**BLACK AMERICA SINCE MLK: AND STILL I RISE**

**PART THREE: KEEP YOUR HEAD UP**

**FINAL TIME-CODED SCRIPT**

*START*

**[01:00:08]**

**VO: I GREW UP IN A WORLD THAT WAS TRANSFORMING -- A WORLD WHERE SEGREGATION WAS FADING AWAY, WHERE BLACK PEOPLE WERE STEPPING OUT OF THE SHADOWS, INTO THE LIMELIGHT.**

**AS A YOUNG MAN, I SAW RALLIES AND REVOLUTIONARIES.**

**AND I WAS CONVINCED THAT CHANGE WAS RIGHT AROUND THE CORNER.**

**BUT I NEVER IMAGINED HOW MUCH WAS STILL TO COME.**

**[01:00:51]**

**I’VE LIVED TO SEE ASTONISHING PROGRESS.**

**AFRICAN AMERICANS HAVE ACHIEVED SO MUCH, IN SO MANY WAYS, SURPASSING OUR GREATEST HOPES AND OUR WILDEST DREAMS…**

**WE’RE VISIBLE IN VIRTUALLY EVERY FACET OF AMERICAN LIFE… DEFINING ITS FACE AND ITS VOICE TO THE WORLD...**

**[01:01:24]**

**YET FAR TOO MANY BLACK LIVES ARE STILL THREATENED BY HARSH INEQUALITIES...**

**WHY DO WE STILL HAVE TO MARCH TO PROTECT OUR RIGHTS?**

**FIFTY YEARS AGO, I THOUGHT THAT, BY NOW, WE WOULD HAVE BEEN LONG PAST ALL THIS...**

**[01:01:44]**

**HOW DID WE GET HERE? HOW HAVE WE COME SO FAR, AND YET HAVE SO FAR TO GO?**

*SERIES TITLE: Black America Since MLK: And Still I Rise*

*FUNDER POD*

*SERIES TITLE: Black America Since MLK: And Still I Rise*

*EPISODE TITLE: Part Three: Keep Your Head Up*

*ARCHIVAL: JESSE JACKSON 1984 DNC SPEECH*

**[01:02:15]**

*JESSE JACKSON: Just because you're born in the slum does not mean the slum is born in you, and you can rise above it if your mind is made up..*

**[01:02:27]**

**VO: I REMEMBER WATCHING THIS SPEECH--FEELING A SENSE OF AMAZEMENT.**

**REALIZING THAT AN AFRICAN AMERICAN COULD BE A VIABLE CANDIDATE FOR THE PRESIDENCY OF THE UNITED STATES.**

**IT WAS 1984.**

*SKIP PERSONAL ARCHIVAL*

**[01:02:44]**

**I WAS THIRTY-THREE YEARS OLD…AND THE FATHER OF TWO LOVELY DAUGHTERS... I WAS AN ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR AT YALE...**

**THE FUTURE SEEMED BRIGHT.**

*GATES ON CAMERA*

**[01:02:55]**

**GATES: RACE RELATIONS IN AMERICA WERE SO MUCH BETTER THAN WHEN I WAS GROWING UP.**

**FOR PEOPLE LIKE ME--PEOPLE WHO HAD BENEFITTED SO MUCH FROM AFFIRMATIVE ACTION--IT FELT LIKE THERE WERE NO LIMITS TO WHAT WE COULD DO.**

**DID RACE STILL MATTER? OF COURSE IT MATTERED. BUT THE QUESTION WAS: HOW *MUCH* DID IT MATTER?**

*ARCHIVAL: EARLY OPRAH*

**[01:03:15]**

*OPRAH WINFREY: ‘Good Morning, Everybody! I’m Oprah Winfrey, a new host of AM Chicago, and I am thrilled to be here.’*

**[01:03:17]**

**VO: THE ANSWER--AT LEAST FOR SOME--SEEMED TO BE: “NOT VERY MUCH.”**

**[01:03:23]**

*Oprah show: “Everybody loves Oprah…”*

**[01:03:26]**

*OPRAH: “You mean me?”*

**[01:03:28]**

**VO: IN 1984, OPRAH WINFREY STARTED HOSTING A LOCAL MORNING TALK SHOW...**

**SHE WAS TWENTY-NINE YEARS OLD--BORN IN RURAL MISSISSIPPI...**

**AND SHE WAS ABOUT TO BECOME A NATIONAL PHENOMENON.**

**I REMEMBER WATCHING HER RAPID RISE WITH IMMENSE PRIDE.**

**OPRAH AND I ARE PART OF THE SAME GENERATION--A GENERATION THAT BUILT IT SUCCESS ON THE VICTORIES OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT...**

**[01:03:58]**

OPRAH WINFREY: Reverend Jesse Jackson spoke at my high school, and he said excellence is the best deterrent to racism. Therefore, be excellent. So I had that quote on my mirror. Excellence is the best deterrent to racism. Be excellent.

**[01:04:16]**

GATES: Was race ever an obstacle in your career?

**[01:04:19]**

OPRAH WINFREY: No. You know why? Cause I was born at the right time. I was never, not one day, in a segregated school. So I never...

**[01:04:29]**

GATES: Same with me.

**[01:04:29]**

OPRAH WINFREY: Had never had the indoctrination of “You’re less than…” or made to feel like, in a classroom, I couldn't raise my hand, couldn't say what I wanted to say, couldn't be myself.

*ARCHIVAL: OPRAH DANCING, OPRAH WITH GAYLE...*

**[01:04:41]**

**VO: LOOKING BACK, IT’S EASY TO FORGET THAT OPRAH WAS DOING SOMETHING RADICALLY DIFFERENT FOR A BLACK PERSON--SIMPLY BY BEING *HERSELF*… ON NATIONAL TELEVISION...**

**EXPOSING THE INTIMATE DETAILS OF HER LIFE FOR EVERYBODY TO SEE.**

*ARCHIVAL: OPRAH WEIGHT LOSS*

**[01:04:58]**

*OPRAH: “I have lost--as of this morning--sixty-seven pounds.”*

**[01:05:05]**

GATES: People in our generation...

**[01:05:06]**

OPRAH WINFREY: Mm.

**[01:05:06]**

GATES: But certainly people older, who are black, would never have made themselves vulnerable in public...

**[01:05:11]**

OPRAH WINFREY: Mmm.

**[01:05:11]**

GATES: Before white people. Never.

**[01:05:12]**

OPRAH WINFREY: Yes.

**[01:05:13]**

GATES: We didn't have pain, you know?

**[01:05:14]**

OPRAH WINFREY: Yeah.

**[01:05:14]**

GATES: We were beyond, uh, suffering.

**[01:05:17]**

OPRAH WINFREY: Yeah.

**[01:05:18]**

GATES: What was it about you...how did you figure that out?

**[01:05:20]**

OPRAH WINFREY: When you are able to literally connect to the heart of somebody and they can see that, oh, I do that, oh, I eat that, oh, I have a weight issue, oh, I felt terrible when I lost my first boyfriend, and I was distraught, and I ate a sleeve of Oreos.

**[01:05:38]**

GATES: (Laughs.)

**[01:05:39]**

OPRAH WINFREY: All the things I was willing to talk about that felt neither black, nor white, nor Asian, nor Hispanic. They were able to look beyond the color of my skin and see the content of my character.

**[01:05:54]**

**VO: OPRAH EMBODIED A NEW ERA--AN ERA OF BLACK CROSS-OVER SUPERSTARS.**

**FROM MICHAEL JACKSON TO BILL COSBY... MICHAEL JORDAN TO WHITNEY HOUSTON...**

**BLACK PEOPLE WERE WINNING FAME AND FORTUNE IN WAYS THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN UNIMAGINABLE EVEN A DECADE BEFORE.**

**AND THEIR SUCCESS ENCOURAGED AMERICA TO THINK DIFFERENTLY ABOUT RACE…**

**[01:06:33]**

VINCE BROWN: What happens is that I think white people can now suddenly imagine themselves identifying with black success in a new way. What that means is that if you happen to be famous then we’ll accept you into our society as a rough equal, maybe even a better.

*ARCHIVAL: MICHAEL JORDAN COMMERCIAL*

**[01:06:49]**

*WHITE KID: How about a little one on one?*

**[01:06:51]**

*MICHAEL JORDAN: I’m ready.*

**[01:06:53]**

**VO: BLACK SUCCESS WASN’T CONFINED TO THE REALM OF CELEBRITIES.**

**AFRICAN AMERICANS WERE MAKING DRAMATIC GAINS IN ALMOST EVERY ARENA...**

**[01:07:03]**

DONNA BRAZILE: This was a transformational period. Visibility’s viability. We started seeing more blacks in corporate America, more black television personalities. So things were changing, slowly--albeit slowly, But there was no question that we were not going back. This was a journey forward.

**[01:07:24]**

**VO: AS THE 1980S PROGRESSED, THERE WERE MORE BLACK DOCTORS AND LAWYERS... MORE BLACK POLITICIANS.**

**AND PIONEERS IN DOZENS OF FIELDS:** **THE FIRST BLACK ASTRONAUT....**

**THE FIRST BLACK MISS AMERICA...**

**EVEN THE MAN WHO WOULD BECOME THE FIRST BLACK BILLIONAIRE....**

*ROBERT JOHNSON RIBBON CUTTING*

**[01:07:43]**

**VO: IN 1980, ENTREPRENEUR ROBERT JOHNSON WAS TRYING TO START A CABLE CHANNEL AIMED AT BLACK AUDIENCES.**

**JOHNSON HAD ALMOST NO MONEY...**

*GATES AND ROBERT JOHNSON WALK & TALK*

ROBERT JOHNSON: Ninety-plus percent return on the investment...

**[01:07:57]**

**VO: BUT HE WAS ABLE TO TALK HIS WAY INTO A FIVE-HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLAR CHECK FROM AN INVESTOR...**

**[01:08:03]**

ROBERT JOHNSON: Here I was, I’m nine of ten kids, of Freeport, Illinois. Five hundred thousand dollars was equal to the entire GDP of everybody black in the city. So I get this money in my hand...

**[01:08:14]**

GATES: Did you cry? Did you cry?

**[01:08:15]**

ROBERT JOHNSON: So, it’s, it’s probably like Sir Edmund Hilary when he looked at Mt. Everest and said, “There’s that mountain. I bet you I can climb it.”

**[01:08:20]**

GATES: Right.

**[01:08:21]**

ROBERT JOHNSON: And he just said, “Okay, I’m gonna do it, ‘cause I think I can.”

*ARCHIVE: B.E.T. SHOWS OF LATE 80S/EARLY 90S*

**[01:08:26]**

**VO: JOHNSON USED THE MONEY TO LAUNCH B.E.T.--BLACK ENTERTAINMENT TELEVISION....**

**IT WAS A MODEST ENTERPRISE AT FIRST...BUT JOHNSON SOON SAW A WAY TO MAKE IT GROW...**

**[01:08:40]**

ROBERT JOHNSON: The record industry started making music videos, but MTV was not playing black videos.

**[01:08:46]**

GATES: Right, not before Michael Jackson.

**[01:08:48]**

ROBERT JOHNSON: Not before Michael Jackson, so when I went to the record companies and I said, “Look, you guys make videos, I’ll play them as long as you keep making them.” And so, that became a source of free programming, which is really good, ‘cause when you got free programming, and you’re getting paid by the cable operators, you can get paid by the advertisers, that’s a pretty good business.

**[01:09:11]**

GATES: That’s pure profit, kaching-kaching-kaching.

**[01:09:14]**

ROBERT JOHNSON: You got to work hard to screw that one up, so… (Laughs.)

**[01:09:18]**

**VO: B.E.T. SOON BECAME A MAJOR FORCE IN THE MUSIC INDUSTRY--AND AN EXTRAORDINARILY PROFITABLE COMPANY....**

**[01:09:29]**

JOHNSON: It proved unequivocally that African-Americans, given financial support and-and a vision can create significant wealth for black investors and white investors and anybody else.

**[01:09:42]**

GATES: Which, major accomplishment.

**[01:09:44]**

JOHNSON: We were the first African-American company publicly traded on the New York Stock Exchange.

**[01:09:48]**

GATES: That’s right.

**[01:09:49]**

JOHNSON: All of the things I’ve done, part of it is to prove in some way to white America that if you simply invest in, transfer and put more capital behind talented black individuals, they will generate as much wealth as anybody else. You just got to have the confidence and the commitment to do it.

**[01:10:13]**

**VO: FOR PEOPLE OF MY GENERATION, SUCCESS STORIES LIKE JOHNSON’S WERE UTTERLY THRILLING.**

**THEY INSPIRED US TO THINK ABOUT THE POSSIBILITIES OF INDIVIDUAL BLACK ACHIEVEMENT IN ENTIRELY NEW WAYS. THE SYSTEM SEEMED TO BE OPENING UP AT THE TOP....**

**IT WAS INTOXICATING.**

**BUT IT WAS ALSO, IN SOME WAYS, DECEPTIVE…**

**[01:10:38]**

CORNEL WEST: The 1980s did provide various opportunities for Black folk because the markets were bursting out all over, and so if you were prepared, if you had high-level skills you were able to get in and lo and behold, live lives of fairly decent material uh, prosperity. But we’re talking about a slice of Black America. You see, the rest of Black America had to deal with the Reagan cut-backs, the Reagan speed-ups at the workplace, increasing unemployment and underemployment.

**[01:11:17]**

**VO: AT THE SAME TIME THAT SOME AFRICAN AMERICANS WERE FINDING THAT RACIAL BARRIERS HAD FALLEN, MANY OTHERS WERE LIVING IN PLACES WHERE THE BARRIERS SEEMED INSURMOUNTABLE...**

*ARCHIVAL: SOUTH BRONX 1980s*

**[01:11:31]**

RONALD DAY: The poverty in my neighborhood was striking and it was pervasive. We were the ones who waited on the line for welfare cheese. And I knew I was poor, but it was embarrassing for me to have my mother send me to the store to go spend food stamps on food.

*ARCHIVAL: RONALD DAY PHOTOS AS A CHILD IN THE SOUTH BRONX*

**[01:11:51]**

**VO: RONALD DAY GREW UP IN THE SOUTH BRONX--IN AN ALMOST ENTIRELY BLACK NEIGHBORHOOD...**

**THE PEOPLE HE SAW GETTING AHEAD WEREN’T STARTING THEIR OWN CABLE TV COMPANIES…**

**THEY WERE SELLING DRUGS.**

**[01:12:09]**

GATES: Ron, paint a picture for me... What would we have seen here on the street in the middle of the day?

**[01:12:17]**

RONALD DAY: You had maybe five or six different crews dealing drugs, and so, there was a lot of competition, and so, one crew was on the corner, one crew was on the next corner, the other crew was up the block. I mean we were resigned to the fact that this was the neighborhood that we lived in.

**[01:12:32]**

GATES: Right.

**[01:12:33]**

RONALD DAY: And there was not much that we could do to change it.

**[01:12:36]**

**VO: BY THE TIME HE WAS FIFTEEN, RONALD HAD DROPPED OUT OF HIGH SCHOOL, AND WAS DEALING HEROIN...**

*RONALD DAY PERSONAL ARCHIVAL*

**[01:12:42]**

RONALD DAY: I didn’t see people who were going to school, earning a high school diploma and really doing well with their lives. So it was like, to what end do I stay in school? The law of the street was much more powerful than the classroom.

*RONALD DAY AND SKIP ON BENCH*

**[01:12:56]**

RONALD DAY: I went from making maybe fifty dollars a day… to making, a year or two later, maybe a couple thousand dollars a day...

**[01:13:04]**

GATES: A day?

**[01:13:05]**

RONALD DAY: Yes.

**[01:13:05]**

GATES: That’s a lot of money.

**[01:13:06]**

RONALD DAY: It is a lot of money. It is a lot of money for someone who’s 15, 16, 17 years old.

*ARCHIVAL: STILLS, FOOTAGE DEPICTING DRUG TRAFFIC AND DRUG USE*

**[01:13:12]**

**VO: THE MONEY GOT EVEN BETTER WHEN A NEW DRUG FLOODED THE MARKET: CRACK COCAINE.**

**CRACK PROVIDED AN INTENSE HIGH AT A LOW PRICE.**

**IT WAS FABULOUSLY PROFITABLE FOR RONALD’S BUSINESS--BUT DEVASTATING FOR HIS NEIGHBORHOOD…**

**[01:13:30]**

*BLACK MAN TALKING TO REPORTERS: “You can find crack in front of schools, in front of churches, in front of synagogues. You can buy crack when you can’t buy a bottle of milk.”*

**[01:13:37]**

*BLACK VETERAN TALKING TO REPORTERS: “You have no words to describe how bad it is. I’ve seen young mothers with babies in strollers and small toddlers at their skirt-tail buying crack in the neighborhood where I live.”*

**[01:13:49]**

RONALD DAY: The crack addict would purchase drugs and then be back an hour later.

**[01:13:54]**

GATES: And they wanted some more of that?

**[01:13:55]**

RONALD DAY: And they wanted some more.And... People had to get money on a regular basis in order to feed that habit. And so you took from your mother, you took from your father, you took from your children.*..*

**[01:14:04]**

GATES: Did part of you worry, feel guilty about the effect that this was having on the community?

**[01:14:11]**

RONALD DAY: I would say that I did feel guilty, but the feeling was fleeting. So I wasn’t outside making the observation about wow, look at what my behavior is doing, look at how I’m contributing to the harm that’s being done in my community. I never had the opportunity to do that type of reflection.All I knew was the drug culture and the drug life.

**[01:14:38]**

**VO: THE DRUG LIFE EVENTUALLY CAUGHT UP WITH RONALD DAY.**

**WHEN HE WAS TWENTY-FOUR, HE WAS CONVICTED OF ATTEMPTED MURDER, AS WELL AS DRUG AND WEAPONS CHARGES--AND SPENT FIFTEEN YEARS IN PRISON.**

**AT LEAST HE SURVIVED.**

**MANY OF HIS FRIENDS ENDED UP DEAD--KILLED IN TURF WARS BETWEEN RIVAL DRUG GANGS... LIKE COUNTLESS OTHERS IN CITIES ACROSS AMERICA...**

*ARCHIVAL: DRUG DEALS, CORONERS WITH BODY BAGS AND STRETCHERS*

**[01:15:05]**

*JOURNALIST: “As the drug trade has escalated, so has the violence. Virtually every night, police pick up bodies.”*

*ARCHIVAL: VIOLENCE, GUNS, WOUNDED PEOPLE TAKEN TO HOSPITAL*

*ARCHIVAL: DEAD BODIES BEING TAKEN AWAY BY POLICE & CORONERS*

**[01:15:12]**

JELANI COBB: We saw these epic death tolls, overwhelmingly black males in American cities, every major American city, in a way that people had not seen before.

**[01:15:23]**

*REPORTER VO: ‘Every night there are drive-by shootings and victims who are sometimes soldiers in this war but often not. Often they are innocents in the crossfire.’*

**[01:15:32]**

**VO: IT IS DIFFICULT TO ESTIMATE THE DEATH TOLL OF AMERICA’S DRUG TRADE.** **EVEN EXPERTS SAY THE CASUALTIES ARE UNCOUNTABLE.**

**BUT WHILE THE VIOLENCE WAS REAL--AND TERRIFYING--THE NEIGHBORHOODS THAT WERE MOST AFFECTED WERE FULL OF PEOPLE WHO WERE NEITHER DRUG DEALERS--NOR DRUG USERS.**

**AND SOME OF THEM BEGAN TO BAND TOGETHER TO FIGHT BACK...**

**[01:16:02]**

AL SHARPTON: People’s homes were being robbed, people were being robbed in the street. I was worried for my own mother. People wanted more policing. People wanted more protection.

**[01:16:13]**

*ARCHIVAL: AL SHARPTON AND PROTESTERS: “Get back crack! Get back crack! Save the babies! Close the crack house!”*

**[01:16:23]**

AL SHARPTON: We’d march out and I’d paint red Xs on the store to say, “They’re selling crack in here.”

**[01:16:29]**

*ARCHIVAL: PROTESTERS SHOUTING: “Stop cracking it up! Stop cracking it up. Next crack house!”*

**[01:16:42]**

AL SHARPTON: The idea of it was to expose. We know where the crack is. Why aren’t the police doing something about it?

**[01:16:53]**

**VO: ACTIVISTS SAW THE DRUG TRADE AS A SYMPTOM OF A MUCH LARGER PROBLEM... THEY CALLED FOR BETTER POLICING, SOCIAL SERVICES, JOBS PROGRAMS--AND MUCH MORE.**

**BUT THEIR CALLS WERE DROWNED OUT BY A DRUMBEAT OF SENSATIONALIZED ONE-DIMENSIONAL MEDIA STORIES…**

*ARCHIVAL: NEWSCAST ON CRACK NEIGHBORHOOD.*

**[01:17:12]**

*REPORTER VO: ‘This is the battlefield. As much a battlefield as the jungles of Vietnam. And this is the enemy. Dealers peddling deadly drugs…’*

**[01:17:20]**

AL SHARPTON:The media portrayed it as a black habit when it clearly was not limited to the black community. But the face of crack became black. And the street crime, black. And it really...as that image was constantly pounded in the American psyche, it was that image of making black and crack and crime synonymous is why they got away with then turning it into a high incarceration rate for blacks-- because people had been seeing that all these years.

**[01:18:00]**

**VO: THE DELUGE OF MEDIA STORIES ABOUT BLACK CRIME HAD AN EXTRAORDINARY EFFECT...**

**TURNING COMPLEX SOCIAL AND MEDICAL PROBLEMS INTO A “WAR ON DRUGS”...**

**A WAR JUSTIFIED--AND INTENSIFIED--BY ITS OWN RHETORIC...**

**[01:18:18]**

*ARCHIVAL Politician: “The death penalty is a deterrent. When you fry that drug dealer that caused the death of someone, that person is never going to come back.”*

**[01:18:28]**

*ARCHIVAL John Kerry: “If you’re going to wage a war against drugs, you’ve got to determine that you’re willing to do what’s necessary to give you the threshold of a true war.”*

**[01:18:37]**

*ARCHIVAL GEORGE H.W. BUSH: “Take my word for it: this scourge will stop”*

**[01:18:44]**

ERIC HOLDER: I was US Attorney here in Washington DC. And there was a real need for some kind of effective law enforcement response. But I think unfortunately what we did was come up with a response that didn’t think about the long-term consequences of what it is we were doing.

**[01:19:02]**

**VO: THE “WAR ON DRUGS” COMBINED MASSIVE INCREASES IN POLICE SPENDING WITH NEW SENTENCING LAWS THAT DISPROPORTIONATELY AFFECTED BLACK COMMUNITIES**.

**[01:19:13]**

SHERRILYN IFILL: A whole apparatus was created that essentially criminalized black men and criminalized them at a higher level for conduct that whites would also engage in. The most infamous example, of course, is the hundred to one ratio between crack and powder cocaine.

**[01:19:27]**

**VO: POWDER COCAINE AND CRACK WERE CHEMICALLY IDENTICAL. BUT CRACK WAS CHEAPER, MORE COMMON IN POOR NEIGHBORHOODS, AND UNDER THE NEW LAWS, PUNISHED MUCH MORE HARSHLY.**

**[01:19:40]**

*REPORTER VO: ‘There’s a mandatory five year prison term for selling 500 grams of powder, about a pound. But the same penalty applies for selling just five grams of crack—one hundred times less.’*

**[01:19:52]**

SHERRILYN IFILL: That had no pharmacological basis, had no logical basis, but it was understood that African-American men were more likely to be arrested for crack possession crimes than white men were. So the racial implications of it were well known when it was enacted, and yet it was done anyway.

**[01:20:10]**

**VO: FROM 1983 TO 1997, THE NUMBER OF AFRICAN AMERICANS INCARCERATED FOR DRUG OFFENSES GREW BY OVER TWO THOUSAND PERCENT....**

**THAT’S MORE THAN SIX TIMES THE RATE OF INCREASE FOR WHITE AMERICANS...**

**[01:20:27]**

ERIC HOLDER: Whites and blacks use drugs at roughly the same rates. How do you explain these unbelievable differences in the way in which white folks and black folks were treated? There was a certain callousness.

**[01:20:52]**

JAMES FORMAN JR.:There’s a policy response which is incredibly aggressive and incredibly intrusive and targets black communities--not for help, treatment, better schools, better job training programs. Instead black communities get one thing really and one thing only, which is more police and longer prison sentences.

*MUSIC CUE: NWA - FUCK THE POLICE*

**[01:21:21]**

*NWA: Fuck tha police*

*Comin straight from the underground*

*Young nigga got it bad 'cause I'm brown,*

*And not the other color. So police think*

*They have the authority to kill a minority*

**[01:21:27]**

**VO: AS THEIR NEIGHBORHOODS CAME UNDER SIEGE, YOUNG BLACK PEOPLE REFUSED TO BE SILENT.**

**THEY USED HIP HOP TO CALL OUT THE INJUSTICES THAT WERE ENGULFING THEIR COMMUNITIES...**

**WITH HARSH LANGUAGE DESIGNED TO MATCH THE BRUTALITY THEY SAW ALL AROUND THEM...**

**[01:21:44]**

HASAN JEFFRIES:I remember going down to Morehouse College, and hearing for the first time in the dormitory Ice Cube and NWA and the lyrics. Talking about “nigga this” and “nigga that” and just being shocked. Like, what the hell is going on? What is this?

**[01:22:02]**

*ARCHIVAL ICE-T VIDEO: “Damn right I’m a nigga!”*

**[01:22:03]**

*ARCHIVAL ICE-T interview: “We were like the voices from down here in the hood yelling out to you on a rap record.”*

**[01:22:07]**

*ARCHIVAL ICE-T video: “Black people might get mad cause they don’t see they’re looked upon as a nigga just like me, I’m a nigga...”*

**[01:22:11]**

**VO: THE MEDIA TERMED THIS NEW MUSIC “GANGSTA RAP.”**

**MANY OF THE ARTISTS SIMPLY CALLED IT “REALITY RAP”...**

**[01:22:21]**

BRITTNEY COOPER: The thing is, these songs had a political critique. It was important in that moment. This was the ability of black youth to talk back to these policies that were making their lives unlivable. I don’t think they were positive images, but I think they were valuable representations that told us about parts of black life we weren’t talking about.

**[01:22:38]**

MICHAEL ERIC DYSON: They’re listening to Tupac say, “Just the other day I got

lynched by some crooked cops, and to this day, them same cops on the beat getting major pay. But when I get my check, they taking tax out, so we’re paying the cops to knock the blacks out.” So here’s Tupac giving them a lesson in Economics 101, and America’s going, “Wait a minute. There’s some intelligence here. There’s some insight here.”

*ARCHIVAL: TUPAC SHAKUR INTERVIEW*

**[01:23:01]**

*TUPAC: “We shouldn’t be angry? My raps that I’m rappin’ to my community shouldn’t be filled with rage? You know what I’m saying? They shouldn’t be filled with the same atrocities that they gave to me? In the media, they don’t talk about it. So on my raps, I have to talk about it.”*

**[01:23:14]**

**VO: MOST GANGSTA RAP WAS WRITTEN BY YOUNG BLACK PEOPLE--BARELY OUT OF THEIR TEENS--YET IT QUICKLY BECAME A GLOBAL SENSATION...**

**BUT NOT ALL OF THE MUSIC WAS A CRITIQUE OF INNER CITY NEGLECT.**

**MUCH OF IT DEPICTED A SOCIAL WORLD THAT SEEMED--TO SOME-- MISOGYNISTIC AND DEEPLY AMORAL…**

**AND AS IT BECAME INCREASINGLY POPULAR, MANY AFRICAN AMERICANS WERE HORRIFIED… THEY WORRIED THAT IT WAS GLAMORIZING THE DESTRUCTION OF BLACK COMMUNITIES...**

**AND REINFORCING LONGSTANDING RACIST STEREOTYPES...**

**[01:24:00]**

HASAN JEFFRIES: When the only thing that you’re hearing becomes that which is most derogatory, that which is most demeaning towards black women, that which is celebrating death and destruction. The images that are being projected are problematic because there is no counterbalance.

**[01:24:20]**

JAMES BRAXTON PETERSON: There’s an entire economy around criminalizing black men. If you’re making a TV show, a rap song, or a movie about black people behaving badly it’s much more likely that it’s going to sell and do well than about more complex, nuanced depictions of black life.

**[01:24:40]**

*ARCHIVAL C. DELORES TUCKER: “We, African-American women particularly, are tired of being called ho’s, bitches and sluts by our children who are paid to do this by Time Warner.”*

**[01:24:54]**

*ARCHIVAL REVEREND CALVIN BUTTS: “We're not against rap. We're not against rappers. But we are against those thugs who disgrace our community, our women, who disgrace our culture. And who have absolutely nothing of redemptive value to offer except the legacy of violence and sexual assault and foul language.”*

**[01:25:20]**

JAMES BRAXTON PETERSON: It’s not that they’re saying don’t air our dirty laundry. What they’re saying is be conscious of the fact that there is a tremendous American appetite for black pathology and what the consequences of that appetite means in our communities.

**[01:25:31]**

*ARCHIVAL JESSE JACKSON: “Somehow I get the impression that the basic white mass media wants to focus on rap and not reality. And I say, if you're gonna cover violence, cover reality and not just rap, rap is an extension of the culture. Let's break up the violence in the culture. And I hope y'all put that on camera because that's real. Don't just pick and choose stuff out of here to fit me on one side and the rappers on the other. These are our children in trouble, they are in pain.”*

**[01:26:03]**

**VO: THE DEBATE OVER RAP MUSIC WAS INTENSELY EMOTIONAL BECAUSE THE STAKES SEEMED SO HIGH.**

*ARCHIVAL: 1980s URBAN NEIGHBORHOODS*

**[01:26:10]**

**VO: AS THE 1990s BEGAN, THE POOREST AFRICAN AMERICANS WERE FALLING EVER FURTHER BEHIND.**

**AND THERE WAS NO CONSENSUS ABOUT HOW TO HELP.**

**INDEED, SOME WERE BEGINNING TO FEEL THAT POOR BLACK PEOPLE HAD ALREADY RECEIVED TOO MUCH HELP--AND NEEDED, INSTEAD, TO FOCUS ON THEIR OWN BEHAVIOR...**

**[01:26:33]**

ARMSTRONG WILLIAMS: If you look at the Jewish community and the Muslim community, they don’t have the kind of issues that the black community has because they never allowed the government to take over their lives. They were involved in their child’s education, they were involved in their child’s discipline. What is happening is with these Welfare programs, they’ve conceded so many other things. The babies, the absentee fathers, the crime, the drugs and there’s just no way you can put the genie back in the bottle.

*ARCHIVAL: NAACP MEETING*

**[01:26:59]**

*ARCHIVAL PASTOR: The hopelessness, the despair that permeate many of our inner city neighborhoods have caused some of us to turn on ourselves, rather than turn into ourselves.*

**[01:27:11]**

**VO: BLACK AMERICA WAS NOW ENGAGED IN A HEATED DISPUTE OVER THE QUESTION OF WHERE GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE POOR ENDED--AND PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY BEGAN.**

**THE DISPUTE WOULD SOON BOIL OVER ON A VERY PUBLIC STAGE...**

*ARCHIVAL: HEADLINES ABOUT THURGOOD MARSHALL RETIRING FROM SUPREME COURT*

**[01:27:30]**

**VO: IN 1991, THURGOOD MARSHALL, A CIVIL RIGHTS HERO, ANNOUNCED HIS RETIREMENT FROM THE UNITED STATES SUPREME COURT...**

*ARCHIVAL: BUSH PRESS CONFERENCE WITH CLARENCE THOMAS*

**[01:27:41]**

**VO: TO FILL THE VACANCY, PRESIDENT GEORGE BUSH TAPPED CONSERVATIVE APPEALS COURT JUDGE CLARENCE THOMAS.**

**UNLIKE MARSHALL, THOMAS DIDN’T BELIEVE THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SHOULD ADVOCATE FOR AFRICAN AMERICANS--OR ANY RACIAL GROUP.**

**TO MANY, HIS NOMINATION WAS DEEPLY TROUBLING...**

**[01:28:05]**

KIMBERLÉ CRENSHAW: The Supreme Court was important because they backed up the demands of African Americans for greater access to the political sphere. They backed up demands for the African American community for greater access to employment, for greater access to education, to housing. Well, now, the very institution that backs us up is going to have an African American who says, actually, you know, you don’t have to worry about that stuff anymore.

*ARCHIVAL: MAGAZINE COVERS ABOUT THOMAS’ CONSERVATISM.*

**[01:28:35]**

**VO: THOMAS GREW UP IN RURAL GEORGIA DURING THE WANING YEARS OF JIM CROW…**

**HE KNEW POVERTY FIRST-HAND. AND HE’D SEEN HOW THE GOVERNMENT COULD HELP LIFT PEOPLE OUT OF IT: HE’D BENEFITTED TREMENDOUSLY FROM AFFIRMATIVE ACTION.**

**BUT JUDGE THOMAS DIDN’T SEE IT THAT WAY...**

*ARCHIVAL: THOMAS INTERVIEW*

**[01:28:55]**

*CLARENCE THOMAS: “It is expected that we all have the same basic belief, that we believe in certain social programs that are supposed to help black people, and we are not supposed to question these programs.”*

**[01:29:11]**

**VO: THOMAS WAS PART OF A SMALL, BUT GROWING WAVE OF BLACK CONSERVATIVES.**

**HE BELIEVED THAT AFRICAN AMERICANS WERE BEING HURT BY MISGUIDED GOVERNMENT POLICIES--LIKE WELFARE AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION.**

**[01:29:26]**

LEAH WRIGHT RIGUEUR: Clarence Thomas says that affirmative action makes African-Americans feel inferior. They are constantly led to believe that they are unqualified, so it really undermines them once they get to the highest level of things, right. Am I looking around and saying, "Do I deserve to be here? Was I only chosen because I'm black? Am I a token?"

**[01:29:47]**

*NEWS ANCHOR: “In a divisive debate, the National Bar Association voted Thomas down--as did the NAACP.”*

**[01:29:54]**

**VO: CIVIL RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS EXPRESSED OPPOSITION TO THOMAS’S NOMINATION--AND THE CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS REFUSED TO ENDORSE HIM.**

*ARCHIVAL: CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS PRESS CONFERENCE*

**[01:30:03]**

*CONGRESSMAN: “This nomination is a matter of the refutation of the very principles of justice and freedom for which so many gave their lives during the Civil Rights movement in this country.”*

**[01:30:17]**

**VO: IN THE END, THOMAS’S IDEAS WERE NEVER DEBATED BY THE SENATE IN A MEANINGFUL WAY.**

**INSTEAD, THE CONFIRMATION PROCESS BECAME TRANSFORMED WHEN LAW PROFESSOR ANITA HILL--A FORMER COLLEAGUE OF THOMAS’S--ACCUSED HIM OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT…**

*ARCHIVAL: HEADLINES*

*ARCHIVAL: ANITA HILL TAKES OATH*

**[01:30:43]**

**VO: HILL’S ALLEGATIONS TRIGGERED AN INTENSE DEBATE AMONG BLACK LEADERS...**

*ARCHIVAL: ARMSTRONG WILLIAMS PRESS CONFERENCE*

**[01:30:47]**

*ARMSTRONG WILLIAMS: You just don’t have ordinary Blacks in this courtroom. You have very well educated Blacks from Yale Law School, from Holy Cross. The de la cream of the crop. And if they’re in the courtroom bickering over this nonsense, what kind of message are we sending to our younger generation?*

*ARCHIVAL: PHOTOS OF THOMAS AND HILL WORKING AT THE EEOC*

**[01:31:06]**

**VO: ARMSTRONG WILLIAMS HAD WORKED CLOSELY WITH CLARENCE THOMAS AND ANITA HILL--AND CONSIDERED THEM BOTH HIS FRIENDS. BUT AS THE HEARINGS UNFOLDED, HE THREW HIS SUPPORT BEHIND JUDGE THOMAS...**

**[01:31:19]**

ARMSTRONG WILLIAMS: I really liked Anita. Anita was really good people. But Justice Thomas and I are…he’s my hero. He’s my mentor.

*ARCHIVAL: ARMSTRONG WILLIAMS PRESS CONFERENCE*

**[01:31:30]**

*ARMSTRONG WILLIAMS: “It must stop, we must stop this sensationalism. There is something wrong about this. Chairman Thomas is innocent.”*

**[01:31:37]**

ARMSTRONG WILLIAMS: I became Malcolm X at that time. By any means necessary we would get him on the court.

**[01:31:45]**

**VO: WILLIAMS JOINED A CHORUS OF CONSERVATIVES WHO CLAIMED THAT HILL WAS PART OF A LIBERAL CONSPIRACY--EVEN THOUGH SHE ACTUALLY SHARED MANY OF THOMAS’ POLITICAL VIEWS.**

**BUT THE CRITICISM DIDN’T STOP HER FROM TESTIFYING...**

*ARCHIVAL: ANITA HILL TESTIMONY*

**[01:32:01]**

*ANITA HILL: His conversations were very vivid. He spoke about acts that he had seen and pornographic films involving such matters as women having sex with animals and films showing group sex or rape scenes.*

**[01:32:19]**

**VO: THOMAS REFUSED TO BACK DOWN.**

**INSTEAD, HE SHIFTED THE TERMS OF THE HEARING--PORTRAYING *HIMSELF* AS A VICTIM OF RACISM...**

*ARCHIVAL: CLARENCE THOMAS TESTIMONY*

**[01:32:28]**

*CLARENCE THOMAS: “This is a circus. It’s a national disgrace. And from my standpoint, as a black American, as far as I’m concerned it is a high tech lynching for uppity blacks who in any way deign to think for themselves.”*

**[01:32:47]**

HASAN JEFFRIES: Right there, he’s invoking a call for solidarity. Because who’s not going to defend a lynching, or those who were trying to lynch a black man?

**[01:32:59]**

ARMSTRONG WILLIAMS: It was war. And in war, use every weapon at your disposal, okay. A lot of Republicans did not like the fact that Thomas was using this language. But it was Thomas’s life and credibility on the line. It was Thomas who was being humiliated. You’ve got to do what you’ve got to do.

**[01:33:16]**

*ARCHIVAL: WOMEN MARCH IN DC CHANTING, ‘WE SUPPORT THOMAS!’*

**[01:33:20]**

**VO: THOMAS’S STRATEGY PROVED EXTREMELY EFFECTIVE.**

**POLLS SHOWED HE WAS RECEIVING ENOUGH SUPPORT FROM AFRICAN AMERICANS TO ALLOW REPUBLICAN SENATORS TO KEEP PUSHING HIS NOMINATION FORWARD, EVEN AS MOST CIVIL RIGHTS GROUPS CONTINUED TO OPPOSE HIM...**

**[01:33:38]**

KIMBERLÉ CRENSHAW:When has an African American man ever been lynched over anything that he’s ever done to a black woman? I mean, what kind of history is that coming from? It’s not a history that we ever lived, but it did the work that it was supposed to do. Millions of African Americans were able to completely write Anita Hill out of the race. And some people actually called for that literally. Some people actually said Anita Hill should be shot for what she’s doing to Clarence Thomas.

*ARCHIVAL: ANITA HILL PRESS CONFERENCE*

**[01:34:08]**

*ANITA HILL: “Words simply cannot express the kind of anguish that I have experienced over the past several days.”*

**[01:34:16]**

VINCE BROWN: There has been a strain of Black Nationalism that’s “My people, do or die.” So even Clarence Thomas, he was one of ours.As one of ours, we shouldn’t be criticizing him, especially when he’s about to earn this high position. There is also, frankly, the sexist component of it.A black woman criticizing a black man of high position is automatically betraying the race.

*ARCHIVAL: MAGAZINES, NEWSPAPERS ETC. ABOUT THE HEARINGS*

*ARCHIVAL: THOMAS SWEARING IN CEREMONY*

**[01:34:42]**

*JUSTICE: “Repeat after me: “I, Clarence Thomas…””*

**[01:34:48]**

ARMSTRONG WILLIAMS: They backed down. Yes, they did. And had he not used that language he would not be on the court today. So I say amen.

*ARCHIVAL: THOMAS SWEARING IN CEREMONY*

**[01:34:57]**

**VO: IN THE TWO DECADES SINCE HIS CONFIRMATION, JUSTICE THOMAS HAS HELPED ROLL BACK GOVERNMENT SUPPORT FOR AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AND SOCIAL WELFARE PROGRAMS.**

**WHILE IMPLYING THAT AFRICAN AMERICANS SHOULD TAKE PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THEIR OWN PROGRESS.**

**YET IT IS NOT AT ALL CLEAR THAT POOR INDIVIDUAL CHOICES ARE THE MAIN OBSTACLE TO BLACK PROGRESS.**

**INSTEAD, TOO OFTEN, IT HAS SEEMED THAT RACISM--WOVEN DEEP INTO THE FABRIC OF OUR SOCIETY--POSES A GREATER THREAT...**

*ARCHIVAL: RODNEY KING BEATING VIDEO*

**[01:35:36]**

*ARCHIVAL NEWS ANCHOR:* ***“****The FBI today is investigating an explosive case in Southern California involving white policemen and a black motorist. Los Angeles Police Officers pulled over a car they said was travelling in excess of the speed limit. What you’re seeing is what happened after that.”*

**[01:35:52]**

**VO: THE RODNEY KING BEATING MADE AMERICA’S RACIAL TROUBLES CLEAR--EVEN TO SOME IN THE LAPD....**

**[01:35:59]**

STEPHANY POWELL: I saw it on TV and my heart just stopped. This was proof that um, police brutality was alive and well, and there was this expectation, now somebody’s gonna do something about it, and when…

**[01:36:16]**

GATES: They have to do something about it because the whole world can see it.

**[01:36:18]**

STEPHANY POWELL: Can see it…you could see it right there. It’s…it’s caught on tape.

*ARCHIVAL: STEPHANY POWELL IN HER LAPD UNIFORM*

**[01:36:22]**

**VO: STEPHANY POWELL WAS AN OFFICER IN THE LOS ANGELES POLICE DEPARTMENT WHEN THE KING VIDEO CAME TO LIGHT. WATCHING IT, SHE WAS TORN...**

**[01:36:34]**

STEPHANY POWELL: Being African-American and being a police officer you’re making this attempt to fit in-between two worlds and be loyal to both, so being loyal to your race and at the same time being loyal to the department that you serve.

**[01:36:51]**

GATES: When you saw the video, did you think, ‘I didn’t know this happened,’ or ‘Oh, my God, they got caught!”

**[01:36:56]**

STEPHANY POWELL: I think it was more so of ‘Oh, my God, we’re going to have a serious situation here....’

*ARCHIVAL: TRIAL OF KING BEATING OFFICERS*

**[01:37:08]**

*ARCHIVAL FEMALE NEWS ANCHOR: “A controversial case involving four Los Angeles Police Officers goes to court today. The officers face charges stemming from the videotaped beating of a motorist. The case has already raised accusations of officially sanctioned racism and brutality.”*

*ARCHIVAL: PEOPLE WATCHING KING VIDEO*

**[01:37:22]**

*ARCHIVAL WOMAN: “He was down, he was unarmed… They didn’t have to do that!”*

**[01:37:27]**

**VO: THE HARD EVIDENCE OF THE VIDEOTAPE ILLUMINATED TWO RADICALLY DIFFERENT PERCEPTIONS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BLACK PEOPLE AND THE POLICE…**

**[01:37:37]**

JELANI COBB: Depending upon your vantage point, this is an innocent black man. Or these are police doing what you need police to do to prevent people like him from getting into your community and invariably doing some wrong. And those are two completely different realities.

**[01:37:58]**

**VO: BUT THE TAPE DIDN’T PRODUCE THE RESULTS MOST AFRICAN AMERICANS HAD HOPED FOR...**

*ARCHIVAL: LOS ANGELES COURTROOM*

**[01:38:04]**

*ARCHIVAL JUDGE: “…find the defendant not guilty of the crime of assault by force likely to produce great bodily injury.”*

**[01:38:11]**

STEPHANY POWELL: When the verdict came in, I hear the cheer go up when the officers are exonerated, and I just looked over at my uh…one of the other black officers, but we didn’t say anything. We didn’t need to say anything. We both knew at the same time what it was we were feeling… And what we were feeling was… this is not gonna go too well.

*ARCHIVAL: L.A. RIOTS BREAK OUT*

*ARCHIVAL: RIOTS, BURNING BUILDINGS, ETC. IN LA*

**[01:38:47]**

*ARCHIVAL NEWSCASTER: South Central is responding with fury to the acquittal of four Los Angeles Police Officers.*

**[01:38:53]**

*ARCHIVAL NEWSCASTER: In South Central Los Angeles, the situation appears to have gotten worse there. You know we cannot send camera crews in those areas because it’s just too dangerous at this point.*

*EXT: GATES AND POWELL DRIVING*

**[01:39:04]**

STEPHANY POWELL: It was heartbreaking to watch. Because I was living in South Central LA during the riots. And I started seeing landmarks that I knew as a child start to burn…

**[01:39:19]**

**VO: I REMEMBER FEELING SHOCKED BY THEIR VERDICT, BUT NOT BY THE ENSUING RIOTS...**

**THEY REFLECTED SOMETHING VERY DEEP AND PAINFUL.**

**[01:39:33]**

VINCE BROWN:When those guys were exonerated, you just thought, ‘What’s it all for, right?’ I mean, are we ever going to find justice here? All the Civil Rights Movement, all the Black Power Movement, and everything that’s come before… You’re that vulnerable. To a lynch mob of police--and they’re going to get away scot-free.

**[01:39:53]**

HASAN JEFFRIES: The response to the acquittal, the fury, the anger, the frustration is because of the visual evidence. It’s like, how did you not see what I saw?

**[01:40:03]**

AVA DUVERNAY: I grew up in Compton and South Central. That was a real shattering at that time as a young person, in that place, from that place, when you can have evidence of this kind of assault and yet, uhm, you know, yet it doesn’t matter.

**[01:40:19]**

**VO: THE RIOTING EXPRESSED BLACK AMERICA’S FRUSTRATION AT OUR CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM AS BOTH SIGN AND SYMBOL OF OUR NATION’S SYSTEMIC RACISM.**

**BUT MANY WHITE AMERICANS SAW ONLY POINTLESS DESTRUCTION…**

**IT REVEALED A PROFOUND DIVIDE BETWEEN THE EXPERIENCES OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE.**

**AND AS TIME PASSED, THIS DIVIDE WOULD ONLY GROW…**

*ARCHIVAL: SIMPSON CAR CHASE*

**[01:40:47]**

*ARCHIVAL NEWS REPORTER: ‘Now we’re following somebody that we’ve all loved for so long, that’s been accused of some terrible crimes...’*

*ARCHIVAL: OJ GETTING OUT OF A POLICE VAN IN A PRISON OUTFIT*

**[01:40:58]**

**VO: OJ SIMPSON’S ARREST ON SUSPICION OF MURDER, JUST TWO YEARS AFTER THE LA RIOTS, EXPOSED THE SAME RACIAL FAULT LINE BETWEEN WHITE AND BLACK AMERICA...**

**DEEPENING THE SENSE THAT WE SEEMED TO BE LIVING IN TWO SEPARATE WORLDS…**

*ARCHIVAL: PEOPLE WATCHING THE OJ SIMPSON TRIAL ON TV.*

**[01:41:15]**

**VO: SIMPSON WAS ONE OF THE FIRST BLACK CROSS-OVER CELEBRITIES... A MAN WHOSE SUCCESS AND POPULARITY APPEARED TO DEFY RACE...**

**BUT AS HIS TRIAL UNFOLDED, IT BECAME OBVIOUS THAT RACE WAS VERY MUCH A FACTOR.**

*ARCHIVAL: PEOPLE READING THE PAPER WITH OJ ON THE COVER*

**[01:41:34]**

HASAN JEFFRIES:For white Americans it’s a trial of guilt or innocence of one man, OJ Simpson. For African-Americans, it’s a trial of the legitimacy of the criminal justice system.

**[01:41:48]**

**VO: THE ISSUE TOOK CENTER STAGE WHEN OJ’S DEFENSE TEAM BEGAN TO FOCUS ON THE CONDUCT OF THE POLICE...**

*ARCHIVAL: SIMPSON TRIAL*

**[01:41:54]**

*ARCHIVAL BAILIFF: “The People called Detective Mark Fuhrman…”*

**[01:41:56]**

*ARCHIVAL ANNOUNCER #1: “Suddenly, Fuhrman is the most famous cop in America. Not because he found the bloody glove on OJ Simpson’s estate, but because of inferences that he planted it there. Motivated by racial hatred.”*

**[01:42:09]**

*ARCHIVAL ANNOUNCER #2: “Fuhrman used racial epithets and talked of framing people, fudging police reports.”*

*ARCHIVAL: MARK FUHRMAN TESTIMONY*

**[01:42:15]**

*ARCHIVAL ATTORNEY: “Detective Fuhrman, did you plant or manufacture any evidence in this case?”*

**[01:42:22]**

*ARCHIVAL DETECTIVE FUHRMAN: “I assert my fifth amendment privilege.”*

**[01:42:26]**

**VO: EVIDENCE OF RACISM ON THE PART OF THE LAPD CONFIRMED THE BLACK COMMUNITY‘S BELIEF THAT THE POLICE COULD NOT BE TRUSTED.**

**AND SOWED DOUBT ABOUT SIMPSON’S GUILT.**

**[01:42:37]**

*ARCHIVAL AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMAN ON STREET: “Because, you know, he’s a black person, naturally I feel he’s not going to get a fair trial.”*

**[01:42:42]**

*ARCHIVAL AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMAN ON STREET: “Race is always an issue when it comes to crime.”*

**[01:42:46]**

*ARCHIVAL REPORTER: “Do you think he can get a fair trial?”*

**[01:42:48]**

*ARCHIVAL AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMAN ON STREET: “No. This is the nature of the system. This is the way the system works in this country. It does not work for us, not at all.”*

**[01:42:55]**

*ARCHIVAL AFRICAN AMERICAN MAN: “I truly believe this was a frame-up.”*

**[01:42:58]**

AVA DUVERNAY: They replaced, you know, the image of OJ with the image of all the black men who have been set up, people that they know, brothers that they know... so, yeah, I mean you can talk to many people who are like, “No, he didn’t do it,” you know, “This was a set up.”

*ARCHIVAL: SIMPSON TRIES ON A GLOVE THAT DOESN’T FIT*

**[01:43:12]**

**VO: MANY WHITE AMERICANS SAW THE SAME EVIDENCE, BUT CAME TO A VERY DIFFERENT CONCLUSION...**

**[01:43:19]**

*ARCHIVAL WHITE WOMAN ON STREET: “From all of the information that I’ve heard on television, I just assume that he’s guilty.”*

**[01:43:24]**

*ARCHIVAL WHITE MAN ON STREET: “Guilty. Guilty as sin. There’s so much evidence!”*

*ARCHIVAL: PEOPLE WAITING FOR THE OJ VERDICT*

**[01:43:29]**

**VO: ON OCTOBER 3rd, 1995, AS THE WORLD WAITED IN SUSPENSE FOR THE VERDICT, OUR NATION’S RACIAL DIVIDE WAS OUT IN THE OPEN, PLAIN AS DAY...**

**BUT WHAT HAPPENED NEXT STUNNED EVERYBODY...**

*ARCHIVAL: READING OF SIMPSON VERDICT*

**[01:43:47]**

*MRS. ROBINSON: ‘We, the jury, and the above and title action find the defendant--Orenthal James Simpson not guilty of the crime of murder.’*

*ARCHIVAL: PEOPLE IN TIMES SQUARE REACT TO SIMPSON VERDICT*

**[01:43:56]**

**VO: FOR A BRIEF MOMENT, AFRICAN AMERICANS FELT A COLLECTIVE SENSE OF VINDICATION...**

*ARCHIVAL: OJ SIMPSON EMBRACING JOHNNIE COCHRAN AND TALKING TO EACH OTHER*

**[01:44:04]**

BRITTNEY COOPER:They put on the TVs in the classroom, and let us watch the verdict. All of the white kids come out of the doors, and they’re just shaking their heads, and you literally saw black kids run out of the doors jumping…It was such a clear distinction. Many of us were friends, and we hung out, but those were those touch moments, those moments that rubbed away the surface, and you saw that there was a real difference in the way that we perceived race relations in the country.

**[01:44:36]**

VINCE BROWN:For a lot of black people, this was about a system that had gotten away with murder for so long finally meeting some kind of limit. Never mind that he happens to be rich and have a great legal team and you’re never going to get that kind of justice, if you want to call it that. The point was finally the system had met some kind of limit.

**[01:44:56]**

BRITTNEY COOPER: This is the problem of racism in the country, is that it ethically messes us up, right? That because of these past histories of racism and the failure to address and deal with them, then we can see an injustice…and our sense of justice is, ‘You’ve got to give us one; you owe us one.’

**[01:45:14]**

**VO: WHILE THE OJ VERDICT EXPOSED THE PERSISTENCE OF AMERICA’S RACIAL DIVISIONS, IT ACTUALLY CAME AT A TIME WHEN MANY AFRICAN AMERICANS HAD SUBSTANTIAL REASONS TO FEEL OPTIMISTIC...**

*ARCHIVAL: MAYA ANGELOU READS POEM ‘ON THE PULSE OF MORNING’ AT CLINTON INAUGURATION*

**[01:45:27]**

*ARCHIVAL MAYA ANGELOU:* “*History, despite its wrenching pain,*

*Cannot be unlived. But if faced with courage,*

*Need not be lived again*

*Lift up your eyes on this day breaking for you”*

**[01:45:42]**

**VO: BY THE MID-1990s, AMERICA WAS IN THE MIDST OF AN ECONOMIC BOOM, PRESIDED OVER BY PRESIDENT BILL CLINTON--A DEMOCRAT ELECTED WITH THE OVERWHELMING SUPPORT OF BLACK VOTERS…**

**[01:45:55]**

DONNA BRAZILE: Bill Clinton was surrounded by black people. I think he was surrounded by black people from the moment he was born. He’s so comfortable around black people that often you look at him and say to yourself, “Okay, really?”

**[01:46:09]**

ERIC HOLDER: There was at some really base visceral level a connection that existed between the president and the African American community. He was a person who promised to do a great many things and did do a great many things.

**[01:46:26]**

**VO: CLINTON APPOINTED AN UNPRECEDENTED NUMBER OF AFRICAN AMERICANS TO HIGH POSITIONS IN HIS ADMINISTRATION.**

**AND UNDER HIS ECONOMIC POLICIES, THE INCOMES OF BLACK MIDDLE CLASS FAMILIES ROSE... AND THE BLACK ELITE SAW ITS FORTUNES IMPROVE DRAMATICALLY.**

**AND BLACK CULTURE CONTINUED TO FLOURISH...**

*ARCHIVAL: LAUREN HILL WINNING A GRAMMY, ETC, DENZEL AND WHOOPI WINNING OSCARS...*

**[01:46:48]**

AVA DUVERNAY: That time was just so, so great. I came of age in the best time, for pop culture, for black people. I mean literally, it was the music was amazing, in the early ‘90s. It was the golden age of hip-hop. It was also the golden age of black cinema.

**[01:47:03]**

JAMES BRAXTON PETERSON: Do the Right Thing. Boyz n the Hood. Menace II Society. Oh, man. Where’s that moment? Can we go back to that moment in terms of films?

**[01:47:12]**

**VO: THIS ERA WAS MARKED BY A WAVE OF BLACK FILMMAKERS TELLING THEIR OWN STORIES…**

**[01:47:17]**

*ARCHIVAL: "Max has a meeting with Clarence Thomas next week"*

**[01:47:20]**

**TELEVISION SHOWS CENTERED AROUND BLACK CHARACTERS...**

**[01:47:26]**

*ARCHIVAL WILL SMITH IN MEN IN BLACK: “I make this look good.”*

**[01:47:28]**

**AND HOLLYWOOD BLOCKBUSTERS BRINGING BLACK STARS INTO EVERY THEATER IN AMERICA.**

*ARCHIVAL: HIGH ENERGY MONTAGE OF BLOCKBUSTER SUCCESS OF WILL SMITH, HALLE BERRY, DENZEL WASHINGTON, SAMUEL JACKSON, WESLEY SNIPES, ETC…*

**[01:47:34]**

**VO: BUT ALL THIS SUCCESS BROUGHT LITTLE TO HELP THOSE WHO NEEDED IT MOST...**

**[01:47:43]**

**VO: EVEN PRESIDENT CLINTON COULD PROVIDE FEW ANSWERS FOR THE AFRICAN AMERICANS WHO STILL LIVED IN HARDCORE POVERTY.**

**AND AS TIME PASSED, UNDER PRESSURE FROM POLITICAL OPPONENTS, HIS ADMINISTRATION ADOPTED POLICIES THAT SEEMED TO SUGGEST THAT POOR PEOPLE WERE LARGELY RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR OWN CONDITION...**

**AN IDEA THAT FELL ESPECIALLY HARD ON BLACK AMERICA.**

**[01:48:10]**

MARY PATTILLO: What we see during the Clinton era is this emphasis on what individuals should do. So in welfare, in immigration, in crime, and in housing, he was a personal responsibility Democrat.

*ARCHIVAL: CLINTON SIGNS 1994 CRIME BILL*

**[01:48:27]**

*ARCHIVAL BILL CLINTON: “This bill puts government on the side of those who abide by the law, not those who break it.”*

**[01:48:33]**

**VO: IN 1994, CLINTON SIGNED NEW CRIME LEGISLATION THAT PUT ANOTHER HUNDRED THOUSAND POLICE OFFICERS ON THE STREET, ADDED A FEDERAL THREE-STRIKES PROVISION, AND POURED BILLIONS OF DOLLARS INTO THE CONSTRUCTION OF MORE PRISONS.**

**[01:48:50]**

LESTER SPENCE: The Omnibus Crime Bill was, at the time, the largest piece of crime legislation ever passed. If you look at the slope of incarceration, it goes up. It’s not straight - it’s not like a straight line from ’72 to now. It’s a curve. And that curve really starts to curve up under Clinton’s watch.

**[01:49:11]**

DONNA BRAZILE: I think they went too far. It was a tough-on-crime era. I mean, part of the Republican mantra was “Low taxes, smaller government, and tough on crime.” Bill Clinton tried to out-tough the Republicans. And as you know, recently he basically said, “I made a mistake.”

*ARCHIVAL: STILLS OF PRISONS*

**[01:49:28]**

**VO: ALMOST A QUARTER OF A MILLION MORE PEOPLE WERE INCARCERATED DURING BILL CLINTON’S PRESIDENCY THAN RONALD REAGAN’S...**

**AND A DISPROPORTIONATE NUMBER OF THEM WERE BLACK.**

**BY THE LATE 1990S, AFRICAN AMERICAN MEN--JUST 6% OF THE GENERAL POPULATION--MADE UP NEARLY HALF OF ALL INMATES.**

**LEAVING A TERRIBLE VACUUM IN BLACK COMMUNITIES.**

**[01:49:57]**

CORNEL WEST: It’s resulted in the disempowerment of their families, of communities. It’s resulted in a tearing apart of the bonds. And it’s resulted in an escalating sense of depression and despair when you’re locked in, in that way.

**[01:50:21]**

AL SHARPTON:You’re talking about my friends. We couldn’t have reunions because there wasn’t nobody there. Everybody was locked up or dead. And connected from the War on Drugs to just locking us up, just locking us up. If I hadn’t been in the church I probably would’ve been one of them to go down because mostly everybody else I knew did.

*ARCHIVAL: MILLION MAN MARCH BUSES ARRIVING, ETC., SOTs*

**[01:50:50]**

**VO: UNWILLING TO GIVE INTO DESPAIR, BLACK MEN TRIED TO COME TOGETHER...**

**[01:50:59]**

*ARCHIVAL CROWD CHANTS: “We are black! We are black!”*

**[01:51:03]**

*ARCHIVAL DICK GREGORY: “I love you! As of ten o’clock this morning, we reached one million black men!”*

**[01:51:15]**

JAMES BRAXTON PETERSON:I don’t remember it as some kind of conscious decision to go. I mean it was the Million Man March. I’m a black man, every black man was going.

**[01:51:24]**

**VO: ON OCTOBER 16th, 1995, AFRICAN AMERICAN MEN FROM ALL WALKS OF LIFE CONVERGED ON WASHINGTON, DC--DRAWN TOGETHER BY A SHARED SENSE THAT SOMETHING NEEDED TO CHANGE...**

**[01:51:38]**

*ARCHIVAL MAN #2: “This is about respect, unity and love for the brothers. I mean, we’re trying to get something out of this, out of life. We’re tired of being behind everything, we want to be in charge sometime. We want to unify and that’s what this is about. I mean, look at all these brothers around here.”*

**[01:51:52]**

**IT WAS ONE OF THE LARGEST BLACK POLITICAL DEMONSTRATIONS IN AMERICAN HISTORY …**

**[01:51:59]**

HENRY LOUIS GATES: What was it like? What did it feel like?

**[01:52:02]**

JAMES BRAXTON PETERSON: Black men everywhere, like, literally everywhere.

**[01:52:06]**

**VO: JAMES PETERSON WAS A TWENTY-FOUR YEAR OLD GRADUATE STUDENT AT THE TIME. FROM THE MOMENT HE ARRIVED, HE WAS SHOCKED BY THE SHEER SIZE OF THE CROWD…**

**[01:52:16]**

GATES: It was astonishing.

**[01:52:17]**

JAMES BRAXTON PETERSON: It was astonishing. Remember, that’s bigger than the ’63 march.

**[01:52:20]**

GATES: Oh, yeah.

**[01:52:20]**

JAMES BRAXTON PETERSON: It’s bigger than almost anything else...

**[01:52:22]**

GATES: I mean it looked like Africa on television. I said, “Whoa.”

*ARCHIVAL: FARRAKHAN AT PODIUM*

**[01:52:25]**

*ARCHIVAL LOUIS FARRAKHAN: “You heard a call...”*

**[01:52:27]**

**VO: THE MARCH’S MOST PROMINENT ORGANIZER WAS LOUIS FARRAKHAN-- LEADER OF THE NATION OF ISLAM.**

**FARRAKHAN WAS DEEPLY ATTUNED TO STRUGGLES OF BLACK AMERICA.**

**BUT THE SOLUTIONS HE OFFERED WERE SURPRISINGLY FAMILIAR.**

**[01:52:43]**

*ARCHIVAL LOUIS FARRAKHAN: "...will strive to improve myself..."*

**[01:52:48]**

**HE URGED BLACK MEN TO CHANGE THEIR BEHAVIOR--AND ATONE FOR THEIR FAILINGS...**

**[01:52:52]**

*ARCHIVAL LOUIS FARRAKHAN: "...socially, for the benefit of myself, my family, and my people."*

**[01:53:01]**

GATES: The biggest surprise for me was that the message was not “Down whitey,” critique the system as much as it was individual atonement, individual responsibility. Help me to understand that. I think that surprised a lot of people around the country.

**[01:53:19]**

JAMES BRAXTON PETERSON: In that particular moment the sense of atonement was very real for a lot of us because we realize as young men that there were some of the trappings of the materials and the violence of America’s society had gotten to us and we had lost a lot of our friends. We had lost relatives to some of that violence.

**[01:53:36]**

GATES: We had internalized racism. We had...our people had internalized the way we were being treated.

**[01:53:41]**

JAMES BRAXTON PETERSON: Absolutely and the way that we were being depicted in the media, and the way that we were being depicted in the music.

**[01:53:50]**

ARMSTRONG WILLIAMS:I was at the Million Man March. I respect the Nation of Islam values--to bring black men back to their families. To stop this killing in these communities. To stop the disrespect of women, and to really find and claim our place in America.

**[01:54:10]**

**VO: THE TROUBLE WAS: FOR ALL ITS GOOD INTENTIONS, THE MARCH EMBRACED A STRANGE CONTRADICTION.**

**SPEAKER AFTER SPEAKER ATTACKED A RACIST AMERICAN SYSTEM, BUT ALSO CALLED ON BLACK MEN TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THEIR OWN LIVES--.**

**[01:54:29]**

LESTER SPENCE: The then black mayor of Detroit, Dennis Archer, he’s giving a speech, and everybody was cheering, was cheering, was cheering. ‘Take responsibility,’ I remember him saying, ‘If the city doesn't pick up the garbage, pick it up yourselves!’ And everybody’s cheering like, “Yeah, the city won’t pick up the trash. Pick it up yourselves!” And I’m like, wait a second. That’s what we pay taxes for, right? Again, it’s the sense that the government doesn't have responsibility. It’s you.

**[01:55:04]**

**VO: IN THE END, MORE THAN ANYTHING, THE MARCH CRYSTALLIZED THE CENTRAL QUESTION FACING BLACK AMERICA AT THE TIME...**

**WERE THE PROBLEMS WE FACED REALLY OF OUR OWN MAKING?**

**OR WERE THEY PART OF THE UNFINISHED BUSINESS THAT THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT NEVER HAD A CHANCE TO RESOLVE?**

*END OF PART 3*