



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Policy Brief Syllabus

ApEc 1101: Principles of Microeconomics
Fall 2021

Donald Liu

To apply the economics concepts learned in the class to real-world problems, you will write two policy briefs, one on **income inequality** and one on **racial inequality**. The policy brief projects will heighten your familiarity with recent debates on income and racial inequality, give you the opportunity to reflect upon the issues, and then identify and articulate steps that can be taken to address the problems. Inequality stifles productivity, preventing individuals from fulfilling their economic potential and reducing the wellbeing of affected individuals and society as a whole. Economics is therefore a useful tool for understanding and addressing issues in income and racial inequality.

The objective of this document is to provide you with detailed information on the policy brief projects, including what a policy brief is, an overview of the projects, how to identify a policy brief issue, how to write a policy brief, the available points and the due dates, the grading rubrics, and the readings. A shorter version of this information will be presented in a slide show in class.

What is a Policy Brief?

A policy brief is a concise summary of a particular issue, the policy options for addressing the issue, and a recommendation for resolving the issue. A policy brief seeks to provide useful information to individuals and organizations who are interested in formulating or influencing policy. An **objective policy brief** gives objective summaries of relevant research on the issue at hand, suggests possible policy options, and provides the pros and cons (i.e., benefits and costs) of the options without prejudicing the readers. An **advocacy policy brief** goes further by arguing for a particular course of action, allowing the author to be a champion for something he or she is passionate about.

Overview of the Policy Brief Projects

You will write two **advocacy policy briefs**.

In the first policy brief, you will identify and address a policy issue related to **income inequality** in the United States or abroad. For example, you can examine the issue from the lens of how the Covid-19 pandemic has disproportionately affected the livelihood and health of low-income people (including people of color), and how this uneven distribution of burden has worsened the extent of

income inequality.

In the second policy brief, you will identify and address a policy issue related to **racial inequality** in the United States or abroad. For example, you can examine the issue through the prism of the recent Black Lives Matter movement and/or from the perspective of how to set right the longstanding injustice against people of color in general and African Americans in particular.

To be sure, “race” is a complex and often divisive subject. There is a wide range of viewpoints on the cause of income and racial inequality and, hence, on the type of policy needed for addressing the issues. For example, calling for investment in the early lives of children in disadvantaged families, Professor James Heckman argues that the persistent income gaps in the United States across racial lines is mainly due to differences in family structure and the quality of parenting. By contrast, Professor Samuel Myers Jr. emphasizes systemic race-based biases as the root cause for vast disparities in opportunities for African-Americans and other minority groups. Indeed, among economists, one can find multiple perspectives that exist between Heckman’s household-level, individual accountability-based argument and Myers’ emphasis on social, political, and economic institutions that systematically treat people differently based on skin color.

Be yourself and be the devil’s advocate if you wish. Please note that we will not judge your policy brief by the political ideology it champions. Instead, we will look for how you identify and articulate the issue, present the arguments, and provide evidence to support your arguments.

Also, please note that you are required to examine the issue through **an economic lens**, such as using cost-benefit principle, considering efficiency-equality tradeoff, and investigating market failures. You are welcome to include other perspectives (such as social, political, legal, and historical ones) if they complement or supplement your economic arguments.

How to Identify a Policy Brief Issue?

To begin with, you need to review relevant literature in the broad area of income/racial inequality and then identify a policy issue that you would like to address in the policy brief. For your convenience, we have provided you with a list of readings in Section G that you may use. You are required to cite at least **six articles** in your policy brief. You are encouraged to read more articles than the minimum so that you can gather all the information you need for the projects.

Narrow It Down: It can be difficult for students to pinpoint a problem to examine. Here is some guidance to get you started. As pointed out in an article on how to write an effective policy brief by the Writing Center at the University of North Carolina, you might feel very strongly about the topic of **“bad spending habits in young adults.”** However, you cannot simply implement a policy to make young people “make better spending decisions.” To make it the subject of a policy brief, you will need to look for research on the topic and narrow it down to a specific issue. Is the problem of bad spending habits stems from a lack of financial education, the prevalence of predatory lending practices, the pervasiveness of untruthful advertising, or something else? Narrowing to one of these (or others) would allow you to write a policy brief that proposes a concrete policy action, such as requiring a personal finance course in the high school

curriculum.

How to Write a Policy Brief?

Your Task: You are to write two advocacy policy briefs. In each policy brief, you will identify a policy issue within the broad topic of income/racial inequality, examine the current approach for resolving the issue, explore alternative options, and advocate for a particular course of action, including identifying the steps to be taken.

Policy Brief Format: Your policy brief should follow the format below.

1. **Author's Information:** Your first and last name and discussion session # (e.g., 002, 003 ...)
2. **Title:** A title that effectively communicates the content of the policy brief
3. **Executive Summary:** This should be a **one paragraph** summary of your policy brief, including:
 - a. A description of the problem addressed
 - b. The current policy approach and the reason it needs to be changed
 - c. The policy action you are proposing
4. **Scope of the Problem:** This section communicates the importance of the problem and the necessity of the proposed policy action. It should include:
 - a. Problem: **A statement** of the problem
 - b. Causes: **Paragraph(s)** examining the root causes of the problem
 - c. Importance: **Paragraph(s)** establishing the policy relevance of the problem
5. **Policy Alternatives:** This section discusses the current policy approach to addressing the problem and its drawbacks, and explores alternative solutions, including the pros and cons (i.e., benefits and costs) for each. It should include:
 - a. Current Approach: **Paragraph(s)** describing the current policy approach to addressing the problem
 - b. Drawbacks of Current Approach: **Paragraph(s)** describing how the current policy approach is failing
 - c. Possible Solutions: **Paragraph(s)** describing alternative options for addressing the problem, including pros and cons for each
6. **Policy Recommendation:** This section contains your recommendation and concrete steps to be taken to address the policy issue. It should include:
 - a. Proposed Action: **A clear statement** of the policy action that you are proposing

- b. Justifications: **Paragraph(s)** discussing why the proposed action is the best policy moving forward
 - c. Steps for Implementation¹: **Paragraph(s)** discussing the specific practical steps or measures that need to be implemented (See Footnote 1 for an illustration.)
- 7. **In-text Citations:** Make sure that you include citations in the text as needed. Examples of in text citations include: (Liu, 2021), (Liu & Wieland, 2021), (Liu et al., 2021), (Liu, Wieland, Barbieri, and Yamanuha, 2021). You can embed a hyperlink in an in-text citation to allow the reader to access the article in question. Example: (Buchta & Webster, 2021).
- 8. **References:** The reference list should consist of two sections: Section A and Section B.
 - a. Section A is required and should include the references of the **six articles** that are highly relevant to your policy brief report.
 - b. Section B includes references for other in-text citations that were neither hyperlinked nor listed in Section A of the reference list.
 - c. All references should follow an appropriate citation format.

More Information about Steps for Implementation

Requiring a personal finance course in the high school curriculum was used in the [previous section](#) as an example illustrating a potential policy for addressing the problem of bad spending habits in young adults. What are the steps for executing the proposed policy?

Possible steps include:

- 1) working with experts to design a personal finance curriculum appropriate for high school students of different ethnic and economic backgrounds,
- 2) designing a training program for high school teachers to qualify for teaching the curriculum,
- 3) working with the state legislature to mandate the curriculum in high schools, and
- 4) working with the state legislature and/or non-profit organizations to provide funding for the teacher training and curriculum implementation.

Some Tips

1. Follow the policy brief format presented above, using the headings and subheadings to structure your reports.
2. Make sure to provide enough information for the reader to understand the issue and arrive at a decision. You may include graphs and charts to concisely summarize key information within sections, if necessary.

3. Rely on facts, data, and research results, not conjecture or emotion. Make sure you cite your sources.
4. Use language appropriate for an official policy brief that will be available to the public, including the use of correct grammar and spelling.

Policy Brief Outline Checklist

To better organize your thoughts, we encourage you to come up with an outline before writing the policy brief. We also encourage you to share your outline with the instructional team and seek feedback from us if you have questions. A suggested checklist for the policy brief outline can be found on the course Canvas site (**Modules/Section A: Course Information/A-2: Policy Brief**).

Policy Brief Template

Your policy brief should be single spaced, in 12-point font and with 1" margins. It should be no more than three pages, excluding the reference list. For your convenience, a policy brief template is available on the course Canvas site (**Modules/Section A: Course Information/Section A-2: Policy Brief**).

Submission

Go to the course Canvas site (**Modules/Section B: Links/B-2: Links for Submitting Policy Brief Reports**) to submit your policy brief to *TurnItIn*, which checks for plagiarism.

Avoiding Scholastic Dishonesty

See Section B9 of the course syllabus for University policies on scholastic dishonesty. The Office for Community Standards has compiled a useful list of [Frequently Asked Questions](#) on how to avoid scholastic dishonesty.

Available Points and Due Dates

The two policy brief projects account for **8%** of the available semester points. Each policy brief assignment will be curved to render a class average of **85%**, based on non-zero data points. As discussed in the course syllabus, you must score at least **75%** in **each** of the two policy brief projects to earn an A for the course.

The available points and the due dates of the policy brief assignments are listed in the table below:

Project	Available Points	Due Date
Income Inequality Policy Brief	400 pts	October 20, Wednesday (10 PM)
Racial Inequality Policy Brief	400 pts	November 24, Wednesday (10 PM)

There will be a **5-day** grace period after an assignment is due. However, a penalty of **10% per day** of the available points will be imposed for late submissions (1 day: from 1 second to 24 hours).

The assignments will be curved to render a class average of 85%, based on non-zero data points.

Grading Rubric

Be Smart! Please go over the grading rubric carefully before beginning the project. The rubric contains detailed information on how your policy briefs will be graded.

The grading rubric for the policy brief report (400 points) is presented in the table below.

Considerations and Points	Not Acceptable	Needs Improvement	Somewhat Agree	Agree
Scope of the Problem (40 pts) (1) The problem to be addressed is adequately discussed. (2) The root causes of the problem are adequately discussed. (3) The importance of the problem is adequately discussed.	0 pts	20 ~ 27 pts (50%~68%)	28 ~ 35 pts (70%~88%)	36 ~ 40 pts (90%~100%)
Policy Alternatives (40 pts) (1) The current approach to the problem is adequately discussed. (2) The drawbacks of current approach are adequately discussed. (3) Alternative policies and their pros and cons (i.e., the benefits and costs) are adequately discussed.	0 pts	20 ~ 27 pts (50%~68%)	28 ~ 35 pts (70%~88%)	36 ~ 40 pts (90%~100%)
Policy Recommendations (40 pts) (1) The proposed policy action is adequately discussed. (2) The justifications for the proposal are adequately discussed. (3) The implementation steps are logically laid out and discussed.	0 pts	20 ~ 27 pts (50%~68%)	28 ~ 35 pts (70%~88%)	36 ~ 40 pts (90%~100%)
In-text Citations (20 pts) Citations in the text are adequate and appropriate.	0 pts	10 ~ 13 pts (50%~65%)	14 ~ 17 pts (70%~85%)	18 ~ 20 pts (90%~100%)
References (20 pts) The in-text citations are either hyperlinked to the source or their references provided in the reference list (either in Section A or B).	0 pts	10 ~ 13 pts (50%~65%)	14 ~ 17 pts (70%~85%)	18 ~ 20 pts (90%~100%)

Considerations and Points	Not Acceptable	Needs Improvement	Somewhat Agree	Agree
Required References (20 pts) (1) Six articles are included in Section A of the reference list, following an appropriate citation format. (2) The six selected articles are highly relevant to the policy brief.	0 pts	10 ~ 13 pts (50%~65%)	14 ~ 17 pts (70%~85%)	18 ~ 20 pts (90%~100%)
Title (30 pts) The title of the policy brief is appropriate for the content in the brief.	0 pts	15 ~ 20 pts (50%~67%)	21 ~ 26 pts (70%~87%)	27 ~ 30 pts (90%~100%)
Executive Summary (40 pts) The executive summary is a fair, concise representation of the policy brief, and is likely to entice its readers to read the brief.	0 pts	20 ~ 27 pts (50%~68%)	28 ~ 35 pts (70%~88%)	36 ~ 40 pts (90%~100%)
Relevancy and Soundness of Economic Arguments (30 pts) (1) The policy brief identifies an important issue and examines the issue through an economics lens. (2) The economic arguments, data, and terms presented in the policy brief are relevant and sound.	0 pts	15 ~ 20 pts (50%~67%)	21 ~ 26 pts (70%~87%)	27 ~ 30 pts (90%~100%)
Persuasiveness of Economic Arguments (30 pts) (1) The arguments presented in the policy brief are convincing, based on economic reasoning. (2) The proposed policy action is a justifiable option moving forward, based on cost/benefit analysis.	0 pts	15 ~ 20 pts (50%~67%)	21 ~ 26 pts (70%~87%)	27 ~ 30 pts (90%~100%)
Accuracy and Fidelity (30 pts) (1) The information presented in the policy brief is accurate. (2) The discussion of alternative policy options is fair and balanced.	0 pts	15 ~ 20 pts (50%~67%)	21 ~ 26 pts (70%~87%)	27 ~ 30 pts (90%~100%)
Organization and Readability (30 pts) The policy brief communicates the author's ideas efficiently, logically and in an easily understandable fashion.	0 pts	15 ~ 20 pts (50%~67%)	21 ~ 26 pts (70%~87%)	27 ~ 30 pts (90%~100%)
Mechanics (30 pts) The policy brief exhibits excellent use of spelling, punctuation, grammar, and formatting.	0 pts	15 ~ 20 pts (50%~67%)	21 ~ 26 pts (70%~87%)	27 ~ 30 pts (90%~100%)

The Readings

For your convenience, we have provided you with a list of readings that you may use. The articles in the reading list are mainly from three news sources: *the New York Times*, *the Washington Post*, and *the Economist*. *The New York Times* and *the Washington Post* are major news outlets in the United States, while *the Economist* is a news outlet headquartered in the United Kingdoms. By focusing on the three news sources, you have access to both domestic and international perspectives on the issues at hand.

In terms of political leaning, the three news sources range from centrist (*the Economist*) to modestly left-leaning (*the Times* and *the Post*). In compiling the reading list, I have attempted to include different perspectives and avoid articles that are overtly partisan. **You are welcome to include additional articles of your choosing.** Make sure you get your information from legitimate news sources.

Note that you may not be able to access the articles in the reading list through the hyperlinks there because the above news outlets are subscription-based. However, you should be able to find most of the articles through the University's Library System. For your convenience, a PDF version of the articles are posted on the course Canvas site (**Modules/Section A: Course Information/Section A-2: Policy Brief**). These PDF articles are available to you through fair use rules for education.

Articles are organized by topic.

Reading List: Income Inequality

General Articles: Highly Recommended

1. Saez, Emmanuel, Thomas Piketty, and Gabriel Zucman. "[Economic Growth in the United States – A Tale of Two Countries.](#)" *The Washington Center for Equitable Growth*, 6 December, 2015.
 - It is a tale of two countries. For the 117 million U.S. adults in the bottom half of the income distribution, growth has been non-existent for a generation while at the top of the ladder it has been extraordinarily strong. None of the growth in per-adult national income went to the bottom 50 percent, while 32 percent went to the middle class (defined as adults between the median and the 90th percentile), 68 percent to the top 10 percent, and 36 percent to the top 1 percent. An economy that fails to deliver growth for half of its people for an entire generation is bound to generate discontent with the status quo and a rejection of establishment politics.
2. Edsall, Thomas B. "[Just Right Inequality.](#)" *The New York Times*, 4 March 2014.
 - Has inequality in this country reached a tipping point at which it no longer provides an incentive to strive and to innovate, but has instead created a

permanently disadvantaged class, as well as a continuing threat of social instability?

3. The Editorial Board. "[The U.S. is Growing More Unequal. That's Harmful – and Fixable.](#)" *The Washington Post*, 16 July 2021.
 - The combined wealth of all households in the United States added up to \$129.5 trillion in the first quarter of this year. The wealthiest 1 percent held 32.1 percent of the total, up from 23.4 percent in 1989. The top 10 percent of households owned \$70 of every \$100 in household wealth, up from \$61 in 1989. The bottom half, whose share never exceeded 5 percent, now holds just 2 percent of household wealth in the United States.
4. The Editorial Board. "[The Smartest Way to Make the Rich Pay is Not a Wealth Tax.](#)" *The Washington Post*, 21 July 2021.
 - Shrinking the wealth gap calls for a two-pronged attack: offer more opportunity to those at the bottom and trim the undue advantages of those at the top. While it's important to ask the wealthy to pay more, it's also important to do it the right way.
5. The Editorial Board. "[How to Close the Wealth Gap from the Bottom Up.](#)" *The Washington Post*, 26 July 2021.
 - The U.S. government has wasted time and money on its poorly targeted suite of policies to promote homeownership, retirement savings and higher education. Direct, transparent support, focused on those who really need the help, could more efficiently lift millions into the middle class.
6. The Editorial Board. "[Private Fortunes Shouldn't be Abolished. But, Our Society](#)
7. [Shouldn't Be This Unequal, Either.](#)" *The Washington Post*, 5 August 2021.
 - Differential rewards for productivity are crucial to stimulating growth in the short run, but the perpetuation of steep inequalities, over generations, can turn into a drag on output. The latter effect may operate via several channels. One is by wasting the potential of those who might have acquired skills or started businesses if not consigned by poverty to society's margins. Another, posited — prophetically — by Alberto Alesina and Dani Rodrik in an influential 1994 study, is that extreme inequality fosters demands for populist policies, which, in turn, damage growth.
8. "[As You Were.](#)" *The Economist*, 11 October 2012 Edition.
 - This article provides a historical view on how governments address income inequality through tax policies, spending policies and regulations. It compares different approaches in the U.S. and West European nations. It contrasts how income inequality changes over time within nations and across nations on the globe.
9. "[For Richer, For Poorer.](#)" *The Economist*, 11 October 2012 Edition.
 - This article provides a general introduction of the issues surrounding income inequality and income mobility, presenting arguments from different viewpoints.
10. Long, Heather and Andrew Van Dam. "[The Black-White Economic Divide Is As Wide As It Was In 1968.](#)" *The Washington Post*, 4 June 2020.
 - 14 charts show how deep the economic gap is and how little it has changed in decades. The covid 19 recession is also hitting black families and business owners far harder than whites.

11. [“The Rich and the Poor.”](#) *The Economist*, 11 October 2012 Edition.
 - The author uses income inequality in the U.S. to tell a tale of two countries.

General Articles

1. [“Could the Pandemic Cause Economists to Rethink Welfare?”](#) *The Economist*, 7 January 2021 Edition.
 - a. At the American Economic Association’s annual shindig, Professor Emmanuel Saez argues that the decision to work may be influenced by norms as well as by financial incentives. By considering only financial incentives, economists might overestimate the work-discouraging effect of welfare schemes.
2. Greenhouse, Steven. [“Labor’s Decline and Wage Inequality.”](#) *The New York Times*, 4 August 2011.
 - a. The decline in organized labor’s power and membership has played a larger role in fostering increased wage inequality in the United States than is generally thought, according to a study in 2011.
3. Tyson, Laura D’Andrea. [“Tackling Income Inequality.”](#) *The New York Times*, 18 November 2011.
 - a. Capital and business income are much more unevenly distributed than labor income and have become more so over time. Capital gains income is the most unevenly distributed — and volatile — source of household income.
4. Clement, Douglas. [“American Inequality: How Recessions Widen the income Gap.”](#) *Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis*, 16 July 2020.
 - a. Downturns scar laid-off workers and push low-skilled workers out of the workforce — sometimes permanently.
5. Freeland, Chrystia. [“Paychecks Tell a Tale of Unfairness.”](#) *The New York Times*, 21 March 2013.
 - a. Random and confidential data of the U.S. taxpayers show that rising income inequality is the statistical reflection of an increasingly calcified society — the rich are staying rich, and the poor are staying poor, even as the gap between them grows.
6. Scott, Eugene. [“Did Coronavirus Lay Bare Inequalities? Not to Those Who Were Monitoring Them Before.”](#) *The Washington Post*, 21 May 2020.
 - a. President Barack Obama: “Injustice like this isn’t new. What is new is that so much of your generation has woken up to the fact that the status quo needs fixing; that the old ways of doing things don’t work; and that it doesn’t matter how much money you make if everyone around you is hungry and sick; that our society and democracy only works when we think not just about ourselves, but about each other.”
7. [“Makers and Takers.”](#) *The Economist*, 11 October 2012 Edition.
 - a. America’s Byzantine tax system does hardly anything to redistribute income, and its entitlement spending flows mainly to the elderly, with the poor not getting much of a look-in.
8. [“Marital Choices are Exacerbating Household Income Inequality.”](#) *The Economist*, 21 Sept 2017
 - a. Opposites don’t attract, and that has implications on income inequality.
9. McCloskey, Deirdre N. [“Growth, Not Forced Equality, Saves the Poor.”](#) *The New York*

Times, 23 December 2016.

- a. The author argues that poverty is never good, but difference, including economic difference, often is.
10. Minter, Adam. "[In George Floyd's City, Inequalities Are Everywhere.](#)" *The Washington Post*, 7 June 2020.
 - a. Why is Minneapolis's black unemployment rate more than four times that for whites? And why, in an area where corporations make such conspicuous efforts to support diversity, do black-owned businesses make up such a small part of the local economy?
11. Porter, Eduardo. "[Income Inequality and the Ills behind It.](#)" *The New York Times*, 29 July 2014.
 - a. There is evidence that inequality among the lower rungs of the socio-economic ladder can have deleterious consequences, stunning the ambition of the poor. As the richest Americans capture a larger and larger share of the fruits of growth, for many people the essential economic question becomes: What is the point of creating a larger pie?
12. Rohwell, Jonathan. "[Myths of the 1 Percent: What Puts People at the Top.](#)" *The New York Times*, 17 November 2017.
 - a. The author argues that regressive regulations – laws that benefit the rich – are a primary cause of the extraordinary income gains among elite professionals and financial managers in the United States.
13. Telford, Taylor. "[Income Inequality in America is the Highest it's been since Census Bureau Started Tracking it, Data Shows.](#)" *The Washington Post*, 26 September 2019.
 - a. In the midst of the nation's longest economic expansion, the separation between rich and poor is at a five-decade high.
14. "[The Stark Relationship between Income Inequality and Crime.](#)" *The Economist*, 7 June 2018 Edition.
 - a. Gary Becker postulated that would-be criminals make a cost-benefit assessment of the likely rewards from breaking the law against the probability of being caught and punished. In Becker's world of utility-maximizing miscreants, places that have larger gaps between the poor (the would-be criminals) and the rich (the victims) will, all other things being equal, have higher crime. A Gallup survey, asking 148,000 people in 142 countries, appeared to go some way to verifying Becker's theory.

Covid-19: Jobs and Income

Highly Recommended Articles

1. Cohen, Patricia and Ben Casselman. "[Minority Workers Who Lagged in a Boom Are Hit Hard in a Bust.](#)" *The New York Times*, 6 June 2020.
 - a. African-Americans and Latinos are especially vulnerable to job losses in the pandemic and at a disadvantage in getting government support.

Additional Articles

1. Smialek, Jeanna. "[Jerome Powell Strikes a Hopeful Tone but Emphasizes the Pandemic's](#)

[Uneven Costs.](#)” *The New York Times*, 3 May 2021.

- a. “The Fed is focused on these longstanding disparities because they weigh on the productive capacity of our economy,” Mr. Powell said. “We will only reach our full potential when everyone can contribute to, and share in, the benefits of prosperity.”
2. [“American Inequality Meets Covid-19.”](#) *The Economist*, 18 April 2020 Edition.
 - a. The covid-19 epidemic in America is two-pronged—a contagious sickness first, followed by an economic malaise. Despite a big stimulus program from Congress, including the temporary introduction of something like a universal basic income that ought to benefit the poorest disproportionately, it is the least advantaged who are suffering most.
3. Badger, Emily and Alicia Pariapiano. [“The Rich Cut Their Spending. That Has Hurt All the Workers Who Count on It.”](#) *The New York Times*, 17 June 2020.
 - a. Research finds that the highest-earning quarter of Americans has been responsible for about half of the decline in consumption during this recession. And that has wreaked havoc on the lower-wage service workers on the other end of many of their transactions.
4. Kumar, Kavita. [“Half of Black Workers in Minnesota Have Lost Work during Pandemic.”](#) *The Minneapolis Star Tribune*, 18 July 2020.
 - a. Minnesota: More than one-quarter of Black workers were still making weekly unemployment claims last month, compared with 9% of white workers.
5. Smialek, Jeanna. [“Fed Chair Powell Warns Pandemic Downturn Could Widen Inequalities.”](#) *The New York Times*, 16 June 2020.
 - a. Jerome H. Powell, testifying before lawmakers, said recent labor market improvement was encouraging but predicted a long road ahead for service-sector workers.
6. Tankersley, Jim. [“Job or Health? Restarting the Economy Threatens to Worsen Economic Inequality.”](#) *The New York Times*, 27 April 2020.
 - a. The coronavirus recession has exacerbated the racial and income divides in America. Lifting restrictions too soon will make them worse and leave workers with a bleak choice.
7. Long, Heather. [“The recession is over for the rich, but the working class is far from recovered.”](#) *The Washington Post*, 13 August 2020.
 - a. The stock market and home values are back at record levels, while jobs remain scarce for those earning less than \$20 an hour.

Covid-19: Immigrants and Essential Workers

Highly Recommended Articles

1. Kakande, Yasin. [“We Are Not Enemies. We Are Essential Workers.”](#) *The New York Times*, 18 May 2020.
 - a. We are caring for the sick, the elderly, the disabled, children and babies. We’re delivering your food and packages, working on your farms, in your factories and warehouses. Pandemic or not, this work has always been essential.
2. Liptak, Adam. [“‘Dreamers’ Tell Supreme Court Ending DACA during Pandemic Would be ‘Catastrophic.’”](#) *The New York Times*, 27 March 2020.

- a. About 27,000 of the young undocumented immigrants who are part of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program work in health care, many of them on the front lines in the fight against the coronavirus.

Additional Articles

1. [“The Biggest Losers from Covid-19.”](#) *The Economist*, 10 April 2021 Edition.
 - a. Covid-19 is a disease of the poor and the powerless. The people known as “essential” workers had to be in public spaces and often in close proximity with their colleagues. Most of them are ethnic minorities. Many of them died.
2. McGeehan, Patrick. [“They Risked Their Lives During Covid. They Still Don’t Earn Minimum Wage.”](#) *The New York Times*, 15 July 2021.
 - a. Throughout the pandemic, gig workers have been considered essential. People who lost jobs during the pandemic took on gig work as a way to make some money. Surveys of food deliverers and others who work for app-based services illustrate the hazards they have faced during the pandemic.
3. Sieff, Levin. [“For Guatemalans in Florida, Essential Work Leads to a Coronavirus Outbreak.”](#) *The New York Times*, 25 July 2020.
 - a. Tens of thousands of immigrant laborers have enabled one Florida construction boom after another. Asked to work through the pandemic, they’re now among the hardest-hit communities in the hard-hit state.

Covid-19: Health Care and Health Outcomes

Highly Recommended Articles

1. Patton, Stacey. [“The Pathology of American Racism is Making the Pathology of the Coronavirus Worse.”](#) *The Washington Post*, 11 April 2020.

Covid-19 is disproportionately killing black people because the whole system is worse for us. This isn’t the first pandemic where the pathologies of American racism have exacerbated the pathologies of a virus.

Additional Articles

1. [“Why Have Some Places Suffered More Covid-19 Deaths than Others?”](#) *The Economist*, 31 July 2021.
 - a. Wonks are searching for less obvious variables that do more to explain variation in deaths from Covid-19. And so far the most powerful of them all is inequality—usually measured as the Gini coefficient of income, where zero represents perfect equality and one represents perfect inequality.
2. Glastris, Paul, and Phillip Longman. [“American Hospitals Are Still Segregated. That’s Killing People of Color.”](#) *The Washington Post*, 5 August 2020.
 - a. De facto hospital segregation magnifies underlying racial and class disparities in health.
3. Oppel Jr., Richard A, Robert Gebeloff, K.K. Rebecca Lai, Will Wright and Mitch Smith. [“The Fulllest Look Yet at the Racial Inequality of Coronavirus.”](#) *The New York Times*, 5 July 2020.
 - a. Black and Latino people have been disproportionately affected by the coronavirus in a widespread manner that spans the country, throughout hundreds of counties in urban,

suburban and rural areas, and across all age groups. The data also showed several pockets of disparity involving Native American people.

4. Parnass, Danielle and Adam Schank. "[What Made U.S. Health Care So Vulnerable to Covid-19.](#)" *The Washington Post*, 2 August 2020.
 - a. The U.S. spent 17% of gross domestic product on health care in 2019, double the average of the well-to-do members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. But it allots only 3 cents out of every dollar to public health, the field devoted to protecting entire populations by, among other things, responding to infectious disease.
5. Romero, Simon. "[Checkpoints, Curfews, Airlifts: Virus Rips through Navajo Nation.](#)" *The New York Times*, 20 April 2020.
 - a. The coronavirus is tearing across the largest Native American reservation in the United States. Facing a spike in deaths, Navajo officials are scrambling to respond.
6. Spagat, Elliot. "[Virus Ravages Poor California County along Mexican Border.](#)" *The Washington Post*, 5 August 2020.
 - a. Imperial County, a farming region along the Mexican border, has had more than 5,200 cases for every 100,000 people, nearly triple that of hard-hit Los Angeles County, the nation's largest county. Nearly 20% of Imperial patients have tested positive, compared with 6.3% statewide.
7. "[The Vulnerability of African Americans to the Coronavirus is a National Emergency.](#)" *The Economist*, 28 May 2020 Edition.
 - a. It is past time to fix a glaring disparity. Covid-19 has also made clear that such an intervention should not be considered ideological.
8. Thebault, Reis, Andrew Ba Tran and Vanessa Williams. "[The Coronavirus is Infecting and Killing Black Americans at an Alarming High Rate.](#)" *The Washington Post*, 7 April 2020.
 - a. A Post analysis of available data shows that counties that are majority-black have three times the rate of infections and almost six times the rate of deaths as counties where white residents are in the majority.

Covid-19: Education

1. Goldstein, Dana and Alicia Pariapiano. "[The Kindergarten Exodus.](#)" *The New York Times*, 7 August 2021.
 - a. Just as the pandemic lay bare vast disparities in health care and income, it also hardened inequities in education, setting back some of the most vulnerable students before they spent even one day in a classroom. As the pandemic took hold, more than 1 million children did not enroll in local schools. Many of them were the most vulnerable: 5-year-olds in low-income neighborhoods.
2. "[Closing Schools for Covid-19 Does Lifelong Harm and widens Inequality.](#)" *The Economist*, 30 April 2020 Edition.
 - a. Less well-off children everywhere are less likely to have well-educated parents who coax them to attend remote lessons and help them with their work.
3. Edelin, Ramona. "[The Coronavirus Crisis Shines Light on Educational Inequalities.](#)" *The Washington Post*, 1 May 2020.
 - a. The tragedy of this pandemic has forced a bright light on entrenched, intergenerational inequalities and burning social injustices, creating a unique opportunity to address them.

4. Romm, Tony. "[‘It Shouldn’t Take a Pandemic’: Coronavirus Exposes Internet Inequality Among U.S. Students as Schools Close Their Doors.](#)" *The Washington Post*, 16 March 2020.
 - a. Millions of Americans lack Web access, a digital divide that complicates educators’ efforts to continue instruction during a health crisis.
5. Struss, Valerie. "[How Covid-19 Has Laid Bare the Vast Inequalities in U.S. Public Education.](#)" *The Washington Post*, 14 April 2020.
 - a. In the research community, it is widely recognized that students transition into schools not from a blank slate, but from an unequal society. Because of that, young people enter school with vastly different levels of preparation.
6. Struss, Valerie. "[Coronavirus Pandemic Shines Light on Deep Digital Divide in U.S. amid Efforts to narrow It.](#)" *The Washington Post*, 29 April 2020.
 - a. Rural areas are especially hard-hit, as are high-poverty areas, while schools and families struggle to keep up learning programs with school buildings closed and students at home. The digital divide is not new, but the crisis facing the country has laid bare just how deep and damaging it is.

Covid-19: Housing and Transportation

1. Long, Heather. "[2020 is the Summer of Booming Home Sales – and Evictions.](#)" *The Washington Post*, 7 July 2020.
 - a. The affluent are taking advantage of the cheapest mortgage rates in history to buy bigger homes. Meanwhile, renters face more job losses and fear eviction.
2. Tan, Shelly, Alyssa Fowers, Dan Keating and Lauren Tierney. "[Amid the Pandemic, Public Transit is Highlighting Inequalities in Cities.](#)" *The Washington Post*, 15 May 2020.
 - a. While there are a variety of issues at hand that impact inequities, public transportation and the covid-19 outbreak shine a light on how many of them interact.
3. Verma, Pranshu. "[‘We’re Desperate’: Transit Cuts Felt Deepest in Low-Income Areas.](#)" *The New York Times*, 15 August 2020.
 - a. As the pandemic wreaks havoc on public transit systems across the country, experts say it is low income residents, people of color and essential workers bearing the brunt.

Covid-19: Racial Unrest and Protests

1. Arora, Maneesh. "[How the Coronavirus Pandemic helped the Floyd Protests Become the Biggest in U.S. History.](#)" *The Washington Post*, 5 August 2020.
 - a. People who lost money or jobs because of the pandemic response were more likely to protest with Black Lives Matter.
2. Bodea, Cristina and Christina Houle. "[The Longer-term Coronavirus Fallout Could Erode Democracy. Here’s How that Could Play Out.](#)" *The Washington Post*, 4 August 2020.
 - a. Studies suggest people living in high inequality countries or who experience downward personal mobility are less likely to support democracy and are more susceptible to authoritarian values.
3. Rosenberg, Eli. "[An Undercurrent of the Protests: African Americans Are Struggling More Economically from This Pandemic.](#)" *The Washington Post*, 1 June 2020.
 - a. Black people are more likely to work in industries such as hospitality, dining and

leisure that have been so severely curtailed by the virus. And those who have kept their jobs are more likely to work in hands-on, front-line work that puts them at continual risk of exposure in grocery stores, public transportation, trucking, warehousing and health care.

Covid-19: Economic Solutions

1. Greer, Scott and Julia Lynch. "[These Social Policies Could Help the U.S. Cope with the Coronavirus Pandemic](#)." *The Washington Post*, 24 May 2020.
 - a. Coping with an emergency could be easier if systems had more resilience built in, like cash income supports, unemployment insurance, subsidized housing and health care, and publicly provided childcare give household budgets a little slack. This could allow people to continue to work, or at least consume, during periods of either personal misfortune or mass disruption — thus reducing the threat of broad economic collapse.
2. "[Guy Standing on How Lockdowns Make the Case for a Basic Income](#)." *The Economist*, 20 May 2020 Edition.
 - a. Countries need to institute bold policies to build resilience—for individuals and businesses—and to pave the way for a revival of society grounded on ethical and sustainable foundations. Basic income would help for three reasons: rescue, resilience, and revival.
3. Porter, Eduardo. "[Coronavirus Is a Crisis. Might It Also Narrow Inequality?](#)" *The New York Times*, 25 June 2020.
 - a. Economic downturns have often led to political moves to lift the most vulnerable. But recoveries tend to reverse the effect.

Reading List: Racial Inequality

1. Spriggs, William E. "[Opinion: Black Unemployment Matters Just as Much as White Unemployment](#)." *The New York Times*, 19 July 2021.
 - a. The employment gap between Black and white people highlights the problem of longstanding strains in the Black community. Not long ago, the Federal Reserve based its policies on a mechanical rule about inflation risk and the level of unemployment, which led central bankers to slow down the economy whenever the overall unemployment rate fell below about 6 percent. Because of this mentality, every month from September 1975 to June 1997, the Black unemployment rate was in the double digits.
2. "[Covid-19 Has Shone a Light on Racial Disparities in Health](#)." *The Economist*, 21 November 2020 Edition.
 - a. In the few countries that collect and publish such data, covid-19 has hit ethnic minorities harder than whites. That is in part because the disease disproportionately affects those in jobs, such as security guards and supermarket staff, where ethnic minorities are over-represented. But it is also because of racial disparities in health. Doctors have long argued about the extent to which those disparities are the result of broader inequalities compared with other factors, such as racism or biology. Covid-19 has thrown

those questions into stark relief.

3. Grullón Paz, Isabella. ["Pandemic and Racial Injustice Cause Outsize Harm to Black Students, Study Finds."](#) *The New York Times*, 27 July 2021.
 - a. The disproportionate impact of Covid-19 on Black people, coupled with racial trauma from last summer, will make it harder for Black students to return to classrooms, Teachers College research showed.
4. Kitzmiller, Erika M., and Akira Drake Rodriguez. ["The Link Between Educational Inequality and Infrastructure."](#) *The Washington Post*, 6 August 2021.
 - a. For over a century, we have spent much more on schools for White students than for Black ones. This article discusses this education inequality since the late 19th century.
5. Allen, Reniqua. ["Opinion: The American Dream Isn't for Black Millennials."](#) *The New York Times*, 5 January 2019.
 - a. The American dream, the idea that anyone can succeed through hard work, is one of the most enduring myths in this country. Today, young black Americans are not being chased down by dogs, we don't have to fight to use the same restrooms and water fountains as people who don't look like us. But we're still tired of having to prove our humanity and trying to make sure that America makes good on its promise.
6. Ott, Julia. ["While Tax Breaks Favoring the Rich May Appear Race-neutral, They Aren't."](#) *The Washington Post*, 15 July 2021.
 - a. The tax advantages enjoyed by the wealthiest Americans are not the by-product of a broken system. Instead, our tax code operates as it was designed. Early sponsors of the preferential tax rate for capital gains intended for this tax provision to secure White wealth, and white supremacy, across generations. Many 'investment' tax breaks in the U.S. tax code embody structural racism.
7. ["Can White People Experience Racism."](#) *The Economist*, 18 September 2018 Edition.
 - a. This is more than an esoteric academic debate. The alt-right and white supremacists thrive on stories of anti-white racism—nothing makes for better propaganda than the sense of a conspiracy of oppressors. Already, 55% of white Americans believe that they suffer from discrimination according to a poll by NPR in October 2017.
8. ["Economic Research Documents Black Americans' Struggle for Equality."](#) *The Economist*, 11 June 2020 Edition.
 - a. History shows that progress towards equality is followed by a racist backlash. To make real progress towards racial equality in America, the cycle of inequality and poor outcomes needs to be broken, and decades of damage remedied.
9. Kaplan, Sarah. ["Climate Change is Also a Racial Justice Problem."](#) *The Washington Post*, 29 June 2020.
 - a. What does racism mean for climate change --- and vice versa? Unless inequality is addressed now, future impacts from climate change will disable many communities of color.
10. Kendi, Ibram X. ["Racial Progress Is Real. But So Is Racist Progress."](#) *The New York Times*, 21 January 2017.
 - a. Both racist and antiracist groups have made progress. Both forces — the racist

force of inequality, and the antiracist force of equality — have progressed in rhetoric, in tactics, in policies. Both forces have drawn inspiration from America's founding creed of liberty. (**Warning:** This article is a bit politically charged.)

11. Lewis, John. "[Together, You Can redeem the Soul of Our Nation.](#)" *The New York Times*, 30 July 2020.
 - a. Mr. Lewis, the civil rights leader who died on July 19, wrote this essay shortly before his death, to be published upon the day of his funeral.
12. "[Like Obscenity, You know Racism When You See It.](#)" *The Economist*, 23 August 2018 Edition.
 - a. White pride is troubling because of its association with a violent fringe movement that the FBI tracks assiduously. But it is also troubling because demands made by political majorities on the basis of race are more threatening than those made by minorities. (**Warning:** This article is a bit politically charged.)
13. "[The Minnesota Paradox.](#)" *NPR*, 8 June 2020.
 - a. A 9-minute interview with Samuel L. Myers, Jr., Roy Wilkins Professor of Human Relations and Social Justice, Humphrey School of Public Affairs, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities.
14. "[The Misplaced Arguments against Black Lives Matter.](#)" *The Economist*, 18 August 2017 Edition.
 - a. Someone who says that black lives matter does not imply that other lives do not—they are simply reminding people that for most of American history black lives have been valued less than white ones.
15. "[The New Ideology of Race.](#)" *The Economist*, 9 July 2020 Edition.
 - a. The ideology takes a wrong turn on many university campuses, by seeking to impose itself through intimidation and power. Not the power that comes from persuasion and elections, but from silencing your critics, insisting that those who are not with you are against you. It is a worldview where everything and everyone is seen through the prism of ideology.
16. vanden Heuvel, Katrina. "[How We Can Start Dismantling Systemic Racism.](#)" *The Washington Post*, 9 June 2020.
 - a. According to a study, the United States spends twice as much on "law and order" — prisons, courts and police forces — as we do on cash welfare programs such as food stamps and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families. The events of this year highlight the urgency of fixing that imbalance.
17. Wegman, Jesse. "[We Are Part of the Problem They Protest.](#)" *The New York Times*, 16 June 2020.
 - a. State Supreme Court judges are starting to grapple publicly with the racial injustices in the criminal justice systems they oversee.

Highly Recommended Articles (Racial Inequality)

1. Brooks, David. "[Opinion: How Racist Is America?](#)" *The New York Times*, 22 July 2021.
 - a. The reality of America encompasses both the truth about structural racism and the truth that America is a land of opportunity for an astounding diversity of groups from around the world. There's no way to simplify that complexity.

2. Ingraham, Christopher. "[Racial Inequality in Minneapolis is Among the Worst in the Nation](#)." *The Washington Post*, 30 May 2020.
 - a. The economic gulf between black and white families is higher in the Minnesota city than nearly anywhere else in America, data show.
3. Michener, Jamila. "[George Floyd's Killing Was Just the Spark. Here's What Really Made the Protests Explode](#)." *The New York Times*, 11 June 2020.
 - a. What prompted the protests against racially biased policing? To fully understand it, we need to recognize the broad systemic racism that exists in the nation. Racial discrimination pervades nearly every aspect of American life. Here's the data, from health care to housing.
4. "[Quantifying Black Lives Matter](#)." *The Economist*, 16 July 2016 Edition.
 - a. Are black Americans more likely to be shot or roughed up by police? This 2016 article reports a surprising finding.

Economics of Racial Inequality

1. Singletary, Michelle. "[One of the Costs of Racism in American Society](#)." *The Washington Post*, 15 August 2017.
 - a. Racism has taken a toll on our society in many ways. One of its costs has been the lost economic mobility of generations of minorities. I nearly lost mine.
2. Cook, Lisa D. "[Racism Impoverishes the Whole Economy](#)." *The New York Times*, 18 November 2020.
 - a. While the targets unquestionably suffer the most, denying people equal opportunities diminishes the finances of millions of Americans.
3. Liu, Donald J. "[My Study Notes on Racial Wealth Inequality in the United States, Its Root Causes, and Its Costs to the U.S. Economy](#)." Unpublished Manuscript, August 21, 2021.
 - a. In preparing for a lecture on racial wealth inequality in the U.S., its root causes, and its costs to the U.S. economy, I have put the contents of some of the articles I read into four areas that are thought to contribute to racial wealth gaps: community context, family wealth, family income and family savings. I am sharing this document with interested readers. The purpose of this document is to summarize, organize and synthesize information about this topic from a variety of published sources into the four areas mentioned above. I have cited sources throughout this document for all the information contained therein.
4. Bernstein, Jared. "[The Built-in Biases in Economics that Feed Systemic Racism](#)." *The Washington Post*, 7 July 2020.
 - a. The concept of "equilibrium" leads economists to generally assume full employment in the labor market, compensation that broadly represents workers' value added, ample competition within product markets, price signals that "clear markets" by balancing supply and demand, and broadly balanced trade. It is impossible, however, to observe the empirical record of black economic outcomes and not conclude that market failure is pervasive.
5. "[The Black-white Wealth Gap is Unchanged after Half a Century](#)." *The Economist*, 6 April 2019 Edition.

- a. The article points out the wealth gap, discusses the root cause, and explores ways to narrow the gap.
- 6. [“The Power of Protest and the Legacy of George Floyd.”](#) *The Economist*, 18 August 2017 Edition.
 - a. America is both a country and an idea. When the two do not match, non-Americans notice more than when an injustice is perpetrated in, say, Russia. And wrapped up in that idea of America is a conviction that progress is possible.

Highly Recommended Articles (Economics of Racial Inequality)

- 1. The Editorial Board. [“Opinion: Narrowing the U.S. Wealth Gap is Important. Narrowing the Racial Wealth Gap is Urgent.”](#) *The Washington Post*, 30 July 2021.
 - a. The racial wealth gap is not the outcome of impersonal market forces but the legacy of oppressive policy. As a country we have already wasted too many opportunities to tackle it head-on. The racial wealth gap can and should be addressed through measures that are race-neutral but foreseeably bestow disproportionate benefits on people of color — thus flipping the script on past policies that were officially colorblind but favored Whites.
- 2. Manduca, Robert. [“How Rising U.S. Income Inequality Exacerbates Racial Economic Disparities.”](#) *The Washington Center for Equitable Growth*, 23 August 2018.
 - a. The article shows how economic inequality and racial inequality are fundamentally intertwined and how policies to make the economy more equal in general can contribute to greater equality between races.
- 3. [“Bosses Say They Want to Tackle Racial Injustice.”](#) *The Economist*, 11 June 2020 Edition.
 - a. Untangling the problem of race and corporate America requires addressing four questions. First, what is the evidence that blacks are disadvantaged in the workplace? Second, how much is business to blame rather than society as a whole? Third, do any such disadvantages impact how businesses perform? And finally, what if anything can business do to improve matters?

Racial Segregation

- 1. Stelly, Amy. [“Highways Destroyed Black Neighborhoods Like Mine. Can We Undo the Damage Now?”](#) *The Washington Post*, 13 August 2021.
 - a. Tremé was a place of massive oaks, thriving shops and joyous community. The Claiborne Expressway erased all that. The government tore up the avenue nearly 60 years ago, burying the heart of Tremé and the 7th Ward so the Claiborne Expressway, part of Interstate 10’s transcontinental span, could run through the city. New Orleans wasn’t alone. The same kind of thing happened across the country; Black communities like those in St. Paul, Minn., Orlando, Detroit, Richmond, Baltimore, Oakland, Calif., and Syracuse, N.Y., were leveled or hollowed out to make way for federal highway building.
- 2. Oliver, John. [“Housing Discrimination.”](#) *Last Week Tonight with John Oliver (HBO)*, 26 July 2021.

- a. John Oliver breaks down the long history of housing discrimination sanctioned by the U.S. government, the damage it has done, and, crucially, what we can do about it. **Warning:** While very informative, this clip may be offensive to you due to the occasional use of vulgar language by the host.
3. Buchta, Jim, and MaryJo Webster. "[Racial Homeownership Gap in the Twin Cities Highest in the Nation.](#)" *The Minneapolis StarTribune*, 27 June 2021.
 - a. A surge in single-family rentals in Hennepin and Ramsey counties is eliminating options for minority and low-income buyers.
4. Lalwani, Nikita and Mitchell Johnston. "[Think Racial Segregation Is Over? Here's How the Police Still Enforce It.](#)" *The Washington Post*, 1 July 2020.
 - a. Amid nationwide demonstrations sparked by the killing of George Floyd, protesters and reformers have focused on ways to reduce police violence. So far, however, they have paid much less attention to an underpublicized aspect of policing: the role the police play in maintaining racial segregation in U.S. cities, the subject of a [new paper](#) by Yale University legal scholar and sociologist Monica Bell.
5. "[Segregation and Poverty Have Declined Among Blacks since 1968.](#)" *The Economist*, 4 June 2020 Edition.
 - a. Urban sociologists use a measure called a dissimilarity index to quantify segregation: the percentage of blacks that would have to move to ensure equal dispersion across a city. In 1970 this number was 93%. By 2010, the dissimilarity index had declined to 70%—an improvement, but far from the integrated society that civil-rights activists may have hoped for 60 years ago.

Highly Recommended Articles (Racial Segregation)

1. "[Segregation Still Blights the Lives of African-Americans.](#)" *The Economist*, 9 July 2020 Edition.
 - a. Addressing segregation is paramount. Most of the other problems—exposure to violence, a paucity of public services, segregated schooling and the persistence of stereotyping—can be traced back to it. This article provides possible solutions.

Protests against Racial Injustices

1. Chudy, Jennifer. "[Many Whites are Protesting with Black Lives Matter. How Far Will Their Support Go?](#)" *The Washington Post*, 15 June 2020.
 - a. Will their sympathetic involvement extend beyond the moment to undoing deeper systems of racial injustice? The author's research takes up this question.
2. "[How to Fix American Policing.](#)" *The Economist*, 4 June 2020 Edition.
 - a. A community that trusts police more, that's a community more inclined to give information to police about crime, partner with police about quality-of-life problems, and help the police do what they need to do to keep things safe. Communities that don't trust the police have lower homicide clearance rates.
3. Lerer, Lisa. "[The Pandemic and the Protests.](#)" *The New York Times*, 4 June 2020.

- a. While the protests were ignited by the killing of George Floyd and the issue of police brutality, the anger and unrest cannot be separated from the unequal cost of the pandemic.

Highly Recommended Articles (Protests against Racial Injustices)

1. [“Police Violence, Race and Protest in America.”](#) *The Economist*, 4 June 2020 Edition.
 - a. Will protesters in American cities bring progress, or set back the cause they champion?

Reparations: Economics

1. [“A Price for Pain?”](#) *The Economist*, 11 April 2002 Edition.
 - a. One goal of justice is to make a victim “whole”—that is, to restore a person or a company to financial health, as if the wrongdoing had never occurred. This is easier said than done, particularly if the bad deed happened long ago. There is also the thorny question of whether a crime (and hence the compensation that is calculated for it) should be viewed with the benefit of hindsight.
2. Brooks, David. [“How to Do Reparations Right.”](#) *The New York Times*, 4 June 2020.
 - a. Reparations would involve an official apology for centuries of slavery and discrimination, and spending money to reduce their effects. Trying to find the descendants of slaves and sending them a check would be a wrong way to spend that money. Giving reparations money to neighborhoods is the way to go.

Highly Recommended Articles (Reparations: Economics)

1. [“Forty Acres and A Mule: The Economics of Reparations.”](#) *The Economist*, 20 June 2020 Edition.
 - a. How much to Pay? How best to spend the money?

Reparations: General

1. Goldberg, Emma. [“How Reparations for Slavery Became a 2020 Campaign Issue.”](#) *The New York Times*, 18 June 2020.
 - a. In 1865, formerly enslaved people were promised 40 acres of land and, later, a mule. More than 150 years since then some politicians are trying to make good on a version of that promise.
2. Hunter, Tera W. [“When Slaveowners Got Reparations.”](#) *The New York Times*, 16 April 2019.
 - a. Guess what? Lincoln signed a bill in 1862 that paid up to \$300 for every enslaved person freed. The slaves did not get anything.
3. Jan, Tracy. [“Reparations, Rebranded.”](#) *The Washington Post*, 24 February 2020.
 - a. South Carolina Congressman James Clyburn proposed a race-neutral

- anti-poverty program a decade ago. Presidential candidates recast it as compensation for slavery.
4. McDaniel, W. Caleb. "[The Former Slave Who Sued for Reparations, and Won.](#)" *The New York Times*, 4 September 2019.
 - a. Henrietta Wood sued the man who had kidnapped her into slavery for damages and lost wages, offering lessons for today's debate.
 5. Parry, Tyler D. "[How Right-wing Talking Points distort the History of Slavery.](#)" *The Washington Post*, 25 June 2020.
 - a. As we debate reparations, we need to get the facts right.
 6. "[The Idea of Reparations for Slavery is Morally Appealing but Flawed.](#)" *The Economist*, 29 June 2019.
 - a. Democrats should drop it.
 7. Williams, Ryan. "[How Reparations Fit Into New Focus on Racial Justice.](#)" *The Washington Post*, 8 July 2020.
 - a. This article attempts to answer the following 10 questions: What are reparations? What's its history in the U.S.? What's driving the debate in the U.K.? Have reparations been given in the past? What are reparations for? What forms can reparations take? How much might U.S. reparations cost? What do critics of these ideas say? What do polls show? What do the presidential candidates say?

Highly Recommended Articles (Reparations: General)

1. Nelson, Nichole. "[Reparations Need to be Part of the Conversation about Racial Justice.](#)" *The Washington Post*, 29 June 2020.
 - a. While many white Americans question why they should have to contribute to reparations when their families never owned slaves or were not even in the United States until long after abolition, understanding how government policy held back African Americans economically — and advantaged whites — long after ending slavery, shows why the reparations discussion is once again growing.