

# the Middle/Dark Ages (~ 500 through 1500)

For many generations prior to colonists' arrival in the New World, powerful English people routinely inflicted terrible punishments on other English bodies. Similar atrocities occurred in other countries throughout Europe. It was standard operating procedure for centuries.

Source: *My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies*, by Resmaa Menakem, Central Recovery Press, 2017.

# Native American Decimation and European Colony Era (~1500 through 1610)

European explorers made initial contact with Native Americans. Soon afterward, immigrants from England, Holland, Spain, Portugal and France followed to establish colonies. Relations between some colonists and some Native American tribes were cordial; between others there were tense or deadly. However, the main threat to Native people came from European diseases, against which Native Americans had little or no resistance. Illness swept through Native settlements in much the same way that plagues had swept through Europe. In 1618-1619, for example smallpox killed 90% of the Native Americans living on or near Massachusetts Bay.

Source: *My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies*, by Resmaa Menakem, Central Recovery Press, 2017.

# Enslavement Era

## (1619 through 1865)

The English became the dominate colonizers of the New World. English colonists forcible imported Africans to North American and asserted dominion over them. Colonists created whiteness, which enabled them to sooth the dissonance among whites; to delegitimize, dehumanize, and totemized Blacks; to create a culture of white supremacy; and to build institutions, processes and relationships that maintained this culture. Whites set the standard/norm; others were defined as aberrant or substandard.

Source: *My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies*, by Resmaa Menakem, Central Recovery Press, 2017.

# Jim Crow Era (1877 – 1965)

When the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment was ratified and enslavement became illegal in 1865, there was a brief period in which some racial barriers fell, and Whites began to struggle with accepting Blacks as normal and human. This trend reversed sharply in the south in 1877, when the first Jim Crow laws were enacted. These laws created and enforced the segregation of Blacks and Whites. The law also bolstered White supremacy through a variety of old and new institutions – most notably the lynching of nearly 3,500 Blacks. Other less violent practices also directly affected Blacks. For example, Black people were not allowed to kiss or show affection in public, and Black men were not permitted to offer to shake the hand of any White person.

Source: *My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies*, by Resmaa Menakem, Central Recovery Press, 2017.

# Neo-Crow Era

## (1966 – Present)

In 1965, segregation became illegal throughout the US, and for the next two decades the Civil Rights movement lessened some of the overt dissonance between Whites and Blacks. It did not, however, soothe the centuries-old dissonance that still existed between poor Whites and powerful Whites.

Source: *My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies*, by Resmaa Menakem, Central Recovery Press, 2017.

# War on Drugs (1980s)

As part of a major escalation of the War on Drugs, Blacks began to be arrested, tried and jailed in unprecedented numbers, even though Black people used illegal drugs at rates similar to White people. The US prison population exploded, from 300,000 to over 2,000,000, mostly through drug convictions. Today, almost 40% of people incarcerated for drug law violations are Black, even though Black Americans make up about 13% of the country's population.

*Source: My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies, by Resmaa Menakem, Central Recovery Press, 2017.*