

Activist Teacher

Articles and commentary about activist teaching and radical pedagogy, and social theory and critique essays, by Dr. Denis G. Rancourt

FRIDAY, JANUARY 18, 2013

➤ Calculated MINIMUM reparation due to slave descendants: \$1.5 million to each Black citizen of the USA



It is not difficult to calculate a MINIMUM amount of monetary reparation due to every single Black slave descendant living today in the USA.

If we leave out the reparations for physical violence, genocidal stress, inadmissibility to superior social classes, etc., and only take into account the stolen labor, at the today's equivalent minimum wage, then the calculation for the minimum amount due to the descendants of slaves is a simple one, as follows.

This calculation includes only the money due to ancestors and their descendants, in terms of the stolen actual labor counted in person-hours, based on a minimal economic value of that labour, adjusted at a lowest reasonable rate of interest.

Every step in the following calculation will use the lowest possible evaluators, such as to produce a MINIMUM amount due.

In the 70 year period between 1790 and 1860, there were, **on average**, 2 million slaves at any time in the USA. In the same period the average US population was 14 million.

Moving forward to 2000, the US population was 309 million, with 40 million slave descendants.

To obtain a minimal (under estimated) annual interest rate, we use the population increase from 14 million to 309 million in the 140 years from 1860 to 2000. This gives a population annual growth rate of 2.2%.

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Denis G. Rancourt is a former tenured full professor of physics at the University of Ottawa, Canada. He is a researcher for the [Ontario Civil Liberties Association](#) and a social theorist. He has published [more than 100 articles in leading scientific journals](#), on physics and environmental science. He is the author of the book [Hierarchy and](#)

Now capital value increase interest rates in the US have been much greater than the population growth rate. Nonetheless, we adopt the underestimate of 2% for the interest rate to be applied to the stolen income value. We further apply the interest rate starting only in 1860, rather than earlier, thereby making our estimate even more of an underestimate.

The value of the stolen labor, for the period 1790 to 1860, at today's US minimum wage of \$7.25 per hour is as follows. (Note that using today's minimum wage automatically corrects for valuing the historic currency to its present value.)

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

Next, I apply the 2% interest rate (compounded annually). This gives a multiplicative factor of $(1.02)^{140} = 16$, for the 140 years from 1860 to 2000. Further compounding could be applied to bring us to the present. (Again, this is a *minimum* estimate.)

Compounding to 2000, therefore, gives:

$$\begin{array}{r}
 \$ 3.7 \text{ trillion} \\
 \times \\
 (1.02)^{140} \text{ (or 16, if you prefer)} \\
 = \\
 \mathbf{\$ 59.2 \text{ trillion}}
 \end{array}$$

The latter one-time payment would be easy for the USA to make, since its annual GDP is \$15 trillion. (Think of a wealthy person's annual salary relative to buying a house in a safe neighbourhood.) The USA would not even need to sell any assets to achieve this modest payment.

For the 40 million Black slave descendants in the US today, the calculated reparation means that US white society owes each and every Black slave descendant a MINIMUM payment of **\$ 1.5 million**, which is long overdue.

After the minimum payment is made, it would be appropriate to calculate and pay the addition reparations that are due.

[Free Expression in the Fight Against Racism.](#)

Activist Teacher blog

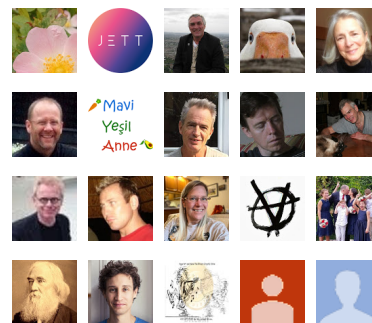
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My goal here was to show that these calculations are simple and unambiguous. Understanding the calculated minimum allows one to move forward from that established basis, towards a more realistic reparation number. At the very least, each Black slave descendant can legitimately demand \$ 1.5 million payable immediately.

An obvious question that arises from this straightforward calculation is: Why are Black leaders not demanding reparation, as a priority demand?

Denis Rancourt is a former physics professor at the University of Ottawa, and is the author of the book "[Hierarchy and Free Expression in the Fight Against Racism](#)". More essays by this author are [HERE](#).

Posted by [Denis Rancourt](#) at [2:47 PM](#)



[This is interesting](#)

Labels: [black liberation](#), [racism](#), [reparation](#), [reparations](#), [slavery](#)

113 comments:



[ChuckBaggett](#) said...

Why doesn't everyone have 1.5 million minimum? Some money must have gone astray for most everyone, right?

[January 18, 2013 at 11:19 PM](#)

[Anonymous](#) said...

Prior to the 2001 attacks in NYC and elsewhere, reparations was on the national political agenda.

[January 19, 2013 at 1:14 AM](#)

[Anonymous](#) said...

But there were white slaves too, and Indian and Chinese etc, etc....

[January 19, 2013 at 2:11 AM](#)

[Anonymous](#) said...

Why would anyone WANT reparations? Shouldn't they rather to use the freedom they enjoy living in this country to make it on their own? This only fosters an unhealthy entitlement culture.

[January 19, 2013 at 6:48 AM](#)



[Denis Rancourt](#) said...

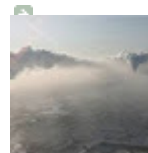
Yup, the same minimal reparation calculation can be applied to any group or individual (and their descendants) whose labor has been stolen by not paying a fair value for the labor, under circumstances where the "value" is determined by the powerful buyer of the labor rather than via a just negotiation on a level negotiating field.



[On the gargantuan lie of climate change science](#)



[What I believe about COVID](#)



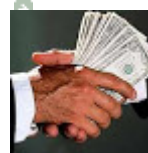
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- [Against the dismissal of Denis Rancourt \(FB group\)](#)
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My calculation is a valid calculation within the logic of labor as a sold commodity, and ownership, and the legal right to transfer earned resources to one's descendants.

If, within a democratic nation state, one accepts these notions of a fair price, non-oppressive negotiations, ownership of earned goods, and inheritance, then one must accept the principle of reparation for stolen labor.

But we remain far from the reparations due for the impacts of stolen land, genocide, murder, torture, and stolen dignity, personality, health, and humanity.

Indeed, the minimal reparation calculation based only on stolen labor must be seen as a necessary and immediate preliminary step which follows from the very principles of a lawful democratic state, or else the state loses its legitimacy entirely, based on its own criteria.

Either the "democratic" state corrects for labor theft, or it must be understood as an instrument of labor theft. The state cannot be neutral with such gross systemic theft. It is either a system of justice or it is a system of criminality. Let's be clear.

January 19, 2013 at 7:42 AM 



 [Denis Rancourt](#) said...

"Anonymous said...Why would anyone WANT reparations? Shouldn't they rather to use the freedom they enjoy living in this country to make it on their own? This only fosters an unhealthy entitlement culture."

Entitlement? One is entitled to not be robbed. One is not entitled to rob. To want and fight for reparation is to want and fight for justice, for one and all. To not fight for reparation is to condone the self-proclaimed entitlement of the robbers, and to condone their crimes. I stole from you but you are now free to earn some of it back, following my rules...? Sound familiar?

January 19, 2013 at 8:38 AM 

 **Bob** said...

Not gonna happen. Wishful thinking.

By the way, the Roman Empire owe me and almost every white descendant of Roman slaves several trillion dollars in total reparation money.

Until that could happen, reparation for the black descendants of the slaves ain't gonna happen. The blacks should sue Muslim Arabs and black Africans for their ancestors enslaving and forcing black Africans to slavery in the 15th to 19th centuries. Don't ignore that ugly facts of history.


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Good day.

January 19, 2013 at 9:56 AM 

 **Bill Habedank** said...

I believe some reparations are in order but to who and how they are to be paid is the big dilemma. Those receiving reparations of course should not pay taxes to fund this which leaves some 250 million Americans left to pay for it. According to my rough calculations in my head that would mean taxpayers paying several hundred thousand dollars apiece to fund this. To do that would mean making these reparations paying Americans destitute. We would be creating another group of poor people and I have to ask if that is fair too. Maybe it is but we then have another problem. There are no easy answer to this.

January 19, 2013 at 12:47 PM 



 **VyseLegendaire** said...

While it might be true that they are 'owed' the lost wages, there is a moral dilemma in expecting to force someone who did not steal or conscript the labor to pay money to someone who is not the person from whom that service was extracted....in other words you cannot inherit a 'moral debt', if we were to do so I suspect there would be an infinite regression to the beginning of time.

January 19, 2013 at 1:28 PM 



 **Denis Rancourt** said...

@Bob, Bill, Vyse:

Come on now. Historic reparation is not that difficult to conceive, or to implement.

Nobody said anything about making ordinary taxpayers poor.

Indeed, 40 million more millionaires in the USA would be a remarkable boost for the domestic economy, far greater than any bank bailout.

Think of it as the state making a modest long term investment, well within its means.

Think of it as increasing the middle class.

Think of it as required, not optional. The right thing.

Now if the state is controlled by a few who would use such a project to make another sector poor, and their friends and bosses more rich, then that also would require some reparation...

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The point is, reparation is due AND ordinary white folks have also been cheated. All colors of regular citizens who have always had their labor devalued by the bosses can fight for reparations. A most obvious place to start is slave descendants, but all these battles for justice can be worked at the same time, and strengthen each other rather than harm each other.

In the words of Malcolm X "We have a common enemy". The face of that enemy is constantly changing but it remains the common enemy.

January 19, 2013 at 3:14 PM 



 [AmPowerBlog](#) said...

This has got to be the most stupid thing I've read in a long time.

January 19, 2013 at 3:22 PM 

 Anonymous said...

Is Africa supposed to pick up any of this tab? Africa is the home to slavery and when Europeans wanted to buy slaves they went to Africa and bought slaves from Africans. Africa has a 5000+ year history of slavery that still continues today. I guess the old saying what goes around comes around and the slaves that Europeans bought found that out.

January 19, 2013 at 4:31 PM 

 Anonymous said...

No.

January 19, 2013 at 5:10 PM 



 [Unknown](#) said...

complete crap... its this type of thinking that contributes to our culture of entitlement. you sir, are a moron.

January 19, 2013 at 6:14 PM 

 Anonymous said...

First, whether or not this debt is ever satisfied is NOT the question. The point is that the economic behemoth that the USA is would not have been possible without this systemically stolen labor. Rome and other points to the ancient world are totally irrelevant. Thank you for the calculation. It is a starting point for discussion on a number of things, not the least being remuneration on these shores in this country in recent enough times. Then the issue of other peoples' stolen labor, it is true enough. Let them find voice to articulate their concerns. Try to stay focused on one item at a time; that's complicated enough.

January 19, 2013 at 10:35 PM 

 [Unknown](#) said...

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I think we need to find every ex-slave we can and pay them the money they so rightfully deserve. I think we also should find every white man who gave his life on the American battlefield and pay him \$2,000,000 for the sacrifice he made so other men could live free.

if we can't find any of these people then we provide every black person, who wishes to return to their homeland, a one way ticket, a bagged lunch and a few bucks for taxi fairs.

while we're at it let's give the author one too.

January 20, 2013 at 5:47 AM

Denis Rancourt said...

For comparison, the current annual US spending on military/defense related costs is over \$1 trillion.

And the estimated total monetary costs to 2011 of the Iraq and Afghanistan US wars is \$4 trillion, which is approximately the minimum value of the stolen slave labor prior to interest payments to slave descendants.

January 20, 2013 at 7:51 AM

MattS said...

@Matthew Smith: yes, a PhD physicist is a moron. That makes total sense #sartalics

I do have one question, Denis: why do you value the slave labour at modern minimum wage, and then apply interest? If there had been a minimum wage in slave-holding times it would have been a lot lower. Surely it makes more sense to either value the labour at minimum wage, or value it at 1800s wages and then apply interest? This would result in an ~\$100,000 payout for each black citizen, which wouldn't make them wealthy but would definitely make them comfortable. Maybe I missed something?

As to everyone who thinks reparations are a bad idea: I'm assuming you're all white (so am I). While YOU might not have owned slaves, and maybe not even a single one of your direct ancestors, there's no doubt that the present wealth disparity between blacks and whites has its roots in massive head start given the white population via stolen labour. In other words, like it or not, you, me, and every white person on the planet (not just Turtle Island) are the beneficiaries of slavery. Not all to the same degree to be sure ... but this is something that can be easily dealt with by liquidating the assets of our own exploiter class, rather than robbing the working class (as the exploiters would of course attempt to do).


January 20, 2013 at 8:05 AM

MattS said...

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The world's richest 100 people amassed enough wealth in 2012 alone to end world poverty 4 times over ... in case anyone's curious as to the practicality of reparations.

[_http://www.rawstory.com/rs/2013/01/19/240-billion-amassed-by-100-richest-people-enough-to-end-extreme-poverty-four-times-over-oxfam/](http://www.rawstory.com/rs/2013/01/19/240-billion-amassed-by-100-richest-people-enough-to-end-extreme-poverty-four-times-over-oxfam/)

January 20, 2013 at 8:24 AM 



 [catherine](#) said...

So presumably those nations who have suffered likewise under various empires (ie Ottoman) should consider claiming even huger amounts? The English could claim reparation in light of the atrocities and slavery at the hands of the Romans, the Vikings, the Normans and many more. Nation by nation claims could be made. We could all claim from the very rich!! and we all know who they are!!!

Incidentally where do the black chiefs enter into these calculations, you know...the ones who hunted down their own people to sell as slaves to the rich whites?

What about the servants and serfs of England and many other countries? The list goes on ad infinitum and yet it seems that in the eyes of some...only black folk and Jewish folk can suffer and bleed. Surely the biggest question of all is why should people living now be held responsible for the behaviour of those who are long dead? It seems that you do not after all believe in fairness.

January 20, 2013 at 8:43 AM 

 Anonymous said...

Then we should also consider reparations from all the blacks who have blocked whites, hispanics and other races from employment. It happens all the time.

January 20, 2013 at 10:37 AM 

 [Denis Rancourt](#) said...

@MattS,

You asked about my calculation. There are two steps here.

Step 1:

If you pay a historic minimum wage ("fair" wage) at the historic wage and ask how much that historic wage is valued in today-dollars, so that we can do all the calculations in today-dollars (used to pay things today, whereas the historic wage was used to buy thing back then, but they are the same things, food, clothing, land, luxury items, etc.) then the answer in today-dollars is today's minimum wage, assuming this to be a minimal "fair" wage.

Step 2:

That is the amount expressed in today-dollars but it was stolen from the ancestors of the descendant survivors some 150 years

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ago. Had the money not been stolen then it would have gained value through natural human investment during 150 years. This is the notion of stolen opportunity regarding accumulation of wealth by one's descendants. It is basic justice that interest must be payed. A rigorous estimate of real valuation in time is the population growth rate. (In the case of the US, for citizens part of the US economy, this population rate value is clearly a minimal interest rate estimate compared to actual wealth growth over 150 years.)

voila.

PS: Regarding your first point: Being a physicist does not demonstrate intelligence! For example: [Are Physicists Smart?](#)

January 20, 2013 at 1:25 PM 

 [Denis Rancourt](#) said...


@catherine:

You state: "Surely the biggest question of all is why should people living now be held responsible for the behaviour of those who are long dead?"

I don't want to make people living now "responsible" in the sense of imposed sacrifice. In a nutshell: I want the rich bastards to "pay", who control the government and continue to screw everybody over.

And the numbers show that there is plenty of money to pay for reparations if we make THEM behave.

If your reaction is that you are worried about being "responsible" then that tells me that you are use to being screwed over yourself. I say: Fight back, but not against others who are also being screwed over.

January 20, 2013 at 1:48 PM 

 [Unknown](#) said...

Youre a moron, sir, with all due respect. Stealing is bad then huh? How about black ppl pay reparations for all tje SHIT THEY STOLE FROM WHITE PPL since they bacame free? Who is gonna reparate me \$40k of equipment they stole from ME?

January 20, 2013 at 2:21 PM 

 [Unknown](#) said...

None of us like government but blacks have stolen alot from white ppl over the years whos gonna reparate that? You might be intelligent in the physics field, but you are really naiive person and never had to do business with blacks. I had \$40k of equipment stolen from me whos gonna reparate me for that? Now make us a smarty pants equation(that u obviously pulled out

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➔ [Dalai Lama](#) (2)

➔ [Daniel Woolf](#) (2)

➔ [Derek Jensen](#) (2)

➔ [EU](#) (2)

➔ [Edward Said](#) (2)

➔ [Evita Ochel](#) (2)


➔ [George Carlin](#) (2)

➔ [Hajo Meyer](#) (2)

➔ [Harrit paper](#) (2)

➔ [Hillary Clinton](#) (2)

where sun dont shine) calculating all the stuff they stole and also all the welfare money they stole by spendin it in strip clubs and cruises and then well talk about reparations. Just because some numbers mathematicLly add up doesnt mean ANYTHING. you,'s ir, are not as smart as u think and r very closed minded

January 20, 2013 at 2:29 PM 

 [Denis Rancourt](#) said...

@Arseny:

OK, I gather you did not have insurance? Which is fine because insurance companies are mega thieves.

I think that it would only be fair to add your reparation request to the calculation. To add it as a demand coming from you. If you add your demand, it will strengthen the overall demand.

Also, when those Black's get their \$1.5 million each, they may be inclined to give you a good deal to buy back your equipment?

January 20, 2013 at 2:49 PM 

 [Unknown](#) said...

Like I said, you are extremely naive. should the government just pay for anything that ever got stolen from anyone? and then again this conversation is totally pointless because the biggest thieves are the government and they will not give you anything only take away. you seem to be living in some kind of a non real lala land. please come down from the sky the world is not all rainbows and it is really evil in really corrupt. even money to a race that steals and kills the most wouldnt help it either. what makes you write an article like this. are you trying to provoke a racial debate? anyways cannot teach old dog new tricks keep thinking that we owe them something we don't owe them anything.

January 20, 2013 at 3:04 PM 

 [Unknown](#) said...

also like I said try to calculate amount the black people stole from white people then we can continue this conversation

January 20, 2013 at 3:06 PM 

 [Unknown](#) said...

No. disparity is because of diff. In intellect. Im white from russia poor as shit till I come to this country and used my intellect to get money. Nothing was given to me I earned it all. White pll disparity. Hah. What about before america? How come white ppl were inventi.g guns ships etc while blacks in africa had diddy squat?

January 20, 2013 at 3:11 PM 


- [Holocaust](#) (2)
- [ISIS](#) (2)
- [In Place of Death](#) (2)
- [Iraq](#) (2)
- [Jacques Fremont](#) (2)
- [Julia Tourianski](#) (2)
- [Legal Fund](#) (2)
- [Libertarian Party](#) (2)
- [Libya](#) (2)
- [Lies](#) (2)
- [Marc Kelly](#) (2)
- [NDP](#) (2)
- [Nick Day](#) (2)
- [Norman Finkelstein](#) (2)
- [Occupy Ottawa](#) (2)
- [Occupy Wall Street](#) (2)
- [Paris terror](#) (2)
- [Paul Martin](#) (2)
- [Quds Day](#) (2)
- [Residential Schools](#) (2)
- [Russia](#) (2)
- [Steven Salaita](#) (2)
- [Tim Moen](#) (2)
- [Truth NGO](#) (2)
- [Venezuela](#) (2)
- [Ward Churchill](#) (2)
- [Zio-zeal](#) (2)
- [access to justice](#) (2)
- [antifa](#) (2)
- [apartheid](#) (2)
- [breathing](#) (2)
- [cancer](#) (2)
- [capitalism](#) (2)
- [child protection](#) (2)
- [constitution](#) (2)
- [cultural appropriation](#) (2)
- [deception](#) (2)
- [diversity of tactics](#) (2)
- [drugs](#) (2)
- [employment equity](#) (2)

 [Denis Rancourt](#) said...

@Arsenyi:


So, is there a solution to your \$40k problem? There must be a solution? It is an injustice. It merits reparation. What are you going to do to obtain reparation?

And you stated the government is steeling from you. It is the "biggest thieves". I agree. What are you going to do about that? That deserves to be addressed. It is a question of principle and dignity. Reparation is due.

January 20, 2013 at 3:25 PM 


 [Unknown](#) said...

Solution? the world is a corrupt evil place there is no solution. what's your solution to stop blacks from stealing give each of them 1,000,000 and a half\$? I don't think that given that type of money to drug crazed criminals will stop them from comitin crimes. in fact I think that that type of money in their hands would only spur more violence drug use and crime. and what's your solution to fix all the corruption in the world again?

January 20, 2013 at 3:36 PM 

 [Unknown](#) said...

U r a tard

January 20, 2013 at 8:24 PM 

 [C. M. Morrison](#) said...

Denis,

Thanks for again showing the power of simple logic to cut through nonsense and clarify issues. For me, your article is valuable because:

1. It starkly demonstrates the enormous power of differential wealth accumulation, combined with lineal wealth inheritance, to create structures in inequality and domination which people become locked into for generations. The sheer magnitude is astounding. All that compounded interest has accrued to groups other than the slave descendants, and for those groups it serves as an enormous entitlement program. Conversely, the theft of income and lack of corresponding wealth accumulation constitutes an equally enormous dis-entitlement (e.g. dispossession) program for the slave descendants.

2. And it has also served, shall we say, to coax snakes out of their holes. Just look at some of the comments and the obstinate illogic and/or crass racism that lurks just below the surface. This goes to show what even the simplest and most obvious suggestion for correcting injustice is up against.

➔ [en francais](#) (2)

➔ [family](#) (2)

➔ [federal elections](#) (2)

➔ [fertility](#) (2)

➔ [food](#) (2)

➔ [graduate school](#) (2)

➔ [hate crime](#) (2)

➔ [journalism](#) (2)

➔ [judiciary](#) (2)

➔ [meta-research](#) (2)

➔ [metastasis](#) (2)

➔ [middle-class](#) (2)

➔ [mind control](#) (2)

➔ [money](#) (2)

➔ [multi-polar world](#) (2)

➔ [pathology](#) (2)

➔ [physicists](#) (2)

➔ [privacy](#) (2)

➔ [pro-choice](#) (2)

➔ [pro-life](#) (2)

➔ [reparations](#) (2)

➔ [revolte](#) (2)

➔ [social engineering](#) (2)

➔ [socialism](#) (2)

➔ [word censorship](#) (2)

➔ [worker rights](#) (2)

➔ [1 - Activist Wars](#) (1)

➔ [1 - Academic Squatting](#) (1)

➔ [1 - Advice to squatters](#) (1)

➔ [1 - Anarchism as cooptation](#) (1)

➔ [1 - Banned from campus](#) (1)

➔ [1 - CBC](#) (1)

➔ [1 - Corporate Climate Coup](#) (1)

➔ [1 - GW: Truth or Dare?](#) (1)

➔ [1 - Interpreting Means-Freire](#) (1)

➔ [1 - On embracing hatred](#) (1)

➔ [1 - Ottawa Sun feature article](#) (1)


➔ [1 - Paul Goodman defends AT](#) (1)

➔ [1 - Plato 60s statement](#) (1)

➔ [1 - Recommended Reading](#) (1)

➔ [1 - Russell Means](#) (1)

Best.

January 21, 2013 at 6:47 AM 

 [Denis Rancourt](#) said...

@C.M.Morrison,


Thanks.

I think "crass racism" is a relatively harmless consequence of "class racism". The first is easy to dissolve, the latter is extremely difficult to constrain.

Focusing on crass racism serves power, in many ways.


Malcolm X made these points very clearly. He preferred racist talkers to silent liberal racists, and he denounced collaborators.

Consider my radical book about racism: "Hierarchy and free expression in the fight against racism".

January 21, 2013 at 8:07 AM 

 [Anonymous](#) said...

The better reparation calculation would be what is owed to the Native Americans that this country was stolen from.


January 21, 2013 at 9:56 PM 

 [Anonymous](#) said...

As someone who has been working minimum wage jobs, I find this article to be incredibly dumb.

I live in a single room I'm renting in a house, I use public transit, I don't eat extravagantly, and I can barely scrape by every month. Something like buying a new pair of boots uses up all of my "savings" from more than one month.

While I agree that reparations are something that should be considered, the calculations you used are dubious at best. I'd be lucky to save 5% of my wages, after taxes and basic living expenses have been taken into account. If your figure had taken living expenses into account (which had to have been provided for the slaves in question), then I could appreciate the number, but as it stands, it's a rather pointless and useless calculation.

January 22, 2013 at 4:10 PM 

 [Anonymous](#) said...

Your math doesn't work, Denis. As MattS says, you need to calculate the value of the labor at 19th century rates.

The average farm labor wage in the American South in 1830

- [1 - SDS at UBC](#) (1)
- [1 - Survival 101](#) (1)
- [1 - War in Afghanistan \(in French\)](#) (1)
- [5G](#) (1)
- [AIPAC](#) (1)
- [AT List Politicians](#) (1)
- [ATI](#) (1)
- [Albert Cleage](#) (1)
- [Alwaght News](#) (1)
- [Amcha Initiative](#) (1)
- [Andre Longtin](#) (1)
- [Anne-Marie Dussault](#) (1)
- [Annenberg Learner](#) (1)
- [BBC](#) (1)
- [Barack Obama](#) (1)
- [Benjamin Netanyahu](#) (1)
- [Benjamin Zander](#) (1)
- [Bob Rae](#) (1)
- [Bruce Charlton](#) (1)
- [Bruce Shipman](#) (1)
- [CLASSE](#) (1)
- [COURT ORDER](#) (1)
- [CSIS](#) (1)
- [CUPE](#) (1)
- [CanWest](#) (1)
- [Chinese Premier Li Keqiang](#) (1)
- [Chris Bently AG](#) (1)
- [Church](#) (1)
- [Claude Haridge](#) (1)
- [Corey Robin](#) (1)
- [Daniel J Levitin](#) (1)
- [Darcus Howe](#) (1)
- [David Griscom](#) (1)
- [David W. Scott](#) (1)
- [Democracy Now](#) (1)
- [Dieudonné M'bala M'bala](#) (1)
- [Donation](#) (1)
- [Ed Corrigan](#) (1)
- [Egypt](#) (1)
- [Elaine Brown](#) (1)

appears to have been about eight dollars a month. (Not per hour, per month.) That works out to a total labor value of the slave population of about \$200 million a year during the period you're looking at. Multiplied by seventy years, that's about \$14 billion in 19th century dollars, or about \$400 billion adjusted for inflation, which comes out to \$10,000 per contemporary black American.

As to WHY you need to use 19th century wage rates, it's pretty simple -- the number you're trying to find is the value of the labor that was stolen.

Your thought experiment is this: Take the annual value of one slave's labor as X. Multiply X by the length of time that US slavery existed, and the number of slaves it affected, and that gives you (more or less) the value of that labor in 1860. Adjust that number for inflation, and you have the amount owed today.

But in order for the thought experiment to work, you need X to be the value of the labor THEN, not NOW. To do anything else doesn't make any sense.

January 22, 2013 at 5:11 PM 

 [ViolentPeace](#) said...

What if you're biracial? Do you divide your reparation on racial genealogy? Would a 1/2 black 1/2 white only receive half the money? And then what about those who look white and gain from white privilege, but still have an African or biracial grandmother/father? Interesting to think about.

January 22, 2013 at 5:40 PM 

 [Denis Rancourt](#) said...

@studentactivism.net:

Angus, your thinking is too fast and superficial on this one. Think again. You leave out the crux of the problem, which is how does one *correctly* account for "inflation" between 1860 and present...?

See my further explanation in a comment above...

I have explained and justified how I account for inflation, now you must explain your unjustified inflation factor.

I am NOT applying today's wage to 1860, as you misunderstand. I am calculating 1860 wages in today dollars, so that I may calculate the amount (with interest) due today. Get it?

January 22, 2013 at 9:16 PM 

 [Denis Rancourt](#) said...

@Anonymous on minimum wage:

- [Elizabeth Collins](#) (1)
- [Ellen Schrecker](#) (1)
- [Essays List](#) (1)
- [Essays and articles by Denis Rancourt](#) (1)
- [FARS News Agency](#) (1)
- [Facebook group](#) (1)
- [Family Law](#) (1)
- [France](#) (1)
- [Francis A Boyle](#) (1)
- [Frederick Douglass](#) (1)
- [GMO](#) (1)
- [George Galloway](#) (1)
- [George Orwell](#) (1)
- [Gerald Celente](#) (1)
- [Ghali Hassan](#) (1)
- [Gideon Levy](#) (1)
- [Gilets jaunes](#) (1)
- [Google Scholar](#) (1)
- [Harmful Idiocy Syndrome](#) (1)
- [Hazel Gashoka](#) (1)
- [Helen Thomas](#) (1)
- [Helena Guergis](#) (1)
- [Henry Campbell Bannerman](#) (1)
- [ICC](#) (1)
- [IPC](#) (1)
- [Iceland](#) (1)
- [Ignorant Schoolmaster](#) (1)
- [Immigration](#) (1)
- [Inderpaul Chandhoke JP](#) (1)
- [Indiegogo](#) (1)
- [Intersectionality](#) (1)
- [Isaiah Berlin](#) (1)
- [Izzeldin Abuelaish](#) (1)
- [Jack layton](#) (1)
- [Jacques Ranciere](#) (1)
- [Jacques Vallee](#) (1)
- [Jamarl Thomas](#) (1)
- [James Petras](#) (1)
- [Jane Scharf](#) (1)
- [John Akpata](#) (1)


You are correct. I could have subtracted the food and shelter costs from the slaves' minimum wage pay, prior to continuing the calculation.

But I thought that if I did that, I would be accused of being a racist.

Seriously, the food and shelter costs for the sub-standard food and shelter (with no heat or air conditioning) would be small, AND the actual wage cost should be larger than minimum wage. So I decided to ignore food and shelter (and clothing) costs and stick to a simple calculation. In any case, the slave probably worked overtime (beyond the 10 hours I included) to make their own food... etc.

Basically, the slaves were never given the opportunity to spend any money, so essentially the entire amount of their labor for the master was stolen.

Your own case is one of wage slavery which requires a different calculation.

January 22, 2013 at 9:37 PM 

 **Anonymous said...**

Yes, Reparations 2013! *Generational PTSD over 400 yrs*

If a child was raped, what are the last term effects?

If a child was kidnapped, what are the long term effects?

If a child was beat, what are the long term effects?

If a child was physically, mentally, sexually, verbally, and educationally abused, what are the long term effects?

What are the long term effects of depression?

What are the long term effects of neglect?

What are the long term effects of terrorism and fear?

What are the long term effects of bullying?

What are the long term effects of people telling you, you're an animal?

What are the long term effects of losing your family?

What are the long term effect of hate?

What are the long term effects of non proper health care?

What are the long term effects of unhealth living conditions?

- [John Carroll](#) (1)
- [John Ioannidis](#) (1)
- [Jonathon Bullick](#) (1)
- [Jordan Peterson](#) (1)
- [Julian Assange](#) (1)
- [Julie Macfarlane](#) (1)
- [Justice Alder](#) (1)
- [Justice Charles Hackland](#) (1)
- [Justice Deena Baltman](#) (1)
- [Justice Peter Annis](#) (1)
- [Justine Trudeau](#) (1)
- [Kamil Karamali](#) (1)
- [Kayhan news Iran](#) (1)
- [Ken Stone](#) (1)
- [Kevin Annett](#) (1)
- [Korea](#) (1)
- [Kourosh Ziabari](#) (1)
- [Latin America](#) (1)
- [Liana Voia](#) (1)
- [Linda Briskin](#) (1)
- [London riots](#) (1)
- [Louis Morissette](#) (1)
- [Lynne Stewart](#) (1)
- [MRM](#) (1)
- [Magazine features about Denis Rancourt](#) (1)
- [Marc Morano](#) (1)
- [Mario Savio](#) (1)
- [McGill University](#) (1)
- [Meaningful Learning Research Group](#) (1)
- [Michael Parenti](#) (1)
- [Michelle Flaherty](#) (1)
- [Mike Duffy](#) (1)
- [Mohamed Hersi](#) (1)
- [Mossbauer spectroscopy](#) (1)
- [Mother Jones](#) (1)
- [Muammar Gaddafi](#) (1)
- [Nader's Show](#) (1)
- [Naomi Klein](#) (1)
- [Neuroleaks](#) (1)

What are the long term effects of unhealth foods?

What are the long term effects of racism?

What are the long term effects of being called N*gg*r?

What are the long term effects of having to hold your head down?

What are the long term effects of any abuse person that does not receive therapy?

What are the long term effects of negative environmental factors?

What are the long term effects on children that was raised by parents that lived these traumas daily?

What are the long term effects of anxiety?

* PTSD * Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

Epigenetic

The researchers found a specific change in the FKBP5 gene was a common factor in the one third of the test participants that had developed some form of trauma related illness as a result of childhood trauma.

January 23, 2013 at 2:11 AM 

 **Anonymous said...**

Denis, you're accounting for inflation -- you say -- by compounding the original amount by 2%, an admittedly arbitrary number. But you're ALSO accounting for inflation by starting off with a hugely inflated figure for the original. That's double-dipping.

What I've done is found a plausible original labor price, and then applied a scholarly estimate for actual inflation since then. (The US Bureau of Labor Statistics publishes an online inflation calculator based on the Consumer Price Index, but since it only goes back to 2013, I used one produced by scholars at the University of Oregon instead.)

January 24, 2013 at 4:51 AM 

 **[Denis Rancourt](#) said...**

@studentactivism/Angus:

Angus, please read [this comment](#) slowly. It contains information that corrects your misconception. "Inflation" (i.e., determining value in today-dollars) and "interest" (i.e., legitimate reparation for loss from not having been paid on time money that was due 150 years ago) are two different components of the calculation.

 [News about Denis Rancourt](#) (1)

 [OCAP](#) (1)

 [Officer Bubbles](#) (1)

 [Ossie Davis](#) (1)

 [Paolo Freire](#) (1)

 [Paul Slansky](#) (1)

 [Peggy Mason](#) (1)

 [Petr Skrabanek](#) (1)

 [Pope](#) (1)

 [PowerPoint](#) (1)


 [Press TV](#) (1)

 [QuAIA](#) (1)

 [R2P](#) (1)

 [RBC](#) (1)

 [Radio-Canada](#) (1)

 [Radio-Quebec](#) (1)

 [Recoil](#) (1)

 [Red Pill](#) (1)

 [ResearchGate](#) (1)

 [Richard Fadden](#) (1)

 [Richard G. Wilkinson](#) (1)


 [Robert F. Williams](#) (1)

 [Russell Jacoby](#) (1)

 [SLAPP](#) (1)

 [Sarnia Ontario](#) (1)

 [Sayyid Ali Khamenei](#) (1)

 [Scientific work of Denis Rancourt](#) (1)

 [Section 83.18](#) (1)

 [Serena Shim](#) (1)

 [Socrates](#) (1)

 [Soros](#) (1)

 [Stephen Lendman](#) (1)

 [Stephen Pollard](#) (1)

 [Stratfor](#) (1)

 [Stuart Tannock](#) (1)

 [Symantec](#) (1)


 [Symbols](#) (1)

 [Terrance Nelson](#) (1)

 [Terri Ginsberg](#) (1)

 [Thomas Mulcair](#) (1)

Sorry, but it seems to me that you are not making an authentic or sufficient effort to understand my printed statements. Get real.

January 24, 2013 at 7:33 AM 

 **C.M.Morrison** said...

@studentactivism.net:

Your own math is clearly incorrect. You left out the compound interest. You assume that only the principal (the 70 years of lost wages) should be paid back. But think of these stolen wages as a forced loan given by the slaves to their owners. When would a bank ever allow you to take out a 400 billion dollar loan, keep it and use it for 140 years, and then pay back only the original amount? So apply the 2% annual interest to your own calculation of \$400 billion lost wages and you get not \$10,000 per person but \$160,000, a life changing amount, especially for poor people.

But Denis was deliberately extremely conservative in every value used in the calculation. He assumed a 2% interest rate, while the actual growth rate was much higher. According to one site I consulted (www.measuringworth.com/growth/) the annual real GDP growth rate for the US for 1860 to 2010 was 3.44%. Set the interest rate to this more realistic value and you get a multiplier of $1.0344^{140} = 113$. Plug this into the calculation, using your own estimate of \$400 billion lost wages, and you get \$1.13 million per slave descendant, essentially the same as Denis.

The point is that the result, using a correct calculation which includes the compound interest, is going to be simply ENORMOUS on any realistic assumptions.

January 24, 2013 at 2:03 PM 

 **[Denis Rancourt](#)** said...

@C.M.Morrison:


Indeed, I was concentrating on trying to get "Angus" to understand my calculation, but his version is full of error, yes.

He uses the lowest possible 1800s farm labor wage (for free workers) of \$8, rather than the historic values in the range \$8.5 to \$14.60 per month; does not mention that these wages included board; and ignores the economic fact that farm labor was dramatically and artificially devalued relative to other labor precisely because of slave labor which was in the farm labor sector. In other words, free farm laborers were the most exploited free laborers.

He puts trust in "inflation" calculations which are notoriously sensitive to how the calculation is made, and which ignore the historic changes in income tax rates.

- ➔ [Tim Ball](#) (1)
- ➔ [Tony Martin](#) (1)
- ➔ [Toronto](#) (1)
- ➔ [Toronto Pride](#) (1)
- ➔ [U of O Watch](#) (1)
- ➔ [Vern White](#) (1)
- ➔ [WHO](#) (1)
- ➔ [Walter Lewin](#) (1)
- ➔ [Western aggression](#) (1)
- ➔ [White Helmets](#) (1)
- ➔ [Wikileaks](#) (1)
- ➔ [William K Black](#) (1)
- ➔ [Youtube](#) (1)
- ➔ [Zombie science](#) (1)
- ➔ [abortion](#) (1)
- ➔ [academic planning](#) (1)
- ➔ [affirmative action](#) (1)
- ➔ [agitation](#) (1)
- ➔ [alternative conceptions](#) (1)
- ➔ [anti-oppression](#) (1)
- ➔ [art](#) (1)
- ➔ [attacks against farmers](#) (1)
- ➔ [audio](#) (1)
- ➔ [biological weapon](#) (1)
- ➔ [blockade](#) (1)
- ➔ [carding](#) (1)
- ➔ [censorship](#) (1)
- ➔ [champerty](#) (1)
- ➔ [chemical weapons](#) (1)
- ➔ [chemtrails](#) (1)
- ➔ [civil guerrilla warfare](#) (1)
- ➔ [collective intelligence](#) (1)
- ➔ [communism](#) (1)
- ➔ [concise definition](#) (1)
- ➔ [conference talk](#) (1)
- ➔ [copyright wars](#) (1)
- ➔ [corruption](#) (1)
- ➔ [cover up](#) (1)
- ➔ [creativity](#) (1)
- ➔ [crime](#) (1)
- ➔ [deplorables](#) (1)

I prefer to use the direct approach that the minimum value in today-dollars of one hour of labor in any period is the minimum wage in today dollars, which happens to be close to the inflation adjusted value for non-farm labor...

January 24, 2013 at 5:16 PM 


 Anonymous said...

@ Denis Rancourt

"Your own case is one of wage slavery which requires a different calculation."

Hasn't cost of living and income from low-wage jobs been historically close though?

Also, I typically work 50-60 hours a week..... Sometimes more than that.....

January 25, 2013 at 4:16 PM 

 Anonymous said...

Don't be fooled by this guy. He is a racist (which is redundant because he is a white Euro-peon)We don't need you to chastise our mis-leaders we are doing that just fine. I am so tired of these wannabe bullshit profs and Canadian so-called anti-racists. They make me want to puke.

Hey Mr. "I did some smart calculations in 5 minutes", I dare you to post this comment. But of course you won't because white "anti-racists" think they are the new saviors of Black people and you couldn't possibly stand any critique of your lily-white "I'm a good guy" bullsh*t propaganda.

January 27, 2013 at 4:40 AM 

 Anonymous said...

so true...move forward. if you were a slave you are deceased so any reparation money could be put in college funding for black children who need financial assistance. no greater freedom than education!

January 30, 2013 at 9:28 AM 

 Anonymous said...

I love how all the comments are skewed and never taking into account of free labor for 100plus yrs??

March 5, 2013 at 10:20 PM 

 E.A. said...

I couldn't reply to who I wanted so I'm just going to comment.

 [determinative conflict](#) (1)

 [document](#) (1)

 [doomsday narratives](#) (1)

 [education resources](#) (1)

 [eugenics](#) (1)

 [event call out](#) (1)

 [everything is ok](#) (1)

 [fake news](#) (1)

 [federal budget](#) (1)

 [genetic engineering](#) (1)

 [goodness](#) (1)

 [greenwashing](#) (1)

 [guest blogger](#) (1)

 [home schooling](#) (1)

 [image](#) (1)

 [ivory tower](#) (1)

 [jail](#) (1)

 [judicial review](#) (1)


 [land acknowledgement](#) (1)

 [landowner rights](#) (1)

 [learning tools](#) (1)

 [lecture](#) (1)

 [legal costs](#) (1)

 [letter to the youth](#) (1)

 [links](#) (1)

 [manipulation](#) (1)

 [meme](#) (1)

 [morality](#) (1)

 [mosque](#) (1)

 [municipal elections](#) (1)

 [net exports](#) (1)

 [olympics](#) (1)

 [ontological anxiety](#) (1)

 [oppressed fairly](#) (1)

 [pandemic](#) (1)

 [parody](#) (1)

 [perception](#) (1)

 [perversion](#) (1)

 [physics teaching](#) (1)

 [pinkwashing](#) (1)

I'm going to go out on a limb here and guess that you are white. It is not about 'wanting' reparations. It's about the United States living up to the bullsh*t values and higher standards that they want the rest of the world to believe they uphold. To address your statement about a slave being deceased:

Why do people get compensated in wrongful death lawsuits? Or better yet, why do the families of soldiers killed (or any military person) get compensated? Those people are dead and gone. The wrongdoing was done to that person, not to their families. I mean their families couldn't possibly be affected by that person's death! And if they are, then they should get over. As we African Americans are supposed to get over the centuries of enslavement of our people. Like we are supposed to get over the affects of that slavery system.

If this is how you really feel, then families of military persons who did in the war should not want, or receive payment. They should take advantage of the freedom that comes with being an American! I mean military people are the ones that made the choice to go and fight for that freedom.


Which is funny because I don't remember any slaves having much of a choice in the enslavement. Nor did they have a choice in the segregation and discrimination that they faced upon being 'freed.' Slavery, which ended a few generations ago has damaged many of my ancestors, emotionally, physically, financially, and socially. And it is my ancestors that have unintentionally passed down the damages done to them through slavery. So take advantage of what freedom? Racism still exist today as does slavery. And my people are now enslaved mentally at the hands of white people who's ancestors were slave owners.

It's really sad that white people feel this way because they didn't have a problem handing out reparations to the Native Americans. But of course, that wouldn't be a problem seeing as the white man killed off so many. There aren't even enough Native Americans around to put a dent in the federal reserves banks. And it was also the US government that encouraged many to pay out reparations to the sufferers of the holocaust.

I'm sure all of this will go in one ear and out the other seeing as we are talking about the African American population. It is so obvious that white people are intimidated by us, and will do anything to make sure we do not reach equality. Even if it means ignoring the pain and strive that their ancestors put ours through. Even if it means white people getting recognition and status on the backs of slaves. Even if it means being told to 'get over' what has been done to our people. I don't hear anyone saying get over the holocaust or get over 9/11. I guess when bad things happen to white people, we are supposed to remember it in history forever...and tell pretend stories about how the white man built America. But when bad things happen to African Americans, we are supposed to forget and go from here.

- ➔ [poetry](#) (1)
- ➔ [political prisoner](#) (1)
- ➔ [popular movement](#) (1)
- ➔ [poverty](#) (1)
- ➔ [pregnant women](#) (1)
- ➔ [prison](#) (1)
- ➔ [profit](#) (1)
- ➔ [property damage](#) (1)
- ➔ [proportional representation](#) (1)
- ➔ [pseudo-science](#) (1)
- ➔ [queer liberation](#) (1)
- ➔ [quotations](#) (1)
- ➔ [quotes](#) (1)
- ➔ [rabble](#) (1)
- ➔ [refugee crisis](#) (1)
- ➔ [religion](#) (1)
- ➔ [reparation](#) (1)
- ➔ [roundabout](#) (1)
- ➔ [rules](#) (1)
- ➔ [rules of war](#) (1)
- ➔ [safe space](#) (1)
- ➔ [scam](#) (1)
- ➔ [secret trials](#) (1)
- ➔ [security certificate](#) (1)
- ➔ [self-image](#) (1)
- ➔ [service manager](#) (1)
- ➔ [sex](#) (1)
- ➔ [software](#) (1)
- ➔ [speaking truth](#) (1)
- ➔ [specialization](#) (1)
- ➔ [stress](#) (1)
- ➔ [strike](#) (1)
- ➔ [stupidity](#) (1)
- ➔ [sybiosis](#) (1)
- ➔ [taboo](#) (1)
- ➔ [transparency](#) (1)
- ➔ [twitter](#) (1)
- ➔ [usury](#) (1)
- ➔ [vaccine](#) (1)
- ➔ [voter registration rule](#) (1)
- ➔ [weather](#) (1)

This is why I don't like most white people. They are racist and don't even know it.

May 23, 2013 at 4:48 PM 

 **Anonymous said...**

Thank you for this reply. It is hard to "move on" when there remains a lack of acknowledgement of the damage done and the continued ills that face my community. One only needs to look at the overturning of a key provision of the Voters Right Act that combated 8 years of attempts at voter suppression, to the recent verdict in Florida that essentially reminded many of us what we already knew, that a young black male has no value in this country. It is hard to "move on" when there is a lack of acknowledgement of the tragedy (and yes triumph) of the black experience in America - a white parent never has to tell their child, "don't wear this, don't make eye contact with cops, don't make sudden movements, avoid confrontations, don't be seen after dark with something in your hand even if it is skittles and a can of ice tea, don't run."

Melissa Harris Perry said it best this weekend:

<http://thinkprogress.org/media/2013/07/14/2297761/black-tv-host-i-live-in-a-country-that-makes-me-wish-my-sons-awaybecause-its-not-safe/>

That is why it is hard to "Move on"

July 15, 2013 at 1:20 PM 

 **Anonymous said...**

Stop trying to hide the fact and truth that your ancestors are BEASTS and is the cause of slavery, racism and "WHITE" Supremacy.....

July 15, 2013 at 3:23 PM 

 **Anonymous said...**

You Mr. Parshikov are not as learned on historic fact as you think, comrade. First everything you use from icebox, to traffic light, to dust pan was invented by blacks. There are doctors that died because they could not use the instruments they themselves created. Life itself started in upper mesopotamia, which would make adam and eve people of color...even the peanut butter that you serve your children was designed by black people. Modern medicine and engineering both came from africa and this was both europeans settled. Please you can disrespect yourself but never disrespect the truth. Oh and for the record I am a black man and an intellectual. Good day my friend.

July 15, 2013 at 3:28 PM 

 **Unknown said...**

 [white nationalism](#) (1)

 [world currency](#) (1)

 [zoning bylaws](#) (1)





I thank u for this piece of knowledge!!

July 15, 2013 at 3:40 PM

Anonymous said...

Maybe I missed this history lesson but WHERE were there european slaves??

July 15, 2013 at 3:42 PM

[Dr. Gabriel](#) said...

There's a big difference between an indentured servant and a prisoner of war terrorized and brutalized Physically, mentally, emotionally, sexually, etc...and forced to toil against their will, stripped from their homes, and of their nationality, culture, and religionneed I continue?...

July 15, 2013 at 3:50 PM

Anonymous said...

You so neatly assume that every (at least most) black people are drug crazed criminals, while ignoring that there are many people of other races, including the "white" race that are drug crazed criminals.

It stands to me, when i look at psychology and how situations play out, that when an individual is told all there life that they are of little value, except to serve another who deserves life, the individuals personal view of themselves is changed/ shaped. That is speaking of one man. Now imagine being told the moment you are born that you and the community that was created for you have no purpose, then having it being proven to you every day. You certainly grow up to hate yourself and your "people" and it certainly does not take one day that someone declares your freedom to get over that ingrained image of self. It takes a lifetime. Instead of trying to reverse the effects of slavery, what ended up happening was a dropping of the ball. Slave owners let go the person they made a ball and said there you have your freedom and never considered that perhaps they should say to the individuals and the communities they made into objects that they were wrong, or here let me clear a path for you to make your own living. Instead, many let go and walked away cursing a people they taught that the only way to survive in this new world was to fight and hate self.

July 15, 2013 at 4:15 PM

[Denis Rancourt](#) said...

Some of the readers of this post might enjoy my book:

[Hierarchy and Free Expression in the Fight Against Racism](#)

I am told that it is very thought provoking.

July 15, 2013 at 4:57 PM

 **Anonymous said...**

If that is the case then why does America give "jews" reparations do you think it has fostered an unhealthy entitlement culture.....then again you are right because when you are paid what you are owed and can produce wealth as a culture as a whole you feel entitled to be treated equal and fair! Then we would have made it our own instead of making millions of white people rich and causing them to feel entitled!

July 15, 2013 at 6:18 PM 



 **Unknown said...**

Good piece of information. But, what political figure in their right mind would back it? The American systems (legislative, judicial, executive) are all run by money & power. Unfortunately, African Americans don't have enough of either of these to make any real impact on the system.

I believe that reparations would even the playing field for the black culture. Although there are those who would say african american have been given too much help in restoring their culture through gov't programs already.

For those that understand, African Americans are disadvantaged from the start. I don't know of one African American that can say they have "old money" or that at some point in time they inherited some large sum of money or estate/land.

However, I do know of countless African Americans with stories of how their ancestors struggled to make something out of absolutely nothing.

And although I do believe in reparations, I also have to ponder the irreparable damages already done to our culture.

In truth, the culture is already completely broken.

The "black family" is a rare occurrence due to the missing fathers who have turned to a life of crime in order to obtain the almighty dollar. The dead sons who have lost their lives following in the footsteps of the fathers, And the daughters who have no love or respect for the fathers and sons nor themselves because they see their men, their black men, as failures in society.

-All can be attributed to what?

The all mighty dollar.

James 5: 1-6

Now listen, you rich people, weep and wail because of the misery that is coming on you. 2 Your wealth has rotted, and moths have eaten your clothes. 3 Your gold and silver are corroded. Their corrosion will testify against you and eat your flesh like fire. You have hoarded wealth in the last days. 4 Look! The wages you failed to pay the workers who mowed your fields are crying out against you. The cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord Almighty. 5 You have lived on earth in luxury and self-indulgence. You have fattened yourselves in the day of slaughter. [a] 6 You have condemned and murdered the innocent one, who was not opposing you.

July 15, 2013 at 6:21 PM 

 **Anonymous said...**

Your statement implies that as a society we are truly "free".

July 15, 2013 at 6:44 PM 

 **Anonymous said...**

So...you mean to tell JEWS are the only ones entitled to reparation?

July 15, 2013 at 7:03 PM 

 **Anonymous said...**

Greetings Denis - thank you for having the courage to publicize a subject that is long overdue in US discourse as well as for Indigenous populations. Even Australia has come a very long way with both monetary and public apologies to Indigenous populations.

Please have a read of - My Face is Black Is True by Mary Francis Berry (2005) to ascertain where this discourse and action left off in meaningful legal terms in the US.

July 15, 2013 at 9:09 PM 

 **Anonymous said...**

Denis - how may I receive updates either on my FB page or email ...?

July 15, 2013 at 9:11 PM 



 **Sion said...**

Thank you Dennis for taking the time to calculate this. And thank you for defending why you did. It have a fantastic day and wonderfully blissful life

July 15, 2013 at 9:17 PM 

 **Anonymous said...**

Awesome post,reply & stance.

July 15, 2013 at 11:36 PM 

 **Denis Rancourt said...**

Dear readers of this post:

Thank you for your many suggestions and questions.

I look forward to reading "My Face Is Black Is True: Callie House

and the Struggle for Ex-Slave Reparations"

My social theory essays are available at this web page: [Denis Rancourt's Essays](#)


The best source I know regarding research on the question of reparations to Jewish people is "The Holocaust Industry" by Norman G. Finkelstein.

My email is: denis.rancourt@gmail.com

July 16, 2013 at 6:39 AM 

 **/SBA said...**

because then black people would have a fighting chance. slavery ended and the blatant racial injustices and job discrimination continued well until the 70's. WE BUILT THIS LAND. it's entire structure is built on our blood and we are STILL at the bottom of society. why? because we never had an even START here. if the jews can get reparations, why can't we? seriously? SERIOUSLY?

July 16, 2013 at 9:16 AM 

 **Anonymous said...**

Such a dumb fucking question. Survival, for one. "Freedom". . to buy shit - is the end of of this misused cliché.

July 16, 2013 at 9:36 AM 

 **Calvin said...**

Jews wasn't the only ones that had gotten a reparations Native Americans and the Japanese also got there reparations from America. Which German paid for the so-called Jews reparations. But that is a good question, Why haven't any black leaders spoke out about reparations. I know Johnnie Cochran had created a team to investigate how truly much America owe descendants of slaves, but he had die (which was foul play I believe).

July 17, 2013 at 5:18 AM 

 **Anonymous said...**

My ancestors died while defending the rights of all men. My ancestor was physically beaten with a cane in his Senate chamber and left for dead after speaking out against slavery. To imply that we haven't paid enough as a society is to forget the payments made on the battlefields of the American Civil War. You argue that so many people would be in a better place today if their ancestors had not been enslaved. This true. Please do not forget that so many others in this country would have had decedents to look back at them had they lived instead of dying for your freedom

July 18, 2013 at 11:50 PM 

 [Denis Rancourt](#) said...

@Christopher Gordon:

"To imply that we haven't paid enough as a society is to forget the payments made on the battlefields of the American Civil War."

I think your logic is flawed here. Those that need to "pay" by "sacrificing" their mega-profits are never on the battlefield of any war.

There is enough for everyone, and there are many who deserve reparations. Reparations does not mean creating unjust conditions for others. It means creating justice for all. (Or more justice for more of us.)

I think when you say "society", you maybe mean white middle class USAmerica? Your society does not want to entertain any ideas that might disadvantage you... but in fact this idea put into practice would greatly enrich you beyond your imagination. It would also prevent your inevitable and continued downfall.

In the end, though, if at all, reparations are going to come from those deserving reparations demanding reparations, imposing reparations.

July 20, 2013 at 8:08 AM 

 [100lbdietjourney](#) said...

call me crazy but why would they be due minimum wage of today? wouldn't they be due the minimum wage of back then? not to mention, they are free now and thier opporatunities here are far beyond those of africa. so, you mean to tell me they are still owed? thier ancestors busted ther ASSES and for that today there are millions of people who would not otherwise even EXIST let alone be provided ample opporatunities at a great life, if they so choose to take it. I mean, seriously. They are all free. They CAN go back to Africa if they so choose. My ancestors had this very land taken from them, but i dont sit here and expect anything. I am who i am today and have this great opporatunity to be something amazing bc of this tragic history.

July 23, 2013 at 12:23 PM 

 [Anonymous](#) said...

Let's look at this the other way around. If those people had NOT been taken as slaves then where would they be and what would they have? Take a look at Africa. What a mess. The majority would likely have dies of starvation or some form of bloody genocide. Whereas the descendents find themselves living in a civilised society with rights and drinking water and electricity and sanitation and infrastructure and a free capitalist society and culture whereby the fittest survive and live better than those who are lazy and ask for handouts. Can you imagine what would happen if \$1.5m was handed out to each of 40 million African

Americans now. I'm sure further chaos would ensue as everyone would be an instant lottery winner. Shocking idea. Utter rubbish.

July 23, 2013 at 12:49 PM 

 [Denis Rancourt](#) said...

@100lbdietjourney:

They are owed today, in today dollars, the value of labour that was done then, plus interest. It's really not that difficult to understand, and it's explained in detail in my comments above, in response to the same question. The other way is to pay in historic money adjusted to today's value, which gives essentially the same result, notwithstanding the bickering of so-called expert economists. Think about it. Think about how inflation works.

July 23, 2013 at 2:10 PM 


 [Denis Rancourt](#) said...

@Anonymous who said:

"Let's look at this the other way around. If those people had NOT been taken as slaves then where would they be and what would they have? Take a look at Africa. What a mess. The majority would likely have died of starvation or some form of bloody genocide. Whereas the descendants find themselves living in a civilised society with rights and drinking water and electricity and sanitation and infrastructure and a free capitalist society and culture whereby the fittest survive and live better than those who are lazy and ask for handouts. Can you imagine what would happen if \$1.5m was handed out to each of 40 million African Americans now. I'm sure further chaos would ensue as everyone would be an instant lottery winner. Shocking idea. Utter rubbish."

Your comment is stupid, plain and simple. Labour was collectively stolen (it was legal) and it is collectively owed, with interest. Period. Thanks to skin colour the owed descendants are easy to find. No "thought" experiment scenario about Africa or Mars or "chaos" changes the fact that reparations are due.

Someone steals your car. Oh wait, people like you have dangerous driving records, so the insurance policy for theft that you have continued to pay does not have to cover for your stolen car, etc. Clouded thinking at best. Or was it even thinking?

July 23, 2013 at 2:28 PM 

 [Sharaud X](#) said...

Dennis Rancourt: you have earned my respect. You may feel alone because the nature of the Slave Master's children is vitriolic. They are also beginning to be victimized by the very same system. This is the reason why they can't mentally grasp seeing the visible tears of slave descendants and the horrible atrocities of the African Holocaust. Basically, I'm saying the patient is almost too

sick to administer any treatment. I know you may alienate yourself by being truthful in a den of uneducated men and also liars, but your efforts are very dear to us! If you see what they're doing in New York: they will repay same sex couples before they repay slave descendants. Also many people were slaves but many people did not have their humanity reduced to cattle as the African who endured years of the most devastating form of slavery. The worst crime against humanity is the African Holocaust. To this day 600 Million Africans have been murdered and still counting...

July 23, 2013 at 3:31 PM 

 [Denis Rancourt](#) said...

@Sharaud X:

"The worst crime against humanity is the African Holocaust."

I completely understand your meaning, yes. Just to be clear, however, I believe that all reparations are due, not just to the victims of the worst (largest magnitude) crime against humanity. For example, in Canada, certainly the state's worst crime is its genocide against native peoples, ferociously continued by essentially all the same policies today. Similarly, the white working/slave-class mine workers and white child laborers which Marie Mother Jones fought for in the USA (1890 to 1930) are also due reparations. And so on. These battles need to unite rather than compete in a divide-and-conquer logic. The main analysis tool should be class analysis, not race analysis, because The Man predominantly uses class oppression, and adds/removes racism where and when it is useful to do so. The dividing forces within a racial group are along class lines and these forces are stronger than race, regarding maintaining the oppression, as has become quite evident in modern USamerica... Indeed, artificial inter-class "race unity" is often a device used to mask the class war in USamerica, and privileged Blacks use it the same way and to secure privilege, I believe. I try to explain these phenomena, as I see them, in my book... And, yes, it gets me into a lot of trouble, because I'm white! (A personal example of race analysis used to mute class analysis.)

July 23, 2013 at 5:00 PM 

 [Unknown](#) said...

being anonymous. does not protect your soul. THE DAY WILL COME when ALL crimes against, "HUMANITY" Will be answered for...

July 24, 2013 at 7:58 PM 

 [Denis Rancourt](#) said...

From: Keith Bowden

Date: 13 August 2013 19:07

Subject: Reparations to blacks

To: "denis.rancourt@gmail.com"

54% of all blacks are on some sort of govt assistance and 9% of whites are on the same govt assistance Which means 46% of blacks are paying into the system and 91% of whites are paying wouldn't you agree that we have given them enough wake up, its bankrupting our country.

August 13, 2013 at 4:33 PM 

 **Anonymous said...**

YES!!!! we do deserve compensation ask yourself why did they pay every other race but the black race, after we built this country whites, chines, and every other race has gotten reparations but not blacks. they put crack cocaine in the black neighbor hoods to keep us down and then they enslaved us for 400 years and then just let us go with nothing and now they look down on us dirty bastards we need to be paid and we need it NOW!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

December 17, 2013 at 8:40 AM 

 **Valarie Cutthecrap Clark said...**

Afrika is a mess because europeans, asians and arabs are there raping her once again.

July 22, 2014 at 6:58 PM 

 **Who wouldn't? said...**

Since this is a claim, you have to calculate damages in the context of the law. Regardless of liability, the law does not allow today's value and interest. You get one or the other. That is why your number seems so big; because it is double dipping.

It should not be difficult to figure out what a similar job in the North paid and use that wage. Since this is purely wage exercise, no general damages, subtract the room and board provided to slaves and families.

Also, subtract every government handout provided to the descendants since emancipation. Welfare, food stamps, Section 8 housing, etc. etc. I wouldn't dare go so far as to include the value of room and board provided by prisons. I would love to see the tally, but I get the feeling it would be near zero.

Did you know Israel received billions in reparations from Germany? A lot of that claim was based on the cost for Israel to set up for the newly arrived Jewish immigrants. From this perspective, any monies paid should be offset with a claim against those who caused the slaves to be moved from one continent to the other, both sellers and traders.

August 28, 2014 at 4:24 PM 

 **eyesspy said...**

Thank you sir, for your efforts towards trying to right a terrible wrong.

However, sir your bold action has spurred the evil bastards of your countrymen to unleash the latest attempt at Genocide against Black people. They have tried Aids, mowing our young men in front of their mothers faces, and now they have unleashed the Ebola virus on us while plucking out their infected white compatriots, curing them with a vaccine that appeared out of nowhere and then withholding the cure while they pontificate about its side effects and devise a means to spread the virus with a 'specially' prepared vaccine out of the shitty bowels of the WHO. This IN FRONT MY FACE TODAY

For all those that say Blacks should go back to Africa. Well Africa deserves reparations by the international community of western nations. Read the West And The Rest Of US by Chinweizu. Africa was destroyed within 200 years of contact with Europe during the Middle Ages. (1500 to 1700 ad). (I do not imply that period as the first African/Euro contact ie the opposite is true)

By the time the European Jew convert had positioned themselves in the slave industry during the Spanish and Portuguese era and again for the Belgian, French and British plunder of the continent Africa had been cleared of its leadership class and replaced by an inebriated dross of its lower class, donning the Emperors (Chiefs) robes, running around selling their compatriots for more booze.

It is from the plotted destruction of Africa that the west modernized the idea that to maintain their superiority and hegemony around the world they must go into a sovereign nation with their ambassadors and friendly NGO's, identify and corrupt a section of the people, cause them to rebel against their Leaders for trinkets (today's luxury items and Swiss accounts) and regime change is affected. remove the Leaders (as in Ghaddaffi , Assad etc)keeping the nation underdeveloped. If the people did not kill the leaders they would be arrested by the British and jailed somewhere in Europe usually in the Tower of London or Elysee

By the time Mungo Jerry and so called Euro explorers went into Africa, what they found was a leaderless debauched drunken society who they could write about and present their enslavement as a way of 'Christianizing' Africans.

A job so well done that although it was Africans who gave us the Hebrew religion, the white man could now go back in with OUR story book and use it to enslave AND save us.

Whichever way you look at it, the African wherever he is found is due reparations.

If we had been freed to attain our dignity and left alone (see Rosewood), we may not needed to bother with reparations.

However, today what is the reality. White people infected Africans with Aids, and now Ebola. I now watch Whites go in, develop the virus, spread it among Blacks curing those White NGO staff who catch it with no urgency to halt the spread in Africa.

Reparations and African resources are two reasons why they are trying to wipe Africans off the face of the map. The other one is because they had to free the slaves and they do not know what to do with them. God forbid they get back to Africa with western knowledge and give Africa a chance to breathe

I have tried to condense 600 years 1500-2014 here, not impossible but could have been presented better. But I know it will be immediately understood by the most stupid of Europeony.

September 6, 2014 at 1:25 AM 

 **Anonymous said...**

Well honestly to answer your statement about looking at Africa, we would've been ok if everyone but us came in and took all of our natural resources ie. Oil. Diamonds, quartz, rubies, etc. Need I keep going. Because if you look at the value of the American dollar it is shot to shit. So what would the currency be after all that's said and done? Gold, diamonds, etc. Need I say more. Oh yeah and all this agricultural cultivation, running water, the necessities we need today here in this country would not exist because we were the one's out there busting our butts to make sure you all had a hot shower and a warm meal every day. So for it to be utter gibberish as you said, you don't give any praise or thanks for the people who are truly the backbone of America. And I'm also half Native American as well. Don't even get me started on that.

October 19, 2014 at 5:21 AM 



 **Unknown said...**

Great post. I cam up with a similar figure. Not one state, city, or locality has not benefited from the unpaid labor of slaves in the Western world. I would include Great Britain in this claim and make it international. Don't forget Barbados was a transportation hub from Europe to Africa and the Atlantic seaboard for not only africans, but natives, and yes, the Irish and other unfortunate souls caught up in this horrific economic system. The state of modern labor is directly related to the slave labor system that the United States was founded on, and reparations needs to be back on the table. 9/11 was a distraction but it is time to get back on track with this.

February 8, 2015 at 10:39 AM 



 **Unknown said...**

I am just trying to be objective here. As many have pointed out, you're operating on the fact that only america should have to pay reparations to black slave descendants. The history of American


slavery and its relatively short duration, does not even count for .1% of slavery throughout the world in history and in modern times.

By definition, slavery means someone who is owned by another person and is forced to perform labor without pay. We can really combine slavery and indentured servitude into the same category. Now, I am being conservative but at least 50% of the worlds 7 billion people can legitimately say that they have an ancestor that was enslaved. Do we discount the reparations due them? I believe that we should, because I would get a chunk of that pie. Now that we are thinking about reparations around the world, let's add a another aspect to this. Across the world and through human history, countless wars have been fought. In modern times, we compensate our soldiers financially. That is a relatively new process. Historically one was conscribed into military service without pay. You fight or you die. By definition, this counts as slavery and time served should be included.

We can also include labors not performed by casualties of war from these conscribed soldiers. How many hours of labor would they have been able to perform until our modern retirement at age 65, had they not been conscribed. Now we are getting some pretty crazy numbers. I'll let you do the research and crunching because you are probably better at it than I am.

Taking all unpaid soldiers into account and the labor that the dead would never be able to perform we can now include over 99.99999% of the worlds population into this category of needing reparation.

However reality sets in and we know that it can never legitimately happen as it would ruin the financial stability (or instability) of the world. Now being a realist, and logical, the best course of action is to wipe the board. Clean slate. Fresh start. Let's look at the mistakes we humans have made, learn from them and move forward.

March 10, 2015 at 8:38 PM 

 [Denis Rancourt](#) said...

@David Stone:

No, I do not assume that solely black american descendants of slaves deserve reparations. I agree that many other groups and populations are also entitled to reparations.

Your logic of operational impossibility is incorrect. You leave out essential elements:

- no reparations justice would ever be made if the solution was to "move on"
- if a population can be identified and there is a record to its link to a mass crime perpetrated by an existing state then reparations are due
- the argument that reparations cannot be made because too

many others would also need reparations is a fallacy

- the economic argument for no reparations is also a fallacy -- ability to pay is always a consideration, following principles of justice

- if there is a link between the past mass crime and present lesser economic and social circumstances of the affected population, then there must be reparation

and so on.

Your position is a classic bogus argument against reparations.

March 11, 2015 at 5:43 AM 



 [babs](#) said...

hi - wondering if you have updated info regarding census details? if 40m descendants were in 2000, how many now? (i know the base was calculated on the min # of slaves then) - just wondering what the fair updated amount is/would be? also don't know if you can do this but it would be amazing to see a "debt clock" for reparations - with an increase for every day we neglect to take action, based on your calculations. nice work.

April 29, 2015 at 8:22 AM 

 [Denis Rancourt](#) said...


Hi babs,
The "debt clock" is a great idea! Please suggest it to Black advocacy associations. That way it would have much more leverage and visibility. I can certainly help with updating calculations if a group wants to use the calculations for political justice.
--denis

April 29, 2015 at 11:15 AM 

 [CARLAJ01](#) said...

The biggest PROBLEM with paying reparations was that "AFRICAN AMERICANS" as a politically identifiable group, would have to to prove their ETHNICITY first, in order to be eligible to receive the payments. Then the second problem was the exact AMOUNT of the payment to be fair. ETHNICITY could be proven simply by looking at their birth certificates. Anyone who has either Negro or Black on their birth certificates would be eligible. However, they would also have to have been BORN in America or its affiliated territories in order to be eligible. Those people of mixed race or foreign born citizenship would probably have a problem because, although they may have been the victims of racial discrimination, they probably overcame that discrimination by speaking with a foreign accent or by claiming foreign citizenship. I proposed a CENTRAL FUND whereby billionaires would be mandated to give up 10% of their assessed wealth, such as what they do to

determine CREDIT SCORES, and this fund would have to sole function of identifying the recipients and distributing the payments. THE PAYMENTS would be based upon the number of years an individual has lived in this country on a continuous basis (lets say for 40 or 50 years) times a set amount (for example \$1000/yr.) These payments would probably take the average family of 4 out of poverty and set them squarely back into the MIDDLE CLASS. (Head of Household payment = \$50,000 Child Payment = \$5000 to \$20,000 each up to age 21) And, knowing the habits of most Americans the money would stimulate the Economy back to pre-Recession levels. The major problems with this scenario would be getting the payments from the billionaires on a voluntary basis. Do we do it with imposed TAXES or as a PENALTY? And, what about wealthy African-Americans who do not need the money? Well, again, need can be determined by what their yearly income. Anyone fitting the profile of a 3rd or 4th generation African-American or Negro who was born in this country in the last century, (because the others are probably already dead or their families didn't live here) who makes or is worth less than the pre-determined poverty levels designated in the present income tax tables (please see irs.gov for these amounts), would receive the cash incentive payment with no other questions asked and no other information needed. There would be no other taxes and the persons could use it however they wished. PROBLEMS...what if the person has NO INCOME or has NO PROOF of citizenship (ie. lost identification papers) and what about those foreign nationals? The person who has \$0 income would receive their payment regardless of their present status because the payment is based on their age alone X dollar amount. Foreign born nationals could be paid a lesser amount X the number of years they have been living in this country. Again, using their birth certificates as proof of age and status of citizenship. The disparity in the wealth in this country is a product of GREED...wealth that has clearly been acquired through inheritance or subterfuge (shady or illegal business transactions) The wealthy probably feel that they already give their share to Society through taxes, therefore, the GOVERNMENT should be responsible for setting up the FUND and giving someone else (NCOBRA?) the responsibility of identifying the recipients. I feel that should this idea be used--- THAT I, PERSONALLY BE MADE HEAD OF THE DISTRIBUTION ADMINISTRATION because of my background in Accounting and Finance and the fact that it is a sound idea with feasible outcome, There is a need for honest and transparent due diligence. As this has been done in the past with the Japanese and the Jews...it could easily be done with the African Americans today.

May 20, 2015 at 2:10 PM 

 [CARLAJ01](#) said...

You seriously cannot believe in all good conscience that living in an oppressive society such as that which exists in America today means that everyone is "free" to achieve their dreams. You are the problem that exists in America...those who have their heads

in the sand thinking that there is no prejudice, discrimination or institutionalize racism. You would have to be blind, deaf and quite DUMB to believe this wholeheartedly.

May 20, 2015 at 2:16 PM 

 **Anonymous said...**

Anonymous is obviously a racist who does not want to be identified.

Signed, Anonymous

May 27, 2015 at 4:26 AM 

 **Anonymous said...**

Wow. Between the statement made by Chuck Baggett

"Why doesn't everyone have 1.5 million minimum? Some money must have gone astray for most everyone, right?"

Um because they weren't kidnapped and forced into slavery. They didn't have their babies, husbands, wives, siblings ripped from them sometimes for as little as not working hard enough. That was a favorite punishment inflicted by President Thomas Jefferson.

Wow. Why do so many racists read things like this!?

It's simple.

NO other ethnic group was kidnapped and brought to the US and forced to work in THE WORST conditions this country has ever seen.

All other so-called-slaves were actually indentured servants who came of their own free will for a better life.

SO, yea, while I (as a mixed origin person who is Black, Asian, and Hispanic to dumb it down) recognize that others were also made to work for no money that doesn't make them a slave. It makes them slave-like. Still VERY, VERY different.

I am so ashamed of this country and most of the people who live in it.

Side note: I noticed that all the "people" out there making these racist comments are all either in the South, unemployed, and almost always NOT A COLLEGE GRADUATE. I would be surprised if they graduated from high school.

Thank God, there are some normal, sensitive, thoughtful, rational, intelligent people on this forum.

June 19, 2015 at 2:12 PM 

 **[Denis Rancourt](#) said...**

@Anonymous:

"I noticed that all the "people" out there making these racist comments are all either in the South, unemployed, and almost always NOT A COLLEGE GRADUATE. I would be surprised if they graduated from high school."

Your statement, in my view, is an incorrect suggestion.

Establishment education indoctrinates one to not say what you actually think and feel, and to not be in touch with what you internally believe.

I think that college-educated folks are effectively much more racist, statistically, than working-class and underprivileged-class folks. Their racism is also augmented by their relative power in society.

In my opinion.

This is true, I believe, for all racial groups. For example, "house negroes" (as defined by Malcolm X) are almost exclusively college-educated.

My book "Hierarchy and Free Expression in the Fight Against Racism" is relevant on these points.

June 19, 2015 at 2:53 PM 

 **Anonymous said...**

Ummm.... your calculations are utter crap, you need to go back to school. You cannot use TODAY'S wage rate then ramp everything up by interest and population growth. you have to take the prevailing wage of the day. Wages change, so picking out a single rate is difficult, so if you focus on the height of slavery, you will find wage rates for similar farm work. My cursory search yielded 33 cents per day for factory workers, who are paid much more than farm workers, and this is for early 1800's. Call it 6 days per week of work at 33 cents per day. You also need to find the number of slaves who left descendants. I have searched slavery literature and found numbers indicating 200,000 to 300,000 slaves left descendants. You can't just take population and ramp it up by 2%. Then you have to take the current number of black Americans, around 41,700,000, then multiply that number by the percentage who are descendants of slaves, also hard to estimate, believed to be as high as 85%, giving you a slave descendant population of 35,445,000. You can't pay wages to dead people and you can't pay reparations to slaves who left no descendants, therefore you cannot take the earnings of ALL slaves and pay them down to folks who weren't their descendants. If the 200,000 to 300,000 figure is accurate, and I don't know if it is, for slaves who left descendants, you have a SIGNIFICANTLY smaller amount of reparations. To give you an idea of this, by your logic, I am owed a part of the John D. Rockefeller wealth simply because I am white, which is not true. Similarly, descendants of slaves are only entitled to the wealth THEIR OWN ANCESTORS created, not the wealth of every black person. I would LOVE to participate in the wealth of every white person - sadly, this is not how it works. Your numbers are not accurate for the reasons above. My calculations had a figure along the lines of \$650 per descendant, and I have seen other numbers as high as \$15,000, but you can't give people money that their ancestors didn't earn - if my great great grandfather earned \$1,000 but was never paid that

money, and 50,000 other white people also earned \$1,000 that they were never paid, but they had no children, that doesn't mean that I am entitled to a share of their money. Make sense?

July 10, 2015 at 5:22 PM 


 [Denis Rancourt](#) said...

Anonymous said: "You cannot use TODAY'S wage rate then ramp everything up by interest and population growth. you have to take the prevailing wage of the day. Wages change, so picking out a single rate is difficult, so if you focus on the height of slavery, you will find wage rates for similar farm work. My cursory search yielded 33 cents per day for factory workers, who are paid much more than farm workers, and this is for early 1800's."

@Anonymous, your ramblings are idiotic. A central part of the calculation is to express every amount in TODAY dollars. The "33 cents" has a today-dollar value, which is best and simply expressed as today's minimum wage, to the extent that a factory worker was living as well as someone on minimum wage today. Get it? It's due to "inflation", which is determinant of the nominal value of money compared to its real value.

This was all already discussed in previous comments, if you want to educate yourself.

Your other points are not worthy of reply. You appear to have a sad difficulty to think clearly, combined with an unjustified self-confidence.

July 11, 2015 at 7:18 PM 


 Anonymous said...

I like this ideal. I have worked all of my life. I'm now retired an having a hard time making ends meet, Every cost go up except my pay. It's not a hand out it' owed to blacks.

September 1, 2015 at 4:14 PM 

 [mrmacflyhimself](#) said...

DENNIS FOR MAYOR

November 11, 2015 at 10:03 PM 

 [mrmacflyhimself](#) said...

BOB you're and Idiot.... you're talking about an unforgettable and unfortunate event that happened in rome vs one that actually happened on american soil dipshit.. stop trying to make the playing field even you moron. Its called closet racism.

November 11, 2015 at 10:05 PM 

 American CPA said...

If you want to rely on a fairly complex financial calculation by physics professor in Canada, realize you do so at your own risk.

The major defect is the physics professor's assumption that all wages that should have been earned by slave labor were passed on to descendants totally intact. Preposterous! How many people do you know that save 100% of their wages? I know none. Ignoring several other dubious assumptions, apply whatever savings rate you think appropriate (rates have been as high as 17% and as low as 1.90%) and adjust the number the professor calculated.

BTW, since I had no influence whatsoever over my great, great, great grandfather's actions good or bad, I totally reject the concept of reparations.

November 30, 2015 at 5:46 PM 



 [Jeff](#) said...

So, based on this logic....shouldn't Nigeria and many other African countries contribute to this "cause"? Considering the majority of the slaves were kidnapped or taken as prisoners by fellow Africans and then sold to the Europeans at the slave ports....in fact, Nigeria's entire economy became 100% reliant on the capture and sales of slaves to the slave traders....odd that these types of facts are conveniently omitted in these types of arguments. ...there is not a civilization in history that has not been touched by slavery...it is a horrible truth....what we need is not a cash settlement to one specific group, we need understandingthose that do not understand the past mistakes are doomed to repeat them...

February 24, 2016 at 7:18 AM 

 [Denis Rancourt](#) said...

@Jeff:

Here is one way you can get out of your self-made paradox Jeff. The USA is a legal person, defined by a constitution, the English common law and royal proclamations before that, and a continuous economic history. Its government institutions are corporations. As such, this legal person is responsible for its crimes, irrespective of any other crimes that other persons have or have not committed.

There is a continuity also in the racial and social classes that have upheld and benefited from slavery in the USA, and in the racial and social classes that have suffered the negative consequences of slavery. Since both the benefits and the harms have, by continuity of legal instruments and of inheritance, survived in the present, reparations are in order.


It's not really that difficult to understand.

February 24, 2016 at 8:14 AM 



Unknown said...

In reality. Almost all slaves were sold into slavery by other Africans in Africa. My husband is from Africa and their history clearly teaches that African's were kidnapped and sold into slavery as retribution for many things. He also said that it was well known that many people would sell their own children into slavery because they were naughty, lazy, because a Pagan God told them too, or because they wanted the money or goods that were given to them to help them to relieve their poverty. It was not typical of White people to go and kidnap African's to make them slaves. The reality is not what people want to think but people didnt have to go catch slaves to sell because African's already had a thriving Slave market run by Africans. If retribution needs to be made let's start there. Start with the people who did the kidnapping and selling to start with. Change the reality we believe by believing the truth of reality.

February 28, 2016 at 5:09 PM 

Anonymous said...

I am currently completing a project that requires me to calculate the long overdue reparations for one family. My question is whether your method could be applied to one single family? Also, shouldn't you have also included the mortality/birth rates of the descendants to provide a more accurate answer ? Finally, can you give a more in depth explanation of your calculations please.

June 6, 2016 at 1:42 PM 

Denis Rancourt said...

Hi Anonymous:

The above comments contain many criticisms of my calculations and my answers to those criticisms. That will give you more insight, I would think.

My calculation is for the minimal today value of all the forcibly extracted labour during US slavery. My proposal is that the stolen labour value be paid equally to the descendants, irrespective of actual specific lineage.

In addition to my global calculation, a given descendant could attempt to calculate the amount actually due to him/her, using whatever genealogical and historic information is available to that descendant. That would make an interesting lawsuit.

June 6, 2016 at 2:12 PM 

Anonymous said...

Denis,

You are making an elementary mistake in your calculation. What you are trying to find is the future value of the wages that the

slaves did not receive, with 1790 as Period 0 and 2016 as Period 206. This would be done by taking the agricultural worker daily wage in 1790, multiplying it by 6 or 7 days to find the weekly earnings of one slave in 1790, then multiplying the weekly wage by 52 to get the yearly earnings of 1 slave. The yearly earnings of a single slave would be multiplied by the actual number of slaves in 1790, not the average for the period. This is important because the slavery period lasts for 70 years and interest compounds. If there were significantly more slaves in 1790 than 1860 the value of reparations will be much greater because of compounding interest than if there were few slaves until 1845 and then the number increased dramatically pulling up the whole period average. Once the total value of labor for the year 1790 is calculated (annual wage * number of slaves in 1790) the future value of this year's lost wages is taken. This is done by multiplying the value of the lost wages times one plus an assumed interest rate and compounding. This is the major flaw in your calculation. In non-technical terms, the interest on an investment accounts for both inflation and the need to earn extra returns. When one puts money they earned today into an investment, in 20 years when they withdraw it they do not get to take the current wage and compound that to determine their return, the actual money they paid 20 years ago is compounded. The current wage is irrelevant because inflation is already factored into the interest rate. Once an interest rate is determined to account for the opportunity cost of not being able to spend the money, credit default risk, inflation risk, etc, the future value of the missed wages from 1790 can be computed. This is done by (Yearly Wage for one slave in 1790 * number of slaves working in 1790) * ((1+interest rate)²⁰⁶). This will give the value of the wages earned in 1790 plus interest over 206 years that would be dispersed today. You would repeat this process for all years from 1791-1860 and sum the future values to get the total money available in 2016 for disbursements. For example the formula for the future value of wages missed in 1860 would be ((yearly wage for one slave 1860*number of slaves working in 1860) * (1+interest rate)¹⁵⁶). Please do not write under the guise of an academic, using your physicist title to convey expertise, if you do not understand the most basic concepts of finance such as future value and what an interest rate is.

July 22, 2016 at 12:48 AM 

 [Denis Rancourt](#) said...

Hi latest Anonymous,

You make two points: 1. The compounding must be made on a year-by-year basis, rather than using averages for the slavery period. 2. One cannot use the current dollar pay rate on the historic labour because the interest rate paid include the effect of inflation.

Regarding your point-1, you are technically correct. However, this does not significantly change the calculated result. The practical

and valid approximation that I used is perfectly suited to the problem at hand, and uses easily available and relatively robust data. The onus is on you to show that your detail, using valid more detailed actual historic data (not hypothetical scenarios) makes a significant difference. The person proposing a more complex calculation refinement has the onus, in my book.

Regarding your point-2, you assume that the 2% "interest rate" that I used already accounts for both inflation (explicit) and numeric currency value change (implied in your logic). Your assumptions (explicit and implied) are incorrect, as I have repeatedly explained above, in the article and in the many comment responses.

I use an "interest rate" that does not include inflation or currency value changes. The rate I use is to account for real-world lost earnings (to present) arising from the (total historic) delay in payments for labour, which I estimate by the average population growth rate (as per the article). Not having access to one's resources for all the real-life improvements that could be made using those resources has a real-world cost that transfers to future generations.

As I have repeatedly stated, my calculation separates the two problems: "inflation/currency-devaluation" vs average "lost potential". The first is solved by doing all the calculations in current dollars. The second is solved by my "interest rate" and what it represents as real-world consequences.

Cheers.

July 22, 2016 at 8:05 AM 

 **Anonymous said...**

Denis,

I'm not so concerned with the first point, just stating that finding the future value of each individual cash flow will probably result in a larger value due to compounding.

The second point is still not correct for several reasons. First, the inflation rate needs to be factored into the interest rate because of compounding interest. Your calculation compounds interest on a wage of 7.15, which would not have been the wage. Using your 1860 future value starting point and an estimated annual inflation rate of 2.16% (<http://www.in2013dollars.com/1860-dollars-in-2015?amount=0.33>) results in a future value of $(.33)*(1.0216)^{156} = 9.25405089566$ for the inflation component of one individual's wages for one year of work. Compounding $(7.25)(1.0216^{156})$ results in an inflation component value of 203.3086939 for one person's wages for one year of work. This is not the real effect of inflation as they would not have earned \$7.25 in 1860.

The second part you assume is that interest rate and lost usage of

the money are different. This is a fundamentally wrong understanding of what an interest rate is. An interest rate is paid to compensate for the opportunity cost of not spending the money now. The following components of an interest rate are from investopedia's cfa level one study guide.

Real Risk-Free Rate - This assumes no risk or uncertainty, simply reflecting differences in timing: the preference to spend now/pay back later versus lend now/collect later.

Expected Inflation - The market expects aggregate prices to rise, and the currency's purchasing power is reduced by a rate known as the inflation rate. Inflation makes real dollars less valuable in the future and is factored into determining the nominal interest rate (from the economics material: $\text{nominal rate} = \text{real rate} + \text{inflation rate}$).

Default-Risk Premium - What is the chance that the borrower won't make payments on time, or will be unable to pay what is owed? This component will be high or low depending on the creditworthiness of the person or entity involved.

Liquidity Premium- Some investments are highly liquid, meaning they are easily exchanged for cash (U.S. Treasury debt, for example). Other securities are less liquid, and there may be a certain loss expected if it's an issue that trades infrequently. Holding other factors equal, a less liquid security must compensate the holder by offering a higher interest rate.

Maturity Premium - All else being equal, a bond obligation will be more sensitive to interest rate fluctuations the longer to maturity it is.

(Read more: The Five Components Of Interest Rates - CFA Level 1 | Investopedia <http://www.investopedia.com/exam-guide/cfa-level-1/quantitative-methods/time-value-money-interest-rates.asp#ixzz4FBGCeTxs>)

July 22, 2016 at 4:16 PM 

 **Anonymous said...**

As the individuals were not able to spend the money over the last 156 years, they would be paid an interest rate to compensate them for the economic tradeoff of "lending" the money to others rather than spending it. This addresses your concern about being compensated for the opportunity cost.

If one wants to make this calculation they would determine an interest rate based off of a risk free rate, add the inflation rate, then add a value to compensate for the "forced investment." According to Federal Reserve data graphed by the new york times (http://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/12/upshot/can-we-ignore-the-alarm-bells-the-bond-market-is-ringing.html?_r=0) the

average risk free rate from 1790 to 2016 was around 5%.

With this data we can now estimate an interest rate to compound wages from 1860 to 2016. The wages made from 1860 would receive an interest rate of

(risk free rate + inflation rate + risk premium (added risk/opportunity cost of forced investment))

$(5\% + 2.16\% + 3\%) = 10.16\%$

I used 3% as an example as it is almost double the current default risk premium of investment grade bonds which is around 1.75%. This is entirely up for debate and could be adjusted to whatever premium can be justified for forced investment.

In summary, the interest rate you use is too low and should be adjusted accordingly to make this calculation rather than assuming that the inflation component is just today's minimum wage compounded at the inflation rate for 156 years. A long term treasury rate or other risk free rate should also be used instead of population growth.

July 22, 2016 at 4:17 PM 

 [Denis Rancourt](#) said...

Hi latest Anonymous again,

You are not making a sufficient effort to understand my calculation and my explanations. You are simply repeating canned definitions without understanding what I have done and explained.

IMO, you are illustrating an example of too much education being a dangerous thing.

I'm not calculating a fair rate to an investor to compensate him for the risk of lending, etc. I am estimating the accumulated loss arising from not having been able to freely invest a historic earning in education, nutrition, care, family worth, etc. I thought I had been clear. I also made it explicit that my calculation was for "a minimum amount due", not a "best estimate of amount due". The latter would be much more.

I don't think we can carry this further. Reading the many prior comments would increase the likelihood of you understanding the meaning of my calculation.

That's it.

July 22, 2016 at 5:00 PM 

 [Unknown](#) said...

Now, you need to deduct for over a century of post-slavery prison cost, Federal housing and healthcare, welfare, food stamps, riot

damages and graffiti removal costs. Seems to me they are the ones owing the US.

September 30, 2016 at 8:30 PM 

 **Cliff Claven said...**

Simple-minded reparations calculations like Dr. Rancourt's above, besides the temporal dislocation of being applied to the wrong generations, count only costs and do not consider the benefits of life in America compared with the alternative life path. A physicist should know to look at both sides of the equation. The fact is that American immigrants, whether they came by violence or by free will, have enjoyed a better life by many metrics than those that remained behind. Today's coddled American urbanites have no concept of how our ancestors lived, or of how the majority of the world still lives today. 60 years after the end of slavery generations of American children of all ethnicities were still being forced to work in harsh conditions on family farms and in dangerous factories with no compensation for themselves other than their upkeep. Are their descendants owed reparations for stolen labor? If so, is not every living person in this country who enjoys the benefits of the vast and intricate infrastructure they built equally indebted? And who should rightfully collect these trillions of dollars on their behalf? The average American welfare recipient receives \$25/day = \$9,000/yr, which puts them in the top 20% of income for the world

(<http://www.forbes.com/sites/timworstall/2015/05/04/the-average-us-welfare-payment-puts-you-in-the-top-20-of-all-income-earners/#40e7c4899d8f>), And most American immigrants do better than pure public assistance. There is no defense of slavery, but asking today's generation to pay reparations to people who were themselves never enslaved and who are enjoying the highest standard of living on the planet courtesy of contributions of everyone's ancestors is ludicrous. We can all trace our family history to enslaved and victimized ancestors. Those alive today in America have no excuse not to count their blessings and move on to take advantage of the best head-start in life the world has to offer.

December 28, 2016 at 6:05 AM 

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