

Podcast Discussion Guide - Episode 2

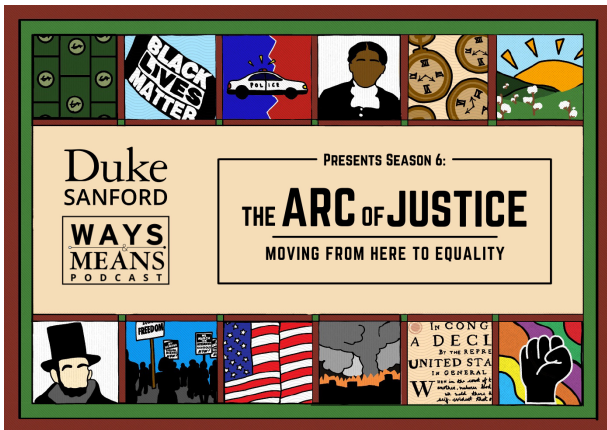
This Land Is My Land: The Racial Wealth Gap's Roots in Federal Policy

The Ways & Means podcast series *The Arc of Justice* is produced in partnership with Duke Professor William A. “Sandy” Darity Jr. and folklorist and arts consultant A. Kirsten Mullen based on their book *From Here to Equality: Reparations for Black Americans in the 21st Century*. Darity is the Samuel DuBois Cook Distinguished Professor of Public Policy at the Sanford School of Public Policy at Duke University.

Over six episodes, the podcast series explores how economic opportunities were different for African Americans and white Americans throughout history – describing what could have been different at different points in history, and possible transformations that could still be implemented in the future.

This series is produced by the Duke University Sanford School of Public Policy, and the team from the award-winning Ways & Means podcast. The series is hosted by journalist Lindsay Foster Thomas and will be broadcast on North Carolina Public Radio WUNC in 2021. Season 6 (*The Arc of Justice*) of Ways & Means is made possible through support from the Duke Office for Faculty Advancement thanks to funding from The Duke Endowment, and also support from North Carolina Public Radio and the Sanford School. The series is part of Duke's Forever Learning Institute as part of the America Today theme.

We invite you to listen to the episodes, and to use this guide for additional resources and dialogue.



“No shift in the power relationship will be possible unless the society as a whole takes action to transform the structural conditions to make racial equality a real possibility.”

- William A. Darity Jr.

Tips as You Listen:

1. Open your ears and heart.
2. Get comfortable in your discomfort.
3. Continue to do your own research.

Key Terms to Learn:

Wealth - assets minus how much debt one owes

Homestead Acts - transfers of 246 million acres of land (largely to whites) from the 1860s to the 1930s

Resources to Read:

1. [From Here to Equality: Reparations for Black Americans in the 21st Century](#), William A. Darity Jr. and A. Kirsten Mullen (UNC Press, 2020)
2. [Summary](#) on Disparities in Wealth by Race and Ethnicity (The Federal Reserve, 2020)
3. [Resource](#) about the Homestead Act (Center for Social Development, Washington University in St. Louis, 2003)
4. [Video](#) of William A. Darity Jr. about closing the racial wealth gap (The Washington Post, 2020)
5. [Report](#) on the racial wealth gap (Duke University Samuel DuBois Cook Center on Social Equity, 2018)

Listen to Episode 2: waysandmeansshow.org

Questions to Discuss:

1. Can you trace your history back to the Homestead Act? What do you know of this personal history?
2. What is the value of connecting landownership in the past to wealth in the present?
3. Why is it significant that America did not keep its promise to those newly emancipated persons? What are other examples of America not keeping its promises?
4. Why do you think that the U. S. didn't grant land to the formerly enslaved via the Homestead Act?
5. What do you think America would look like today if African Americans had received the promised 40 acre land grants or the 160 acre land grants that white Americans received?

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