surprised to learn about the speech and even more surprised that at the age of 29, it was new to me and my generation, "eighties babies." My first time hearing this in particular, I wondered how many people knew the meaning of reparations and if they did, what it meant to them.

As a result of having attended the reparations summit, I developed relationships with activists and experts in this movement. Building on their knowledge, my mission with this film is to bring awareness to individuals, groups, and organizations that are against oppression on people of color and close a generational gap of knowledge of the reparations

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<sup>9</sup> Generation X, commonly abbreviated to Gen X, is the generation born after the Western Post-World War II baby boom. Demographers and commentators use birth dates ranging from the early 1960s to the early 1980s. -Google

<sup>10</sup> Millennials (also known as the Millennial Generation or Generation Y) are the demographic cohort following Generation X. There are no precise dates when the generation starts and ends; most researchers and commentators use birth years ranging from the early 1980s to the early 2000s. - Google

movement. Because I grew up in urban area of Dallas, TX, United States of America, and I know the crises affecting my own neighborhood. I will have easy access to those with whom I grew up and will therefore be able to supply a point of view of the effects of intuitional racism within system of public housing practices from the eyes of the oppressed. Concurrently, as a result of my pursuit of higher education, I am also able to access experts in field of reparations, education, health, and history.

### Summary of Research

Reparations by definition are the making of amends for a wrong that one has done, by paying money to or otherwise providing help to those who have been wronged. When used in reference to wrongs experienced by African Americans, the claim is made that US society owes a debt of trillions of dollars for wage theft and other wrongdoings inflicted upon on African slaves and their descendants.

In this section of my proposal, when I use the shorthand expression, “reparations,” I am specifically referring to reparations for the enslavement from 1619-1863 of Africans in the colonies that became the United States of America, and the subsequent continuing injustices that harmed the ancestors of those slaves. The broader issue of reparations includes many other groups in the United States, most notably Japanese citizens who were interned during World War II and Native Americans whose treaties with the United States have been repeatedly violated since the 18<sup>th</sup> century (Zinn 125-148). Reparations is also part of an even larger international narrative that includes the history of the Holocaust, the Turkish genocide of Armenians, the truth and reconciliation efforts following the end of apartheid in South Africa, among many other travesties which encompass a range much more comprehensive than the narrow scope of this thesis.

This research summary covers two major topics. First, it provides a brief sampling of scholarly literature on the history of the Black experience in United States history with especial reference those writers who focus on the economic contributions of Blacks and second, it reviews several film treatments of Black history that focus on the reparations argument, including some with a personal narrative approach that have influenced my own thinking.

For this section I have relied on three major scholars or scholarly works: Joe Feagin, Howard Zinn, and *American Apartheid*, a book by Douglas Massey and Nancy Denton. In addition, Ta’Nehisi Coates’ essay, “The Case for Reparations,” published in the June 2014 issue of *The Atlantic Monthly* has also been a major influence; Coates referenced these same scholars. The works focus on the economic costs of the centuries of injustice experienced by Americans of African descent and they have also been used extensively by those in the reparations movement.

In the following paragraph I present the outcomes of slavery in these categories: economic cost, wealth generated, pre-civil rights 20<sup>th</sup> century, post-civil rights era, concluding with a review of harms slavery caused to the descendants of slaves. I conclude this section with a discussion of H.R. 40, a bill introduced by Congressman John Conyers suggesting a commission to be assembled to study reparations for African Americans and suggest appropriate solutions. First I provide a synopsis of the history of slavery in the United States.

Slaves arrived in the US in 1619 at Jamestown, VA from the Caribbean. Howard Zinn describes the 17<sup>th</sup> century as a period when Africans in the US lost their status as human beings through a series of laws passed in colonies (in total referred to as slave

codes), through changes in Christian religious doctrine, and through the separation of White indentured servants and enslaved Blacks – initially a class of workers with common interests at the bottom of the social hierarchy – via the promise of White privilege, as skin color came increasingly to describe the lowest rung of society and to distinguish those who were free from those who were not (23-38).

It is historical error to account for the rise of the major industrial powers of England and the US during the late 1600s through the 1800s, without factoring in the benefit of free labor provided by slaves (Zinn 171). The rise of the capitalist system in turn helped to create laws and social customs that would entrench the inferior status of African Americans. Feagin states, “socially reproduced over time are racially structured institutions, such as economic institutions that perpetuate the exploitation of Black labor and the legal institution protecting that exploitation” (52). The resulting system made slaves one of its most valued possessions for generations to come.

How much were slaves worth? Ta-Nehisi Coates argues:

In order to get a true sense of how much wealth the South held in bondage, it makes far more sense to look at slavery in terms of the percentage of total economic value it represented at the time. In 1860, slaves represented about 16 percent of the total household assets, that is, all the wealth in the entire country, which in today’s terms is a stunning \$10 trillion. (1)

Citing civil war historian Eric Foner, Coates reports, “in 1860, slaves as property were worth more than all the banks, factories and railroads in the country put together” (2). Coates asks his readers to imagine “what would happen if you liquidated the banks, factories and railroads with no compensation” (2). Black labor produced so much wealth; it

was the foundation of enrichment of Whites at the top of the class structure for generations.

According to Feagin, researcher Larry Neal “calculated that the [then] current value [1983] of slave labor expropriated by Whites from 1620 to 1865 ranges from about \$963 billion to as much as \$97, 064 billion” (53). Another way to assess the value of slave labor was introduced by Canadian physicist, Dr. Denis G. Rancourt, who found that, “the value of the stolen labor, for the period 1790 to 1860, at today’s US minimum wage of \$7.24 per hour is as follows. (Note that using today’s minimum wage automatically corrects for valuing the historic currency to its present value.)

$$\begin{array}{r} 70 \text{ years (1790 to 1860 period only)} \\ \times \\ 2 \text{ million slaves (average number in the period used)} \\ \times \\ 365 \text{ days per year (OK, maybe I should exclude one day off per week?)} \\ \times \\ 10 \text{ hours of work per day (again a minimum)} \\ \times \\ \$7.25 \text{ per hour} \\ = \\ \mathbf{\$ 3.7 \text{ trillion} (1)} \end{array}$$

Feagin disputes the assertions of those scholars who argue that figuring out the debt is impossible because the history is too distant. Whichever one of the estimates you select from above, it is obvious that it’s possible to calculate a dollar value. But the end of slavery did not mean the end of damages done to African Americans; in fact, more damage was caused by means of segregation and discrimination.

Jim Crow is the term for the era of legal segregation after the end of the Civil War, following a very brief social experiment known as Reconstruction. This period extended from 1876 to approximately 1965. Segregation legal in the U.S., and for Blacks it was a

financial catastrophe. According to Feagin, “the cost of labor market discrimination for 1929-1969 (in 1983 dollars) at 1.6 trillion. Calculating the cost of anti-black discrimination from the end of slavery in 1865 to the year 1968, the end of legal segregation, and putting that calculation into the year-2004 dollars would likely increase that wage-loss estimate to several trillion dollars”(54).

Though there is a range in the estimates, there is no doubt that those who profited from the enslavement and subsequent impoverishment of Blacks in America. This concept, from English America common law, refers to circumstance where one individual party has received and retained “property, money, or benefits which in justice or equality belong to another,” thus obliging restitution to the original party, including “gains later made from it.” (qtd. in Feagin 50). Feagin argues that the concept might be applied by analogy to the situation where one group benefits at the expense of another simply put, for some fifteen generations the exploitation and oppression of Blacks have redistributed income and wealth earned by black labor to generate and, as the synopsis indicates, the conclusion of legalized slavery did not conclude the exploitation of Blacks, continuing their “unjust impoverishment” (unjust enrichments evil twin) (Feagin 51). White Americans, leaving the former relatively impoverished as a group and the latter relatively privileged as a group” (Feagin 53). As Zinn points out:

Slavery [would end] only under conditions controlled by Whites, and only when required by the political and economic needs of the business elites of the North. It was Abraham Lincoln who combined perfectly the needs of business [and] the political ambition of the new Republican Party. (187)

The civil rights movement in the United States lasted from about 1945-1965 and African-Americans did gain some rights (voting, segregation was outlawed), nonetheless there is significant evidence of continued damage to the descendants of slaves. Coates uses the case of a neighborhood in Chicago to vividly depict the impact of decades of unfair housing practices legally enforced early on by the US Department of Housing through the policy of redlining (Coates 58). The impact of this policy, which defined largely Black neighborhoods in cities as places where housing loans could not easily be obtained can also be seen in a PowerPoint presentation of the Kirwan Institute which I witnessed recently at the Children's Health Center in Dallas coordinated by Stephanie Farquhar. The presenter used a study of red lining maps for Dallas, TX. These were color-coded maps accessed from the Library of Congress and they defined what section of which zip codes gets mortgage loans (up to today). The color-based system has wealthy White neighborhoods at the top and Black neighborhoods at the very bottom as far as distribution for housing loans. The Kirwan Institute presentation demonstrates the effects of red lining in three categories: bias, disinvestment, and decline. In the bias category, the study concluded that the Black populated areas were viewed as a risk to public health and property value. Secondly, the disinvestment category concluded that through structural disinvestment, financiers continued to decline to invest in these neighborhoods. With a continuing lack of access to capital, these neighborhoods move into the decline category in which, residents' inability to maintain property, stoke investors' motivation to not to invest.

In short, because home ownership and its economic appreciation are the major sources of wealth for the vast majority of Americans, Feagin suggest these housing practices cause trans-generational wealth deficits. And the result is that "each new

generation of Americans has inherited this preexisting framework of racial inequality and privilege” (52). This system of privilege has led to hyper-segregation in the present.

In the US one’s socioeconomic success may determine a great gratitude in gains of rewards in through labor market. Social scientist suggests that success depends on traits of characteristics. According to Massey and Denton, a person’s success depends on individual traits such as motivation, intelligence, and especially, education” (149). An individual growing up in a hyper-segregated ghetto has only a minimal chance to gain access to the necessary resources in order to achieve greater economic success. For example, if a foreign student moves to the US from an impoverished state of living and gains education and moves back to the impoverished neighborhood where others aren’t educated, they have minimal chances of advancing in the environment because the environment itself, lacks to resources to advance. In other words the ghetto was socially engineered as a place of isolation and control deprivation additional effects include language barriers. Massey and Denton found that ”the educational barriers facing ghetto children are exacerbated by teachers and school administrators who view Black English as wrong, bad, or inferior, thereby stigmatizing Black children and further determining their motivation to learn (p. 164). No environment to with resources, no motivation to learn, leads to no socioeconomic success.

Generational systems with lack of investment to grow and maintain and living in housing with no resources around leads to educational deficits as poorer schools lead to fewer opportunities to get ahead. In addition, as America deindustrialized, the opportunities to make a decent income with manual labor decreased.



Generations of this form of living results with psychological impacts, as the following simple example depicts: My friends and I may greet each other with an exchange of jokingly hateful remarks, sometimes referred to as “the dozens” (Rickford and Rickford 68). The greeting may sound like, “boy you ugly,” and in return, but your hairline is cricked. Then we would both laugh it off but unconsciously. These exchanges bothered me although I could pinpoint why until I stumble across Akbar. He found that “clowning and buffoonery became one of the primary ways that the violent and abusive slave master could be controlled and manipulated. A laughing or satisfied master was less likely to be a violent master” (Akbar 6). But once the majority or the group becomes clowns, and it becomes a social norm, then society stigmatizes that group in a category to not be taken seriously but as a form of entertainment.

I close this part of my summary with a brief outline of H.R. 40. A United States House Bill: A Reparations Study Commission. Since 1989, United States Representative John Conyers, Jr. has regularly introduced this bill in Congress to set up a commission to: acknowledge the fundamental injustice, cruelty, brutality, and in- humanity of slavery in the United States and the 13 American colonies between 1619 and 1865 and to establish a commission to ex- amine the institution of slavery, subsequent de jure and de facto racial and economic discrimination against African Americans, and the impact of these forces on living African Americans, to make recommendations to the Congress on appropriate remedies, and for other purposes.

H. R. 40’s intent is to educate the public especially the White public on racial history (Conyers). Since the mid-1990s reparations for Blacks in America has moved into the political and religious mainstream. For example in 2000, the Atlanta City Council joined the

city governments of Dallas, Cleveland, Detroit, and Washington D.C., in in passing a resolution to support a national commission to study slavery's impact."(Feagin 70).

### Film Treatments

In this second half of my research summary I focus on film treatments that have been influential in my thinking. Directed by Sam Pollard (2012), *Slavery by Another Name* challenges one of our country's most cherished assumptions: the belief that slavery ended with Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation of 1863. The documentary recounts how in the years following the Civil War, insidious new forms of forced labor emerged in the American South, keeping hundreds of thousands of African Americans in bondage, trapping them in a brutal system that would persist until the onset of World War II (Pollard). I must admit, after watching this film, there were days when I would not or could not speak in class, I was emotionally worn by thinking about the devastation that was done to the African American community. This film shed light on a new aspect of African American history in the U.S. detailing: pension laws, exploitation of Blacks, and forced labor.

One director of great importance to me because of his narrative style and his interweaving of personal memoir with the larger story he's telling is Marlon Riggs. In his movie, *Black Is, Black Ain't*, Riggs argued, the definitions of "blackness" African Americans impose upon one another contain and reduce the Black experience. Riggs uses poetry, music, and dance in his transitions to bring forth responses from the viewer that cannot be easily articulated. African American culture has strong traditions that rely on these artistic elements to express the un-expressible emotions. Poetry, dance, and music help to heal. They counter the effect of some of the painful information delivered in the film.

Finally, Director Tariq Nasheed of the *Hidden Colors Documentary* film really got me wondering about the history of African American. The film had more Afro centric tone rather than scholarly. It was somewhat a first of its kind, having been directed, produced, and funded by the Black community. It was the first time I had seen group economics work within the Black community. As a young Black male it gave me a unique perspective about people of color around the world and the terrorism which this group had been subjected. It also gave me a perspective of the situation in which I was living in and shed light on systematic White supremacy. I really became a fan of the way the film was driven by sound, images, and stories that were never told in public school. See, this film gave a perspective about the history of Africans and their influences of works done before and after European influence.

### Style and Approach

This film will use archival material such as photographs and video footage. There will be several interviews from private citizens, activists, experts, and historians. Spiritual style dancing, fast/ slow paced sound design, poetry, and visual animation will drive the narration. The narration will direct the majority of the story, while the sound design drives the tempo of the film. Archival material will represent environmental settings and provide historical artifacts. The dance and poetry will be in style of a spiritual music video, whereas the majority of the film will be in traditional style documentary with interview and narration.

## Treatment

This film opens with observational shots of a low-income neighborhood juxtaposed to a richer neighborhood of the same city. We see the contrast between the glittery and the unglamorous living conditions.

Next, we go back to the low-income setting. I am introduced in the film to share with you my background and the neighborhood in which I lived. I began to go to corner stores and mom and pop food shops that are recognized by locals in the neighborhood. Then we see more observational footage of broken down houses and unsafe living conditions. We establish that the outcome of the wealthy and low-income living is an outcome from slavery. The title of the film appears, *Black Reparations Film Project: Descendants of Slavery and Institutional Racism*.

Afterwards, we head to a Pan African store to meet with James Rodgers a member of NCOBRA. He explains that NCOBRA is the National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America and what they do, in a more sit down detailed interview.

Next, you see me again at the Pan African store asking Mr. Rodgers, why is there a big generational divide between the information about reparations. I begin to explain that I am a 29-year-old scholar working on my Masters and it was just 2 years ago that I heard about reparations. The elder gives his feedback. This establishes the ignorance of my generation as to reparations.

Next, there is an intermission of a dance/poetry video insert about poor living conditions. The intermission is short and sets the tone for the upcoming topic. As a result, we go into a more detailed focus about self-hate, lack of resources, and unawareness within the low incomes areas of living. We end with the quote, "You can take the Nigga out

the Hood, but you can't take the hood out the nigga." This establishes the common behavior patterns of people in these living conditions.

Next is the scholarly portion of the film, which will also have a poetic interlude summarizing slavery and its effects. Here scholars break down the outcome of slavery in these categories: consequences of slavery, the economic cost, wealth generated, pre-civil rights, 20 century, post-civil rights, brief review of the harm it caused to slavery and its descendants (Black People) and H.R 40.

What would reparations help? There is an old saying amongst Black people about a letter written by a slave owner named Willie Lynch. One of the most important things to remember in this letter was the quote, "keep the body, and take the mind." In essence many have made it out of the ghetto their minds are still held by a slave mentality. Apart from many other things reparations would help alleviate, healing this mindset would be key.

Last but not least, we speak of what would it look like for reparations? This sections focuses on the contributions that blacks could make if they are helped to their upmost potential. Here we may show examples of a Black prosperous neighborhood in America. We close out with the final interlude over the credits about reparations and its effect on the future.

#### Financial Possibilities

My goal is to raise \$10,000 through an Indiegogo crowd founding campaign. In addition, I will file travel grants applications to the UNT Media Arts department, College of Arts and Sciences, and Raupe in order to attend two reparations conferences and a film festival. The first conference is National/International Reparations Summit and the second

is the 26<sup>th</sup> Annual National NCOBRA conference. Also planned to attend is the American Black Film Festival.

### Distribution Possibilities

The festivals I plan to submit this film to are: American Black Film Festival, Pan African Film & Arts (Los Angeles), Hollywood Black, Urbanworld, San Diego Black, Black International Cinema, Berlin, Pan African (Cannes), Urban Film Series, New York African Diaspora, Roxbury, San Francisco Black, BFM International, Black Harvest International Festival, Cascade Festival of African Films, New York African Film Festival, San Francisco Black Film Festival, Africa In Motion (Edinburgh, Scotland), and Festival Pan African Du Cinema De Ouagadougou. After the travels runs through the film circuit I plan to process it for digital sales.

## Preproduction, Production, and Post Production Schedule

### ➤ November 2014

- Research-researching the topic about reparations. Reading, “Should America Pay” by Raymond A Winbush

### ➤ December 2014

- Research-researching the topic about reparations. Reading, “ Should America Pay” by Raymond A Winbush

### ➤ January 2015

- Video Trailer-The video trailer will be a part of the funding campaign.
- Research-researching the topic about reparations. Reading the Book “Paying Social Debt” by Richard F America

### ➤ February 2015

- Research-researching the topic about reparations. Reading the book “Middle Passage” by Dr. John Hendrik Clark

### ➤ March 2015

- Shoot social media campaign videos. This video will describe why I choose to make a documentary on this topic. Another video will direct you on where you can go to fund the film.
- Video blog- this will consist of periodical video blogs of others or me who are interested in the topic. The video blogs will go on campaign websites as well as trailer.
- Ta Nehisi Coates- Presentation at UNT on the topic of reparations.

### ➤ April 2015

- Showcase production funding campaign videos at Nation/International Reparations convention
- Launch funding campaign via Social Media
- May 2015
  - Promote funding campaign- New campaign video- A revised version of the campaign video for necessary purposes.
  - Read:
    - I May Not Get There With You The True Martin Luther King, Jr. By Michael Eric Dyson
    - Abraham Lincoln Papers at the Library of Congress website
    - “The Case for Reparations,” Ta-Nehisi Coates
    - “Documenting the Costs of Slavery, Segregation, and Contemporary Racism: Why Reparations Are in Order for African Americans,” by Joe R. Feagin\*
- June 2015
  - Read:
    - “Why reparations for slavery could help boost the economy,” by Michael Maiello and
    - Muhammad University of Islam Slavery and the Psychological Effects On The Black Man & Woman
    - Update campaign page
- July 2015
  - Continue proposal.



- Meet with Dr. Davenport and make corrections to proposal.
- Read The Accommodations book.
- Update campaign page
- August 2015
  - Production- Sit down interviews with Dr. Davenport, Ms. Cheylon, and Jamokee.
  - Public opinions in Dallas TX
  - Update campaign page
- September 2015
  - Update campaign page,
- October 2015
  - Footage of city of Dallas and Tuarean at Pan African Store.
- November 2015
  - Footage of city of Dallas with Sunil
- December 2015
  - Post Production Rough Cut 2, Story structure established and final recommendation for critiques.
  - Update campaign page
- January 2016
  - Picture lock and Final Cut
  - Update campaign page
- February 2016
  - Documentary Primer

- Update campaign page
- March 2016
  - Post Production Rough Cut 1, detailed string-out and recommendations for critiques.
- April 2016
  - Recommendations from Wayne Derrick we inputted and uploaded to YouTube to be shown to committee members.
- May 2016
  - Make changes based off committee's recommendations. Addition of Mr. Payton.
- June 2016
  - Fine cut and Defense
  - Make changes based off committee's recommendations. Additions of narration and personal experience (Self Reflexivity).
  - Picture Lock and Defense

## RECONCEPTUALIZATION BEFORE PRODUCTION

In the preproduction phase, I planned to have a variety of professionals whose backgrounds supported the major sub topics of the documentary, potentially experts in law, anthropology, psychology, history, economy, and activism. These characters would drive the film's narrative as it addresses the human suffering of African Americans under American slavery and Jim Crow. However, professional expertise would only be a portion of what I needed. I needed something more real, something like a true story. I soon learned through anthropologist Beverly Davenport that activist Ta-Nehisi Coates, who has done work on the subject of reparations, would soon be making an upcoming appearance at the University's diversity event.

Coates is a talented writer for the *Atlantic* and author of the recently published highly acclaimed memoir, *Between the World and Me*. I figured, if I could get him to do an interview for the film, it would bring that much more justification to its significance. However, with such a short window to get this organized, I was not able to get a deal with the University to speak with him in person. The University had already done its contract with Coates and was adamant against changing their agreement. Thankfully, the University left a window of possibility for me. After conversing with one of the event coordinators, they allowed me to capture 5 minutes of the event. This was great because it allowed me to capture Coates speaking on a tough subject, redlining.

Redlining is a policy initiated and institutionalized by a federal agency in the 1930s (Massey & Denton 51). This policy defined the riskiness of loans made for various areas within the city, specifically using race as a variable. Neighborhoods with high numbers of African Americans had the highest risk and were coded red on maps. This policy severely

limited Blacks from acquiring mortgages and accumulating wealth through the increasing value of their property. Redlining is the cause of the hyper-segregated ghettos where Blacks were railroaded. While discovering information pertaining to that topic, I then received another email about an actual event to educate the community on the historical practices of redlining. The good news was that the event was taking place nearby in Dallas, TX.

I soon exchanged emails with the redlining event coordinator: Stephanie Farquhar, Ph.D. Dr. Farquhar in partnership with The Kirwan Institute hosted a presentation about Dallas' redlining maps and policies. My intent was to get a member of the Kirwan Institute to speak on the film. I reached out to Dr. Farquhar and she agreed to do it herself; more so, she linked me to perhaps the most important character of my film. That missing need for authenticity and realness lay in the hands of historian Donald Payton. Payton is an engaging diplomatic man and a member of a family with a deep history in Dallas. I thought he could really bring light to the reparations movement. It was Payton who informed me about actual bombings that took place in South Dallas on Blacks moving into predominate White neighborhoods. I knew, through Payton I was going to be able to bring the true stories of how Blacks were terrorized for integrating into White communities. Through Payton, the film follows a more in depth detail of the effects of segregation and integration in the American neighborhoods around the 1950s.

As the director, I chose to make the title "Black Reparations Film Project". The title is direct and avoids sophisticated words to make it as easily accessible as possible for those who may be looking for it. As an observing learner, I figured that the footage should be produced in 4k, because it is the best available quality I had access to. I also decided to use

the RED scarlet. It was the time to acquaint myself with using 4k footage, before it had just been 1080 HD.

## INTEGRATION OF PRODUCTION AND THEORY

### Representation

As a filmmaker, I want to break the chains of Black exploitation and to empower marginalized people of class and race through this film. Unlike traditional exploited films of marginalized people, as the director and a member of the underclass, I give the marginalized group a voice in their activism. My experiences allow me to capitalize and clarify the voice of the oppressed who were traditionally silenced in film.

In the material world, identity is reinforced through the five senses, (touch, smell, feel, sight, and hearing), but in the world of film things started differently. Sight for example, when referenced to real world experiences is the power of seeing. However, this same sense is the foundation of the film world, it gives only the illusion of reality, and is a vision provided to the viewer through the director's camera lens. Those who create stories with these cameras have an outside responsibility when it comes to the depiction of individuals and groups. This is generally referred to as the "problem of representation" (Bogle).

Gray explains that representation is not controlled by "ordinary citizens", but instead is "acquired by the individual from some other source than his direct experience". In film, Black people have been misrepresented by the characters that portray them, often because the director does not have direct experience being Black. This is problematic. Eventually, the "subjects" of a director's craft become aware and raise questions about the right of the director to represent them, as well as question about the accuracy of the images the director depicts. The movie, *Birth of a Nation*, is a classic example of old-style unrelievedly racist representation and the history of mainstream film industry is

abounding with other, less extreme-but no less potent-examples. It was not until the 1970s that people of color began to have real access to film (Ellis 16). Considering the time span of film, this is rather recent and speaks volumes about the misrepresentation that Blacks have witnessed through their depictions on screen.

W.E. B. Du Bois developed the term “double consciousness” to describe the different realms of life that Black people operate. Black people must operate within Black culture and within the larger culture. The general shared experiences that most Blacks go through, such as police brutality, educational disparities, or other forms of racial discrimination, are not as common in larger culture. At a minimum, a Black director can claim a higher degree of cultural awareness, and an associated lower risk of misrepresenting Black life. “The Black director is better equipped to handle both Black and White actors because he has lived with both. He knows where the Whites are at and knows his own people. It’s like we’ve been watching you all our lives, but you haven’t really began seeing us” (Sieving, 201). I find Sieving’s statement to be a powerful restatement of my own experience.

Film has become so powerful now. The misrepresentation Blacks have suffered can be used in film for social activism. The 1960s film *Nothing but a Man*, focuses on the conundrum of staying in a job that degrades employees based on their race or leaving their jobs to move north in uncertain hopes of a better environment. The main character, Duff, is fired for his activism in support of labor unions, while others told him to move north in search of better working conditions, Duff stayed in the south taking any job he could, even at lower wages than his previous job. Duff’s father-in-law comments that Duff is worthless because he cannot keep employment. Regardless of the circumstances, Duff is still only seen as a Black male without a job and not a Black man who stood up against

discrimination in the workplace. As two Black men in the film, *Nothing but a Man*, the father-in-law and Duff are at odds, both are suffering through oppression by their White counterparts, but the father-in-law is a “White man’s nigger”, while Duff is more direct and vocal about his discomfort. The director’s depiction of these two men causes the viewer to identify with Duff and adopt a fighter’s mentality in rough situations. Duff’s father-in-law suggests that Duff move to get away from the discrimination, but the director makes it clear in the depiction of Duff, that it is necessary to fight the system and make things better for the community.

With my Black reparations Film project, I address misrepresentation through visuals. By definition, misrepresentation is the action or offense of giving a false or misleading account of the nature of something. Race as a tool of division played an important role in the United States, it is implemented in its history. Racial hierarchy enforces forms of separation and inferiority from one race or group over another. United States Law classified the Negro as 3/5ths of a man in the original Constitution of 1787 and later after the Emancipation Proclamation reclassified the Negro as a full man. Given that law orchestrated their silence, Negroes never had the chance to represent themselves with dignity in the public eye. The depictions they saw of themselves were from the view of their oppressors, regardless of the racist insolence. Al Jolson, a White Jewish entertainer of the late 1800s, was known for his use of the infamous Blackface and consequently referred to as “The World’s Greatest Entertainer” during the peak of his career. Blackface describes White actors performing in dark face paint and acting out overtly racist and offensive stereotypes that Whites perceived about Blacks. As the film industry evolved through the



Civil Rights era to present, patterns of evolution occur. Through the patterns of history, the same problems reoccur and seriously need to be addressed (Bougle 10).

Although there is more actual Black representation in film, Black actors and actresses are still casted as stereotypical characters seen through the perception of Whites. The Black Reparations Film project talks about deductive style implementing the thesis opening of reparations topic in the media (Hewitt & Vazquez 14). Deductive style opens with a thesis statement and follows with supporting testimony, sequences, or archives. The film opens, Fox commentator states, “Ever since General Sherman’s special field order Nov 16, 1865, 40 acres and a mule to the Blacks in Seattle and Georgia, it has been a promise by the government that’s never been fulfilled”. This is our thesis statement and to address this fulfillment we need to know why and how it gets to this point in the first place.

Use of sound and poetry bring understanding to today’s status of Black people and the need for uplifting while under certain oppressing circumstances. The film is very symbolic with its film score. It capitalizes on the juxtaposition of the solemn song Amazing Grace in contrast to images of slave statues. The song sets the mood of the emotions tied to the travesties Blacks endured during slavery while the audience reads the offences slaves endured. I identify with the oppressed and understand, via personal experience, the need for “repair” of wrongs suffered. As a Black male, my perspective on slavery is different from other White directors. Traditionally, I have noticed that other films use slave images as props to allude to the transgressions; I wanted to break this practice and use the slave statues as a literal representation of the lives that could not be in the film to tell their story. Narrated words cover the images as an illustration of the figurative voice of the slaves.

Conclusion solutions are missing from most documentaries; however, these solutions can be considerably helpful with documentaries. I chose to add a conclusion solution to my film because of the helpful impact it could make on the viewers, the film not only details the issues and experiences detailing reparations, it also offers an action plan on how to proceed with the knowledge they now have. In filmmaking, the experience can waiver when dealing with big televisions networks and distribution. Although the director may have specific motives for their film, they may have to alter it for viewership. In order to get a film on their network, it has to be to their standard of means or the perceived vantage point of its viewers. Directors and editors may change the content of the film in order to address the networks needs for ratings and other demand; that, in turn, jeopardizes the validity of the film. Moreover, if we study the networks closely, we still see many of the same patterns of misrepresentation and bigotry as we saw in *The Birth of a Nation*. In recent years, Blacks have begun to find other outlets of distribution by independent crowd funding and distribution. An example is the “Hidden Colors”. This film was the first of few to be produced, written, and directed by Blacks. It addresses thoughtful and necessary solutions for Black issues. More so, the information itself is used to uplift rather than entertain for ratings.

### Editorial Structure

The theme of the edit is historical. The style is experimental by a combination of deductive, narration, and a character driven stories to drive the film’s narrative (Hewitt & Vazquez 13-14).

Black Reparations Film Project is driven by the life experience of the director. The director establishes his personal experience in the film’s opening. There, his questions

address why things are the way they are between different classes and races in the US economically, socially, and systematically. As the film unfolds its sequence of events reveal the reparations movement, culture, and wrong doings to Blacks in the US from past to present day.

Black Reparations Film Project has an underlying structure organized by the chronological time line of enslaved Africans history in the United States starting from the 1600s to present day. Although the theme is historical, it presents an oppositional point of view of why reparations are necessary. Furthermore, it simultaneously delivers popular story telling of the enslaved in America (Blacks) using characters, word narration, music, archival photos, and poetry. Unlike commercial documentaries about social issues in America, its purpose is to provide tools and solutions to marginalized people of class and race.

In editing, the layout was based on a historical time-line of events occurring from the foundation of the country until its present day. For example, after the opening sequence explaining the need for reparations, it follows a timeline starting from the 1600s. This allows the viewers to recognize the time and space we are in and where we are going. In lieu of narrating slavery itself for the next 300 years, the words and music express the harmfulness and economic factors it played in American society. Similarly, I used one photo to bring forth some reality of slavery. This use of archival material was to show how one group enforced the idea of superiority based on color. Instead of using multiple photos to cover the oppressions of slavery, I focus on the same photo a little while longer to allow the audience a time of reflection. As the segment of the film moves forward, the chronological timeline appears again, transporting us to the end of slavery around the late 1800s.

After slavery ended, the era for Jim Crow arrives with new challenges for Blacks in America. This moment reaches to the era of the 1930s, when we learn the racist housing practices known as redlining. To address this I attempted to use the interviews with experts and introduce the first character of the film – Donald Payton. This allows a different perspective from an actual living person while addressing historical events. Donald Payton, who is later revealed as the new source of narration, guides us to recent activities from former communities, as Black people were terrorized through segregation. This section challenges the viewers to question the importance of race itself, and the necessity of the color barriers today. We end in the 1960s as Dr. Martin Luther King delivers one of his last speeches. The mainstream media did not broadcast this speech; it is a Martin that we are not use to seeing. Again, the chronological time line appears brings us to modern day from the 1990s to now.

This basis of this next phase of the film is to be guided by the important information, rhythm, and poems. The important information addresses H.R. 40, a Commission to Study Reparation Proposals for African-Americans Act, first introduced by Congressman John Conyers (D-Michigan) in 1989. Conyers has annually sought to hold hearings on the bill that simply seeks to study the effects of slavery and institutional racism, but has been repeatedly been killed in committee. Along with the information, the emotional narrative is told through poetry and music addressing the realities Black people in America know all too well today. The discordant sounds of the violin are used as a token of what goes on in the Black community, police brutality, self-hate, mass incarceration and the development of the Black Lives Matter movement, accompanied by so many others, showing the ignored perspective of a marginalized group.

When we reach the end, we finally have a more complicated vision of what reparations might look like. H.R. 40 is the practical, immediate focus of the reparations movement. But the film goes even further, through the use of artistic images, it showcases what this country would look like with some form of reparations in place. Reparations in the end might serve as a kind of reconciliation, giving both the marginalized and misinformed a vision.

### Self-Reflexivity

In an effort to connect my generation with the wisdom of our elders, there was a need for my presence in the film. As a child of the 80s, I witnessed the technological transition that began in the late 80s. I witnessed the war on drugs, the early stage implementation of computers in every childhood school, and the big surge in social media. These observations led to my realization of how different generations received and comprehended their history. The declining historical awareness of my generation was something I felt I could address with my presence in the film.

My childhood marked the introduction of computers in the classroom and as I grew, the surge of technology in the world paralleled my growth into adulthood. I was seven years old in 1992, when the L.A. riots erupted after a mostly White jury acquitted the police officers that were caught on video beating a Black male by the name of Rodney King. This story was on televisions and radios nationwide. Everyone, from my grandparents to my older cousins, was talking about it. I did not understand much about it but I could look at the concern on my grandmother's face and get a sense of how it could affect me. Around the same time, my oldest cousin had been in and out of jail and I witnessed his frustration when it came to getting a job. I started to wonder how many more cases around the nation

were similar to Rodney King's in Los Angeles. Were they being treated fairly? Were they being stereotyped and pulled over by police? I feared that there were people with the power to get away with murdering and no one or thing could do anything to stop them. It made me question if the lives of those like Rodney King and my cousin really matter.

Through adolescence and early adulthood, emerging social media sites like AOL and eventually Facebook, served as a distraction for my generation and me. Television had reached over 500 channels and smart phones gave access to social sites at the push of a button. The generation that followed me took the accessibility of the internet for granted. They watched school fights, comedy skits, and the latest dance trends anytime and anywhere. They would never experience the trials of technology that my generation went through. As the evolution of social media grew, real world movements of consequence like reparations were cast in the shadows. For me, the growth in "participatory culture" through YouTube provided an understanding of the power of personal narrative (Burgess & Green). Stumbling upon Supersize Me one day on YouTube, Director Morgan Spurlock explained his social experiment in fast-food and how he was going to use himself as a reflexive character of the film. I was immediately hooked. Here he answered the question to a social call and I too had a social cause that caught my attention. If it had not been for a podcast I watched on YouTube, I would not have learned about the reparations movement.

My life growing up in south Dallas and my technical expertise in film, learned in college, began to be informed by theory. Spurlock's movie was a popular form of self-reflexivity, a term used in film studies to signify the way that knowing selves as opposed to omniscient narratives insert themselves into their own analysis, in the belief that their stories matter and give weight to the presentation. The literature in this area is both broad

and deep. It would be impossible for me to discuss it fully in this thesis; however, I want to say, Spurlock led me to seek media studies to pursue my vision and this more formal training introduced me to other self-reflexive directors. The most moving to me was Marlon Riggs. In Tongues United, Riggs explored gay Black men's experience through autobiographical vignettes, as well as the narrative of others. He used poetry, dance and song to convey an emotional truth that would otherwise have been missing from this work of art. In Black Is, Black Ain't, a movie that reveals the truths of people, Riggs reflexively uses footage shot of him in a hospital bed during his AIDS crisis. He uses similar narrative and expressive forms to convey a reality that deeply resonates with his audience.

## PRODUCTION

### Overview

The production of Black Reparations Film Project consists of sit down interviews, observations of characters, and footage of Dallas. TX.

### Shooting Schedule

09/24/2015 Denton. TX- First Interview Shoot: Dr. Stephanie Fauquier – Redlining and history of Dallas as a case study.

09/27/2015 Denton, TX- Second Interview with Dr. Beverly Davenport- History of Slavery and Post Slavery in America

10/30/2015 Dallas, TX- Interview Dr. Raymond A. Winbush – Reparations

11/03/2015-12/23/2015 Dallas, TX

Historian Donald Payton Filming Historical sights around Dallas, TX.

### Crew

Tuarean Hodge Director/Producer/ Cinematographer/ Editor

Organized shoots, location, and set designs. Operated camera during recordings of historian Donald Payton in his home and garage. Cinematography works also included locations in the Southern sector of Dallas such as South Dallas, Joppa, Oak Cliff, Downtown and Five Mile. During postproduction Tuarean was responsible for timeline graphics.



Graphics indicated historical events during the reparations movement. Responsible for organizing timeline to flow in timely fashioned to set tone and pacing of events.

Responsible for lower thirds, minor color correction, and sound design and musical score using Audio Blocks musical category. Here exterior shots were taken of the location such as the park in Five Mile and the Miller Family Planation in Downtown Dallas. Also, directed team production on location to get detail sound along with moving equipment from one place to another.

Garret Graham- Lighting/Cinematography

Responsible for Cinematography work of Beverly Davenport Ph.D. and Stephanie Farquhar, Ph.D. Garrett helped with set up and designed interview location. Worked with Director on camera settings and decisions best fit for the look of the nature the film. Operated RED scarlet camera on tripod. Set up lighting best for each member of interview based off skin tone and room elements such as books and office supplies.

Sunilrao Kilaru – Cinematographer

Sunilrao is responsible for observational footage on the Dallas area. While in passenger seat of car, Sunilrao filmed the African American community in South Dallas, Pleasant Grove, and downtown Dallas. The footage introduces us to the urban inner city where a community of African Americans is at large. Also includes run down homes, impoverished areas, and local attractions such as the Fair Park, Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Bld.

Yuri Wang- is responsible for observational footage on the Dallas area. While in passenger seat of car, Yuri filmed the African American community in Oak Cliff & Joppa. The footage introduces us to historical Freedman’s town of Joppa. Here we see a mix of old run

down homes, bottomland, and construction for future for homes. Also included is Oak cliff were we see local attractions such as Rudy's chicken, Big T bazar, urban housing, and African Americans in their neighborhood setting.

Julius Knolley –Sound

Julius was responsible for setting up sound with C-stand, arm, and knuckles. He used these items along with the 702 sound recorders, a lav microphone, and a boom microphone. The sound was recorded on location of Beverly Davenport Ph.D. and Stephanie Farquhar, Ph.D.'s interview.

### Equipment

The RED Camera/ ZEISS lenses were used for this film. The film was shot under the settings of 4k and Raw images. In accordance to the camera were Camera lenses from ZEISS. This was a prime lenses set composed of Distagon T\* 21mm f/2.8 ZF.2 Lens, Distagon T\* 28mm f/2 ZF.2 Lens, Planar T\* 50mm f/1.4 ZF.2 Lens, Planar T\* 85mm f/1.4 ZF.2 Lens. THE 21 and 50 mm was used for wide exterior shootings such as downtown and homes, while the remaining lenses were used to capture footage of camera action of camera subjects and supporting documents.

702 Sound Recorders was used for recording sound on this film. This sound device connects and maintains the sounds being accumulated from the Laviler wired and wireless as well as boom microphones. Lavalier Lapel Clip-on microphones were used in sit down interviews. While wireless lavalier were used for subjects when moving in action on camera.

Canon A 10 was used during the research period of the film. This was used on location in New York at the International Reparations Summit. It was lightweight; shots were in

1080 p HD and have internal storage for easy live action. It captured meetings, speeches, and events such as multi-cultural rituals and ceremonies.

## POSTPRODUCTION

The picture and audio in this production was hand synced in Final Cut Pro X. Picture and sound editing was done both on Adobe Audition and Final Cut Pro X. The musical score was done with music from Audio Blocks. Additional footage such as stock archival was used from YouTube, Video Blocks and archive.org and all applied in Final Cut Pro X. Acquired graphics from Pixel Film Studios and applied in Final Cut X. Color graded in Final Cut Pro X.

### Schedule

01/11/2016N 02/01/2016N Viewing and logging footage

02/02/2016- 02/06/2016- Writing Historical timeline and sequences.

02/04/2016- 03/20/2016- Editing, color grading, sound design and gathering archival material.

03/21/2016- 1st Rough Cut -Upload to Vimeo to be reviewed by committee members

04/22/2016 -2nd Rough Cut - Changes made from committee's recommendations from the 1st and shown in private meeting with Filmmaker Wayne Derrick.

04/27/2016 – Rough Cut 3 - Recommendations from Wayne Derrick we inputted and uploaded to YouTube to be shown to committee members.

05/02/2016 –Make changes based off committee’s recommendations. Additions of narration and personal experience.

06/22/2016- Fine cut

06/28/2016- Picture Lock

### Equipment

Editing was done using Final Cut Pro X. The footage, sound, and pictures were stored and edited from 6TB G-RAID Studio Thunderbolt 2 External Storage System. RED raw footage was color graded using Final Cut Pro X. Sound mixing was done using Adobe Audition CC 2015. Syncing Sound and Footage was done using Final Cut Pro X.

## RECONCEPTUALIZATION DURING POSTPRODUCTION

Once I organized my footage and was ready to assemble a film, I carefully thought on how I wanted to organize the timeline. I knew that the film needed narration while addressing historical events. I also pictured a character of some sort. My first thought was to assemble a timeline with influences of ART as to guide different themes. For example, the theme slavery, I would have a poet speak about the subject while assembling matching images and music to the poet's words. The idea was to have these themes of injustices brought to the screen in the form of an Art while capturing historical moments of good acts of race building, while interpreting facts from experts. Due to lack of collaborative efforts, and consideration of committee members, I decided to take a different approach. At this new approach I would use a historical graphic to address the time and space we are in, while implementing expert opinions, a character, archival photos, and my personal experience as a narrative arc.

Given that this subject has a long list of History facts; I knew that it would need to be cut down and straight to the point. The process of editing this film was first written. There was no way to cover the entire country's history in a short period of time so I knew I had to narrow down the topics. I reached back into my notes and saw what was more compatible with the footage I had. After carefully analyzing, I decided that the chronological themes would allow viewers to know what part of history we are in and topics such as pre civil war, post-civil war, American Slavery, civil rights movement, and present day could bring light to certain issues addressed at these times. Along the different times we encounter Anthropologist Beverly Davenport Ph.D., Public health expert Stephanie Farquhar Ph.D., and reparations expert Raymond A. Winbush, Ph.D. The character, Historian Donald

Payton, could give us details on the housing crisis, land purchases, and police resistance, from which he lived and had recorded.

There were a number of changes made after discussions with my committee members. After seeing a rough cut, my committee suggested that the themes were more understandable than the graphics. This was simplified with the intentions for a more international audience. Now general audiences can have a clear understanding of the space and time the film depicts. My committee suggested that I detail what is happening in the photo of two Negroes being hung while Whites stood around to watch. With this approach, I went back to the site the photo was taken and intergraded the original story about lynching and White mobs through narration. My committee also suggested moving some scenes around, I moved the photo of the lynching from the beginning of the film towards the middle. Finally, my committee suggested I stick to my original plan and have my voice heard in the film. Here is where I believe all the scenes were successfully pieced together by the addition of my personal story. My narrative answers some broad questions about how race relations developed and what parts the reparations movement played along the way.

## EVALUATION OF WORK COMPLETED

### Preproduction

During the preproduction I researched and executed a funding campaign. The research consisted of African American culture and history. This was an awakening for me because I learned so much history that I was not taught in public school. I also had the experience to travel and meet with activist in the reparations movement, the most influential activist was Kwesi Jumoke Ifetayo of N'COBRA. He helped me access the reparations summit and seemed to be ready to work with a youthful person like myself. The summit was mostly kind, loving, and spiritual individuals; however, I did notice the lack of youth at the conferences. If I had known the list of guest beforehand I would have tried to schedule interviews with some of the influential activists within the movement. The funding campaign was a first for me; however, the experience showed me who truly supported me as a filmmaker by investing in my vision before they could see it. The experience also allowed me to recognize the potential marketing initiatives of an entrepreneur in the film world. I was able to build excitement and rapport with my audience by giving incentives such as personal copies of the film when it releases, signed posters, and personal engagements through social media.

### Production

Production was composed of observational footage of the city of Dallas, following Mr. Payton's narrative, sit down interviews, and the reparations summit. Production came naturally because I knew the hard work would come in the postproduction phase when I had to connect the materials I shot. The sit down interviews I filmed both looked and sounded well. I had a cinematographer and a sound recorder, which gave me more time to



focus on directing and developing questions for the subject. The reparations conference was an eye opening experience overall. During one meeting I was cautioned about recording, but later got the chance to explain my intentions for the film. The summit was supportive of my work and my intentions for the film. As a Dallas native, the observational footage of the city was pretty simple. Although I knew the city pretty well, I enjoyed the opportunity to learning why and how situations changed as a result of social and economic life. Mr. Payton helped me access some prominent parts of Dallas and better engagement with the people in the areas visited. He was key in helping find the bombed houses in South Dallas. If I could go back and change anything and I would have worked harder and possibly hired a film crew so that I could make more of a visual impact in the film to physically share my journey with the audience.

### Postproduction

This was the most difficult part of the film. After a series of events: organizing; gaining access to legalized archival documents, music, photos, and footage; to constantly reconstructing a timeline that synced the story into a powerful piece; I finally felt that I truly produced a full film. Some setbacks included the photos I wanted to use; many of the photos I thought were great for the film were not easily accessible. Some photos came with a fee, I had to decide which photos were worth their fees and which my film could do without. As far as film structure, I constantly consulted with my committee about restructures. The latter editions of the film are more similar to my first idea to include self-reflexivity. Through a few different cuts I found that both Mr. Payton and my voice were necessary to illustrate the journey of reparations. While Mr. Payton added the local history,

my story connected other accounts of the film and gave real personal insight. In hindsight, this realization early on would have saved me a great amount of time.

This film has been a learning adventure and an eye opening experience. I feel privileged to utilize the theory that inspired me, self-reflexivity, now as a filmmaker and share the knowledge of reparations with audiences who may not have learned about otherwise. This film draws light to the injustices my people have faced and I am honored that my voice can add to the voices of activists educating and trying to write the wrongs we have faced.

APPENDIX A  
BUDGET

<i>PRE PRODUCTION ADMINISTRATIVE</i>	#	UNIT	RATE	CASH	In-Kind	TOTAL
Director Research	7	Months	700		4,900	4,900
Conference Fees		Allow	225	225		225
Travel		Allow	1,500	1,500		1,500
<i>TOTAL Pre Production</i>			1,925	1,225	4,900	6,625
<i>PRODUCTION</i>	#	UNIT	RATE	CASH	In-kind	TOTAL
Producer/Director/DP	12	Months	4,000	35,000	35,000	48,000
DP	12	Days	400	2,000	2,000	4,800
Sound Recordist	12	Days	300	1,500	1,500	3,600
Air fare						
DFW-Atlanta -DFW	3	Tickets	250	750		750
DFW- Virgin Islands- DFW	3	Tickets	400	1,200		1,200
DFW-NY-DFW	3	Tickets	300	900		900
Hotel	12	Rooms	150	1,800		1,800
Car Rental	12	Days	40	480		480
Gas	10	Trips	20	200		200
Food (crew x 3meals/days x 12 days)	108	Meals	10	1,080		1,080
Camera Equipment						
RED Scarlet (include 5 129 G memory Cards)	12	Days	160		1,920	1,920
Canon lenses (50 prime and 70/200 zoom)	12	Days	20		240	240
Lighting	1	Week	150		150	150
Expendables		Allow	200			200
Miscellaneous Expenses		Allow	100			100
Western Digital 1 TB Hard Drive	2	Units	120			120
<i>Total</i>				45,630	40,810	65,540
<i>POST PRODUCTION</i>	#	UNIT	RATE	CASH	In-Kind	TOTAL
Editor	10	Weeks	400	4,000	2,000	4,000
Original Score	2	Weeks	50	100		100

<i>Total</i>			450	4,100	2,000	4,100
<i>DISTRIBUTION</i>						
Festival Entry	20	Festivals	40	800		800
Travel		Allow	1,000	1,000		1,000
Total				1,800		1,800

APPENDIX B  
PERSONAL APPEARANCE RELEASE FORM



**PERSONAL APPEARANCE RELEASE FORM**

I hereby authorize Tuarean Hodge, graduate student in The Media Arts program at The University of North Texas, and the producer of the documentary tentatively titled "Medium, Texas," to record and edit into the Program and related materials my name, likeness, image, voice and participation in and performance on film, tape or otherwise for use in the above Program or parts thereof (the "Recordings"). I agree that the Program may be edited and otherwise altered at the sole discretion of the Producer and used in whole or in part for any and all broadcasting, non-broadcasting, audio/visual, and/or exhibition purposes in any manner or media, in perpetuity, throughout the world.

Producer, Tuarean Hodge, may use and authorize others to use all or parts of the Recordings. Producer, Tuarean Hodge, its successors and assigns shall own all right, title and interest, including copyright, in and to the Program, including the Recordings, to be used and disposed of without limitation as Producer shall in its sole discretion determine.

Printed Name of Person Appearing: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Person Appearing: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: City, State, Zip: Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone:(\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

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