

Did You Know...?

...that in 1790, the Naturalization Act limited naturalized citizenship in the U.S. to "free, white persons"?

...that at one point, Italians, Hebrews, Greeks and other European ethnics were considered by many to be separate races, and only later became classified as "white"?

... that in 1922, the Supreme Court of the United States ruled in cases against Takao Ozawa and Bhagat Singh Thind that neither Japanese and Indian people could become citizens because they were not "white"? And that subsequently those Japanese and Indian Americans who *already* were citizens were stripped of their citizenship and all of their property, which was then sold to whites? And that with judicial backing, many more anti-Asian laws were passed under heavy lobbying from the "Asiatic Exclusion League", continuing until the 1960's?

...that the racial requirement for citizenship was not revoked until 1952?

...that the original Social Security program excluded farm workers and domestics- most of whom were non-whites? And the Unions typically locked people of color into low-paying jobs or kept out of the unions altogether?

...that prior to the 1930's, homebuyers had to pay for 50% of the sales price of their home up front? And that in the 1930's, the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) began backing loans to "average Americans" and returning GIs from WWII, allowing them to put 10-20% down with banks financing 80% of their homes over 30 years at relatively low rates? And that blacks- including the close to one million GIs returning from WWII- were excluded from these programs and from the suburbs? So of \$120 billion that went into new housing after the war, less than 2% of those homes went to non-whites?

...that the FHA underwriters wrote guidelines, subsequently adopted by industry, that stated if one or two black families moved into a neighborhood, home prices would go down? And that real estate agents used a method called "block busting", preying on the economic fears of whites by convincing them to sell their homes below market price if any black families moved in to their neighborhood, to avoid more dramatic loss of value? And these houses were then sold to black families.

...that today, the net worth of the average Black family is about 1/8 that of the average white family, with much of that difference deriving from the value of the family's residence?

Find out about all this and more by watching the PBS documentary "The House We Live In", which you can find in public libraries or stream at a modest cost (\$2.99) at <https://vimeo.com/ondemand/race>