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

**PART FOUR: TOUCH THE SKY**

**FINAL TIME-CODED SCRIPT**

**REVISED 10/2016**

*START*

*TRANSITION FROM EPISODE 301 TO SERIES TITLE*

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

*EPISODE TITLE: Episode Four: Touch the Sky*

*ARCHIVAL: HURRICANE KATRINA*

**[01:00:27]**

*ARCHIVAL REPORTER OFF-CAMERA: “Hurricane Katrina is about to unleash her fury on the Gulf of Mexico tonight.”*

**[01:00:32]**

*ARCHIVAL METEOROLOGIST: “140 mile per hour winds, a strong category 4 storm”*

**[01:00:35]**

*ARCHIVAL REPORTER IN STORM: “This is what everyone feared: the storm surge. Take a look out here…*

*ARCHIVAL: New Orleans underwater… people wading through water…*

**[01:00:40]**

**VO: ON AUGUST 29, 2005, I TURNED ON THE TELEVISION--AND I COULDN’T BELIEVE MY EYES...**

**HURRICANE KATRINA HAD HIT NEW ORLEANS…**

**CATASTROPHICALLY DAMAGING ANTIQUATED LEVEES AND FLOODING 80 PERCENT OF THE CITY…**

*ARCHIVAL: PEOPLE STRANDED...SIGNS ON ROOFTOPS PLEADING FOR HELP…*

**[01:00:59]**

**VO: NEARLY 100,000 PEOPLE FOUND THEMSELVES STRANDED--WITHOUT FOOD OR SHELTER...IN A RISING TIDE OF DEADLY WATER.**

**AND IT LOOKED LIKE ALMOST ALL OF THEM WERE BLACK.**

**IT WAS AGONIZING TO WATCH.**

*ARCHIVAL: PEOPLE WITH AMERICAN FLAGS, “HELP US” SIGNS, ETC.*

**[01:01:20]**

BRITTNEY COOPER: All of those Black folks stranded on rooftops, waving American flags, came floating through the television screen, and it was a stark moment. Because here we are in the 21st century, and Black people are still having to make the case to their country that they are citizens, and therefore, worthy of being rescued.

**[01:01:43]**

*ARCHIVAL MAN: “You got a three-week old infant out here. How is a three-week old infant going to be able to survive out here with no milk, no water?”*

**[01:01:49]**

*ARCHIVAL MAN: “They need medical attention. They got old people that’s sick… they got people dying in there.”*

**[01:01:55]**

**VO: KATRINA LAID BARE THE UNFINISHED WORK OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT...**

**[01:01:59]**

*ARCHIVAL OLDER WOMAN: “We are in desperate need. And we are Americans. It is terrible.”*

**[01:02:06]**

**VO: REVEALING THE DEEP VULNERABILITY OF THE POOREST BLACK COMMUNITIES…**

**AND MAKING IT PAINFULLY CLEAR THAT RACE REMAINED A DECISIVE FACTOR IN AMERICAN LIFE…**

**[01:02:19]**

OPRAH: I was in such shock. Why were so many of the people black and poor? Because when you’re black and poor you’re the most disenfranchised. And… that’s why.

*ARCHIVAL: PEOPLE STRANDED AT SUPERDOME, ON STREETS, IN FLOODWATERS*

**[01:02:37]**

AVA DUVERNAY: The Hurricane Katrina spectacle, was really what it was, devastating, tragic, horrific, revealed the great divide that we know is there, and you know--we don’t talk about, but for anyone to say that it wasn’t disregard based on race and class, is to be disingenuous about what we all saw.

**[01:02:59]**

*ARCHIVAL PEOPLE CHANTING: “Help, help, help, help!”*

**[01:03:00]**

*ARCHIVAL WOMAN: “People are dying. They’re dying! Babies are dying!”*

**[01:03:04]**

**VO: THE DISASTER WAS COMPOUNDED BY THE GOVERNMENT’S SLOW RESPONSE--WHICH SEEMED TO EXPRESS A DEEP INDIFFERENCE TO THE VICTIMS.**

**TWO DAYS AFTER THE STORM, PRESIDENT BUSH FINALLY CAME TO VIEW THE DEVASTATION--FROM THE SAFETY OF AIR FORCE ONE--NEVER EVEN SETTING FOOT IN THE CITY...**

*ARCHIVAL: GEORGE BUSH FLYOVER*

**[01:03:27]**

**VO: WHILE ON THE GROUND, THE CASUALTIES--AND THE CHAOS--WERE MOUNTING...**

**[01:03:32]**

*ARCHIVAL MAN #1: “They told us if you want to be rescued, go to the Superdome.’ All of a sudden, now they’re telling us ‘Go to the bridge.’”*

**[01:03:37]**

*ARCHIVAL MAN #2: “They don’t care about us.”*

**[01:03:38]**

*ARCHIVAL MAN #3: “We have very few resources. What are we supposed to do?”*

**[01:03:41]**

*ARCHIVAL NEWSCASTER: “Tonight, the real concern is looting...”*

**[01:03:44]**

**VO: RELIEF EFFORTS WERE ALSO HAMPERED BY THE MEDIA’S LURID STORIES OF CRIME SPREES IN THE FLOOD ZONE…**

**...WHICH ISOLATED THE VICTIMS EVEN FURTHER.**

**DESPERATE, HUNDREDS OF BLACK PEOPLE ATTEMPTED TO ESCAPE ON THEIR OWN--BY WALKING TO SUBURBS ACROSS THE RIVER…**

**THEY WERE STOPPED BY POLICE OFFICERS AND LOCAL RESIDENTS WITH RIFLES.**

*ARCHIVAL: GRETNA BRIDGE CROSSING, FOOTAGE OF ARMED GUARDS ON BRIDGE*

*ARCHIVAL: STILLS OF ARMED WHITE PEOPLE*

**[01:04:18]**

JELANI COBB: The people in surrounding areas armed themselves to prevent black New Orleans residents from getting out of the city, that is a direct metaphor for what had been happening in American cities. White people who’ve managed to escape, and literal barriers to black people getting out of the cities and going to where they are.

*ARCHIVAL: STILLS OF ARMED PEOPLE AND “YOU LOOT, WE SHOOT” SIGNS ETC.*

**[01:04:43]**

*ARCHIVAL WHITE MAN #1: “You had to do what you had to do. If you had to shoot somebody, you had to shoot somebody.”*

**[01:04:49]**

*ARCHIVAL: WHITE MAN #2: “We shot ‘em”*

**[01:04:51]**

*ARCHIVAL FEMALE: “They were looters. In this neighborhood, we take care of our own.”*

*GATES AND TRYMAINE LEE SIT-DOWN INTERVIEW*

**[01:04:58]**

GATES: So how could this be? How could race relations have been so bad leading to such disastrous consequences?

**[01:05:06]**

TRYMAINE LEE: I think it’s hard for America to see this black mass, this poor black mass of people, people are scared of that.

**[01:05:14]**

GATES: Mmm-hmm.

**[01:05:14]**

TRYMAINE LEE: They don’t know what to do with that. They just don’t. For some…we’re still grappling with how to see us as whole human beings--as whole people.

*ARCHIVAL: STILLS OF TRYMAINE LEE WORKING*

**[01:05:23]**

**VO: TRYMAINE LEE--A YOUNG JOURNALIST--STAYED IN THE CITY THROUGHOUT THE DISASTER--TRYING TO REPORT WHAT WAS ACTUALLY HAPPENING...**

*TRYMAINE LEE AND GATES WALK AND TALK*

**[01:05:35]**

TRYMAINE LEE: Thousands of people gathered here. Children, uh, folks who needed medicine, families with nowhere else to go...

**[01:05:45]**

GATES: Why weren’t people bringing food or medical supplies?

**[01:05:48]**

TRYMAINE LEE: Those early days, there were so many rumors of rape and murder and mayhem, and because we’re dealing with poor black people, it seemed plausible. Right? See, the officials say, like, what are we gonna do? (Laughs.) They’re killing each other.

**[01:05:58]**

GATES: Right.

**[01:05:58]**

GATES: So, these were the stereotypes.

**[01:06:00]**

TRYMAINE LEE: The stereotypes.

**[01:06:00]**

GATES: People being victimized by stereotypes of themselves, and all they wanted to do was survive.

**[01:06:04]**

TRYMAINE LEE: That’s right. You talk about these young thugs, these young guys with they dreadlocks and their pants hanging down off their behinds. They were breaking in places and getting medicine for old people. They were breaking in getting food for people. They were keeping people safe.

**[01:06:14]**

GATES: Somehow, that wasn’t reported on my television.

**[01:06:17]**

TRYMAINE LEE: That wasn’t reported, because the image, the optics of the scary black mass of looters, right?

**[01:06:24]**

GATES: And if you stereotype them, that gets you off the hook.

**[01:06:27]**

TRYMAINE LEE: Oh, that’s right.

**[01:06:27]**

GATES: “We would help ‘em, but they just animals.”

**[01:06:29]**

TRYMAINE LEE: Because they were poor and black, and who cares? Right? We’ve seen that time and again, that who cares about them?

*ARCHIVAL: RED CROSS TELETHON*

**[01:06:35]**

*KANYE WEST: “I hate the way they portray us in the media. If you see a black family it says they’re looting. If you see a white family it says they’re looking for food.”*

**[01:06:45]**

**VO: AFTER FOUR EXCRUCIATING DAYS, RAPPER KANYE WEST--ON A TELETHON FOR KATRINA’S VICTIMS--SUDDENLY BLURTED OUT WHAT MANY OF US WERE FEELING...**

**[01:06:57]**

*KANYE WEST: “George Bush doesn’t care about black people.”*

**[01:07:01]**

LEAH WRIGHT RIGUEUR: I see Kanye West who says, "George Bush doesn’t care about black people.” My mouth dropped. I was stunned.

**[01:07:11]**

JAMES BRAXTON PETERSON: He’s talking about our government. He’s talking about the office of the president. And he’s right.Government doesn’t care about black people. How could you think they did in the moment where we’re looking at Katrina?

*ARCHIVAL: KATRINA AFTERMATH*

**[01:07:22]**

**VO: KATRINA REVEALED AMERICA AT ITS WORST…AT ITS MOST CALLOUS... ITS MOST RACIST.**

**BUT IT DIDN’T REVEAL AMERICA IN ITS ENTIRETY.**

**OUR NATION STILL HAD THE CAPACITY TO SURPRISE.**

*ARCHIVAL: HOUSTON ASTRODOME EVACUATION CENTER*

**[01:07:41]**

**VO: DAYS AFTER THE FLOODING, AN OFFICIAL DELEGATION VISITED**

**EVACUEES IN HOUSTON, TEXAS...**

**[01:07:48]**

*ARCHIVAL BARACK OBAMA: “What’s your name, Sweetie?”*

**[01:07:49]**

**VO: AMONG THE VISITORS WAS AMERICA’S ONLY BLACK SENATOR: BARACK OBAMA.**

**[01:07:55]**

*ARCHIVAL BARACK OBAMA: “The emergency response has been entirely inadequate and unacceptable..”*

**[01:08:00]**

**VO: IT WAS REFRESHING TO HEAR A POLITICIAN SPEAK SO FRANKLY...**

**AND OBAMA WASN’T DONE.**

*ARCHIVAL: WIDE SHOT OF SENATE FLOOR FOR OBAMA SPEECH.*

**[01:08:07]**

**VO: DAYS LATER, HE ADDRESSED THE UNITED STATES SENATE--DETAILING THE SYSTEMIC RACIAL PROBLEMS THAT UNDERLAY THE TRAGEDY…**

*ARCHIVAL: SPEECH BY OBAMA FROM SEPTEMBER 6, 2005:*

**[01:08:15]**

*ARCHIVAL BARACK OBAMA: The people of New Orleans weren't just abandoned during the Hurricane. They were abandoned long ago--to murder and mayhem in their streets; to substandard schools; to dilapidated housing; to inadequate health care; to a pervasive sense of hopelessness. Now, that is the deeper shame of this past week.*

*ARCHIVAL: OBAMA AS SENATOR WITH CONSTITUENTS*

**[01:08:40]**

**VO: LOOKING BACK, THIS WAS A CRITICAL MOMENT IN OBAMA’S CAREER--A MOMENT WHEN HIS POTENTIAL BECAME CLEAR....**

**[01:08:48]**

*ARCHIVAL BARACK OBAMA: “ I stand before you today to announce my candidacy for president of the United States of America.”*

**[01:08:57]**

**VO: BUT LESS THAN TWO YEARS LATER, WHEN HE ANNOUNCED THAT HE WAS GOING TO RUN FOR PRESIDENT--MANY AFRICAN AMERICANS--MYSELF INCLUDED--DIDN’T BELIEVE HE HAD A CHANCE.**

**[01:09:09]**

HASAN JEFFRIES: When Barack Obama begins to run, I was skeptical that--not of him as a candidate. I appreciated him as a candidate. I was skeptical that he would be able to win**.**

**[01:09:23]**

JELANI COBB: No one saw that this country was prepared to elect an African American to the presidency. It just wasn’t something that was on people’s radar.At that time, I think there were four black people in this country who thought that a black person could be elected to the presidency, and they all lived at the same address on the South Side of Chicago.

**[01:09:44]**

**VO: OBAMA’S RISE WAS DRIVEN, IN PART, BY CIRCUMSTANCE...**

**[01:09:48]**

*ARCHIVAL GEORGE STEPHANOPOLOUS: “The White House calls these difficult times. Others freely use the “R” word: recession.”*

**[01:09:55]**

**VO: IN 2008, OUR COUNTRY WAS ADRIFT...**

**[01:09:58]**

*ARCHIVAL BRIAN WILLIAMS: “Big trouble for millions of American homeowners as a slowing housing market has turned some mortgages into time bombs…”*

**[01:10:01]**

**VO: SLIPPING INTO A FINANCIAL CRISIS...**

**AND MIRED IN A STRUGGLE AGAINST GLOBAL TERROR...**

**OBAMA PROMISED TO STOP THE WAR IN IRAQ--AND RE-DIRECT OUR ECONOMY.**

**HE SEEMED TO OFFER A GENUINE ALTERNATIVE.**

**BUT EVEN SO: HE FACED A TREMENDOUS OBSTACLE...**

**[01:10:22]**

*NEWSCASTER (OFF-CAMERA): “The big question: can he really win?*

**[01:10:25]**

*ARCHIVAL BLACK MAN: “I just don’t think he has a legitimate shot. I think the Republicans will tear him apart.”*

**[01:10:30]**

*ARCHIVAL WHITE MAN: “I don’t want to sound prejudiced or anything but for one, um, I’m not going to vote for a colored man to be our president.”*

**[01:10:39]**

*ARCHIVAL WHITE WOMAN: “I just don’t think America is ready for a black president.”*

**[01:10:45]**

**VO: FROM THE OUTSET, OBAMA’S RACE WAS A CONSTANT FACTOR IN HIS CANDIDACY…**

**AND IT UNDERSCORED A DAUNTING MATH PROBLEM: EVEN IF EVERY BLACK PERSON IN THE COUNTRY VOTED FOR HIM, HE WOULDN’T COME CLOSE TO WINNING.**

**HE NEEDED A BROADER COALITION…**

**[01:11:03]**

HASAN JEFFRIES:It was like wait a minute. This is dependent upon white folk going into that ballot box and pulling this lever for this person of color, African American. Be completely unprecedented and I just knew it would be enough white folk who got in there, and just before they pulled that lever, said “I just can’t do it,” you know?

**[01:11:24]**

*ARCHIVAL W. KAMAU BELL: “One day there may be a black president, but there will never be a black president named Barack Obama. Ladies and gentlemen: that’s too black.”*

**[01:11:37]**

**VO: TO MY ASTONISHMENT, BARACK OBAMA ROSE ABOVE AMERICA’S RACIAL DIVIDE...**

**[01:11:43]**

*ARCHIVAL OBAMA CAMPAIGNING: “Yes we can! There is nothing we cannot do! If you decide you want change, we will have change!”*

**[01:11:56]**

**HE DREW IN VOTERS BY ARTICULATING A VISION OF OUR NATION’S SHARED MORAL VALUES--INVOKING THE IDEALS OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT…**

**[01:12:05]**

*ARCHIVAL OBAMA: “If you believe that the dream has to be kept alive---for those who still hunger for justice...”*

**[01:12:13]**

VINCE BROWN: He was speaking to what I think was the most important desire of most Americans at the time which was to really heal the divisions that had been created in this country. And the Civil Rights story had been a positive story that could be identified in the presence of Barack Obama. So, in some ways, I think Barack Obama was very savvy about tapping into that strain of American mythology: that this is a free country that’s always getting better and better and better and that we’re making progress.

**[01:12:41]**

*ARCHIVAL OPRAH: “There are those who say that it’s not his time, that he should wait his turn. I wouldn’t be where I am if I waited on the people who told me it couldn’t be.”*

**[01:12:58]**

*ARCHIVAL NEWSCASTER: “Barack Obama stunned the political establishment and much of the country with his clear and decisive victory in Iowa”*

**[01:13:07]**

*ARCHIVAL NEWSCASTER: “Barack Obama, the campaign’s freshest face, has now emerged as its frontrunner.”*

**[01:13:15]**

**VO: OBAMA PROVED TO BE A VERY SKILLED CANDIDATE --ATTRACTING HIGH-PROFILE SUPPORTERS--AND BUILDING AN IMPRESSIVELY DIVERSE COALITION…**

*ARCHIVAL: CELEBRITIES INCLUDING SAMUEL JACKSON, CHRIS ROCK STUMPING FOR OBAMA*

**[01:13:24]**

*ARCHIVAL GEORGE CLOONEY: “I’m an Obama guy.”*

**[01:13:26]**

*ARCHIVAL WILL SMITH: “My wife and I support Barack Obama”*

**[01:13:31]**

BRITTNEY COOPER: We had a shift in 2008, right? First we went from not in our lifetimes will this ever happen, to oh my God, in our lifetimes this is about to happen.

**[01:13:41]**

**VO: BUT OBAMA’S LEAD WAS NEVER SECURE--**

**[01:13:43]**

*ARCHIVAL JEREMIAH WRIGHT: “ And they will not only attack you, if you try and point out what’s going on in White America, U.S. of KKA.”*

**[01:13:51]**

**VO: IN MARCH OF 2008, RECORDINGS OF REVEREND JEREMIAH WRIGHT, THE PASTOR OF OBAMA’S CHICAGO CHURCH, BEGAN TO CIRCULATE IN THE MEDIA...**

**WRIGHT CONDEMNED THE UNITED STATES AS FUNDAMENTALLY RACIST--AND CALLED OUT WHITE AMERICA FOR ITS HISTORIC ABUSE OF BLACK PEOPLE...**

*ARCHIVAL: JEREMIAH WRIGHT SERMON*

**[01:14:10]**

*ARCHIVAL JEREMIAH WRIGHT: “Government gives them the drugs, builds bigger prisons, passes a three-strikes law, and then wants us to sing ‘God bless America.’ No, no, no. Not God bless America. God damn America! That’s in the Bible - for killing innocent people.”*

**[01:14:27]**

**VO: OBAMA’S OPPONENTS SEIZED ON THE WRIGHT CONTROVERSY, HOPING TO DAMAGE THE MULTI-RACIAL COALITION THAT OBAMA WAS WORKING SO HARD TO BUILD…**

**BUT INSTEAD OF TRYING TO AVOID THE ISSUE, OBAMA CONFRONTED IT HEAD ON: ACKNOWLEDGING THE VERY REAL GRIEVANCES BEHIND WRIGHT’S WORDS… AND APPEALING TO OUR COUNTRY’S DESIRE TO OVERCOME ITS PAST…**

**[01:14:53]**

*ARCHIVAL BARACK OBAMA: “The anger is real; it is powerful; and to simply wish it away, to condemn it without understanding its roots, only serves to widen the chasm of misunderstanding that exists between the races.*

**[01:15:09]**

**VO: THE SPEECH SAVED HIS CANDIDACY.**

**[01:15:11]**

*ARCHIVAL BARACK OBAMA: “America can change. That is the true genius of this nation. What we have already achieved gives us hope--the audacity to hope--for what we can and must achieve tomorrow.”*

*ARCHIVAL: ELECTION DAY 2008*

**[01:15:33]**

*ARCHIVAL WOMEN VOTERS: “I’ve been here since 7:15…” “I’ve been here since 6:50”*

**[01:15:39]**

*ARCHIVAL MAN VOTING: “However the outcome is, I’m part of it.”*

**[01:15:44]**

*ARCHIVAL POLL WORKERS: “Your ballot was cast.”*

**[01:15:47]**

**VO: ON ELECTION DAY--AS SAW VOTING LINES STRETCHING ALL THE WAY DOWN STREETS AND AROUND BLOCKS--I TOLD MYSELF THAT NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENED, BARACK OBAMA ALREADY HAD MADE HISTORY...**

**HE HAD ALREADY GONE SO MUCH FURTHER THAN ANY AFRICAN AMERICAN CANDIDATE FOR PRESIDENT BEFORE HIM.**

**BUT, OF COURSE,** **I WANTED HIM TO WIN…**

**[01:16:15]**

DONNA BRAZILE: Dr. King said one day we would be judged by the content of our character. It happened.

**[01:16:22]**

*ARCHIVAL ANNOUNCER: “Very important news. Ohio has gone for Obama”*

**[01:16:26]**

DONNA BRAZILE: This wasn’t just the black vote. This was the majority of Americans voting.

*ARCHIVAL ANNOUNCER: NEWS ANNOUNCEMENTS OF ELECTION RETURNS…OBAMA WINS STATE BY STATE…*

**[01:16:41]**

*ARCHIVAL ANNOUNCER: “Barack Obama will be the 44th president of the United States.”*

**[01:16:57]**

**VO: FOR MYSELF--AND FOR VIRTUALLY EVERY BLACK PERSON I KNEW--IT WAS AWE-INSPIRING...**

**NONE OF US--NOT A SINGLE ONE OF US--HAD GROWN UP BELIEVING WE WOULD LIVE TO SEE THIS DAY...**

*ARCHIVAL: GRANT PARK SCENE*

**[01:17:19]**

*ARCHIVAL OBAMA: “If there is anyone out there who still doubts that America is a place where all things are possible. Who still questions the power of our democracy, tonight is your answer.*

*It’s been a long time coming, but tonight, because of what we did on this day, in this election, at this defining moment, change has come to America.”*

*ARCHIVAL: HEADLINES ABOUT OBAMA’S VICTORY*

**[01:18:01]**

**VO: THE VICTORY OFFERED AFRICAN AMERICANS OF ALL GENERATIONS A CHANCE TO CELEBRATE--AND REFLECT…**

**TO YOUNG PEOPLE LIKE MY DAUGHTERS, IT SEEMED TO PROMISE A NEW AGE...**

**TO CIVIL RIGHTS VETERANS LIKE MY FRIEND CHARLAYNE HUNTER-GAULT--IT FELT LIKE THE CULMINATION OF A LIFELONG STRUGGLE…**

**AND OBAMA’S INAUGURATION WAS SOMETHING SHE HAD TO SEE IN PERSON...**

*ARCHIVAL: CHARLAYNE HUNTER-GAULT IN 1961*

*SIT-DOWN INTERVIEW WITH SKIP AND CHARLAYNE HUNTER-GAULT*

**[01:18:30]**

CHARLAYNE HUNTER-GAULT: I had to be there on that really cold day as a small part of that movement that made his election possible.

**[01:18:42]**

*ARCHIVAL: The President elect of the United States - Barack H. Obama.*

**[01:18:52]**

CHARLAYNE HUNTER-GAULT: It was a wonderful camaraderie that existed. But I had to walk away because **t**he people that I felt the closest to… Some of them couldn’t be there…

**[01:19:08]**

GATES: I know.

**[01:19:10]**

CHARLAYNE HUNTER-GAULT: (Crying) And I could… I found myself humming, you know, that old freedom song, “We’ve Come a Mighty Long Way.”

**[01:19:24]**

GATES: Mmm.

**[01:19:25]**

CHARLAYNE HUNTER-GAULT: And then I went back and listened to the first black president take the oath of office.

**[01:19:35]**

*ARCHIVAL: OBAMA TAKES OATH*

**[01:19:41]**

LEAH WRIGHT RIGUEUR: The idea that there is a black president, that black children, that black people can go out and say there is somebody that looks like me in the White House. That there is a family that looks like me in the White House? That is huge.

**[01:19:58]**

BRITTNEY COOPER: I’m proud of Barack Obama. I’m proud that four Black women and girls live in the White House. I think there’s something absolutely awesome about that. You know, there are Black haircare products at the White House. There’s Pink Oil moisturizer in the White House which is, you know, iconic. That matters. That matters representationally. It matters culturally. It matters.

**[01:20:16]**

ARMSTRONG WILLIAMS: That image of seeing him on every TV every day, being the leader of the free world? It showed that America has made significant progress. You better believe no matter what his policies are and no matter what he does with it, you can never change the fact that he has changed this country and the world forever.

**[01:20:32]**

*ARCHIVAL WANDA SYKES: “I don’t care why we have a first Black President, I’m just happy to have one. I am. I love seeing him take that stroll across the White House lawn, boy. It’s just beautiful! You see him, he’s just walking across the lawn.”*

**[01:20:49]**

**VO: OF COURSE, OBAMA’S VICTORY RESONATED WELL BEYOND THE BOUNDS OF BLACK AMERICA…**

**THERE WERE CELEBRATIONS ACROSS THE COUNTRY...**

**AND AROUND THE GLOBE--UNITING PEOPLE OF ALL RACE AND ALL NATIONALITIES IN A SENSE OF OPTIMISM...**

**SOME EVEN BEGAN TO VOICE THE IDEA THAT THE UNITED STATES HAD UNDERGONE A FUNDAMENTAL TRANSFORMATION…**

*ARCHIVAL: POST-RACIAL DISCUSSION*

**[01:21:17]**

*ARCHIVAL ANNOUNCER: “The election of Barack Obama proves something once again about this country. We can overcome. We can overcome our own history.”*

**[01:21:26]**

*ARCHIVAL GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS: “I think we are moving toward a post-racial America.”*

**[01:21:30]**

*ARCHIVAL LOU DOBBS: “America has turned a corner on the issue of race…”*

**[01:21:33]**

*ARCHIVAL CHRIS MATTHEWS: “You know: I forgot he was black tonight for an hour…”*

**[01:21:36]**

**VO: BUT WHILE THE NEW COLOR OF OUR LEADERSHIP AROUSED EXCITEMENT, THE JOB OF ACTUALLY GOVERNING THE UNITED STATES PRESENTED SOBERING CHALLENGES.**

**[01:21:45]**

*ARCHIVAL NEWSCASTER: “It’s the second consecutive year for rising poverty rates and falling incomes…”*

**[01:21:50]**

**VO: OBAMA NOW HAD TO CONFRONT THE SAME PROBLEMS THAT HAD LED VOTERS TO SUPPORT HIM IN THE FIRST PLACE.**

**[01:21:56]**

*ARCHIVAL NEWSCASTER: “Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae, both have lost billions on bad loans…”*

**[01:21:56]**

**VO: ECONOMIC INSECURITY AND THE FEAR OF TERRORISM STOKED CLASS TENSIONS, TRIBALISM, AND DISTRUST…**

**SOON, OBAMA BECAME A LIGHTNING ROD.**

**AND RACE--ALWAYS USEFUL AS A WEAPON TO DIVIDE--TOOK CENTER STAGE…**

**[01:22:18]**

*ARCHIVAL ANNOUNCER: “Mixed in the anti-Obama crowds over recent weeks--racial slurs against the President of the United States.”*

**[01:22:24]**

*ARCHIVAL NEWSCASTER: “Quote: Another four years of this N-word. Maybe he’ll get assassinated this term.”*

**[01:22:29]**

HASAN JEFFRIES: Having a black president has brought to the surface a lot of the what had moved to the background, a lot of the sort of virulent racism that we thought we had surpassed.

*ARCHIVAL: RACIST MEMORABILIA REGARDING OBAMA*

**[01:22:42]**

VINCE BROWN: There was no year zero when Barack Obama was elected. We’ve had a country driven by racial politics since its founding, since its origins. That’s not going to change with the election of one black president.

*ARCHIVAL: GROUP ON FOX NEWS*

**[01:22:54]**

*ARCHIVAL WOMAN: “I believe that he is a Muslim.”*

**[01:22:55]**

*ARCHIVAL HOST: “You do?”*

**[01:22:56]**

*ARCHIVAL WOMAN: “Yes.”*

**[01:22:56]**

*ARCHIVAL HOST: “How many of you believe that here?” (Many raise their hands.)*

**[01:22:58]**

*ARCHIVAL MAN: “He’s not natural born. You must be natural born to be president of the United States.”*

**[01:23:03]**

*WOMAN IN COUPLE: “We really don’t have a natural citizen of the United States being in the presidency.”*

**[01:23:08]**

*ARCHIVAL DONALD TRUMP: “All I want to do is see this guy’s birth certificate…”*

**[01:23:11]**

*ARCHIVAL KATIE COURIC: “President Obama went on national television today and did what no other president has ever even been asked to do: prove he’s a natural born U.S. citizen.”*

**[01:23:22]**

GATES: Have you been as surprised as some of us have been at the backlash against a black man being elected to the presidency?

**[01:23:28]**

ERIC HOLDER: I think if you go back to that election in 2008 there was a really positive feeling that existed in the country. But over time those who were opposed to him went to really bad places.

*ARCHIVAL: 2009 OBAMA SPEECH TO CONGRESS*

**[01:23:44]**

*ARCHIVAL BARACK OBAMA: “The reforms I’m proposing would not apply to those who are here illegally…”*

**[01:23:50]**

*ARCHIVAL CONGRESSMAN: “You lie!”*

**[01:23:55]**

*ARCHIVAL BARACK OBAMA: “That’s not true.”*

**[01:23:56]**

ERIC HOLDER: When you have a congressman get up and say, “You lie,” to the President of the United States…

**[01:24:01]**

GATES: Unheard of.

**[01:24:02]**

ERIC HOLDER: Unheard of. I’ll be honest with you, let’s go there. That would not have been said to a white president. You know? It would not have been. People thought initially we were entering a post-racial period where we wouldn’t have to talk about race. I think the reality has been that his election has meant that we’ve had to confront in a more stark way racial issues.

**[01:24:22]**

LEAH WRIGHT RIGUEUR: People say: “Well, Obama's just being judged as the president. We don’t see race. His race doesn’t come into account.” But his race is ever present. It dictates how he interacts with voters. What he can talk about. How he expresses anger. Barack Obama can never be the angry black man. He can't.

*ARCHIVAL: 2015 WHITE HOUSE 2015 CORRESPONDENTS’ DINNER “ANGER TRANSLATOR” SKETCH*

**[01:24:42]**

*ARCHIVAL BARACK OBAMA: “And that’s why I invited Luther, my anger translator, to join me here tonight. We count on the press to shed light on the most important issues of the day…”*

**[01:24:59]**

*ARCHIVAL LUTHER: “And we can count on Fox News to terrify old white people with some nonsense.”*

**[01:25:04]**

**VO: WHILE THE POLITICAL BACKLASH AGAINST OBAMA HAS EXPOSED THE TENACITY OF AMERICA’S RACIAL DIVIDE, IT HAS PLAYED OUT-- PARADOXICALLY--AMIDST A POPULAR CULTURE FILLED WITH EVER MORE DIVERSE VISIONS OF BLACK LIFE…**

**[01:25:21]**

*ARCHIVAL: DIVERSE EXAMPLES OF CULTURE FROM THIS ERA – MORE KEY AND PEELE, BOONDOCKS CARTOONS, SNL, ISSA RAE, AFROPUNK, KEHINDE WILEY, ETC.*

**[01:25:23]**

**VO: MUCH OF IT CREATED BY AFRICAN AMERICANS WHO HAVE GROWN UP IN A MULTI-COLORED NATION.**

**AND WANT TO SEE THEIR WORLD REFLECTED IN THE MAINSTREAM...**

**[01:25:33]**

SHONDA RHIMES: It seems weird to me that we watch these TV shows, and everybody, A, looks the same…That's not what my world looks like. That's not what my friends look like. That's not reality.

**[01:25:45]**

**VO: SHONDA RHIMES EMBODIES THIS RISING GENERATION.**

**[01:25:48]**

SHONDA RHIMES: I was born after the Civil Rights Movement had taken hold...

**[01:25:51]**

**VO: IN 2005, SHE CREATED “GREY’S ANATOMY” THE FIRST TOP TEN NETWORK SHOW EVER PRODUCED BY AN AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMAN~~--~~ SHE’S SINCE CREATED “SCANDAL,”’ THE REMARKABLE REFLECTION OF OUR CHANGING REALITY.**

**“SCANDAL’S” STAR IS A BLACK POLITICAL FIXER WHO’S HAVING AN AFFAIR WITH THE WHITE, MARRIED PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES--A CHARACTER NO BLACK PERSON WOULD HAVE DARED TO CREATE, EVEN A GENERATION AGO...**

**[01:26:24]**

GATES: The committee of blackness would've called you in and said, Shonda, our people cannot afford this.

**[01:26:29]**

GATES: You have defied the politics of respectability.

**[01:26:32]**

RHIMES: Well...

**[01:26:32]**

GATES: Aren't you ashamed of yourself? (Laughs.)

**[01:26:34]**

RHIMES: I'm not. People were saying, “This character, Olivia Pope, really needed to be a role model for young women and blablablah.” I don't believe in that. I mean true equality is black women get to be whatever they want to be. To me, being a role model means that you have to be seen through like white folks' eyes, like we're...that's something my mother would say, you know we're worried about how they're going to look at us.

**[01:26:56]**

GATES: Yes.

**[01:26:56]**

RHIMES: I wasn't worried about that.

**[01:26:58]**

**VO: SHONDA’S CONFIDENCE HAS BEEN WELL-REWARDED.**

**YET HER SUCCESS ALSO REVEALS ONE OF OUR ERA’S STARKEST CONTRADICTIONS: WHILE WHITE AMERICA EAGERLY EMBRACES BLACK STARS AND BLACK CULTURE, IT DOES SO WHILE STILL CLINGING TO OLD PREJUDICES ABOUT EVERYDAY BLACK PEOPLE.**

**[01:27:19]**

HASAN JEFFRIES: America has a fascination with stardom, and so artists and entertainers can be embraced, regardless of their color, by white Americans. But what hasn’t happened is that those same attributes that white Americans hold so dear, they’re not projecting onto the African American kid on a corner with a hoodie.

**[01:27:39]**

**VO: IN ESSENCE: EVEN AFTER ELECTING A BLACK PRESIDENT, OUR COUNTRY IS STILL STRUGGLING WITH MANY OF THE SAME RACIAL ISSUES THAT CONFRONTED US DECADES AGO…**

*B-ROLL EXCEL HIGH SCHOOL*

*MARCUS WALKER CLASSROOM SCENE*

**[01:27:53]**

MARCUS WALKER: Okay class, good morning, good morning…

**[01:27:59]**

**VO: THIS IS EXCEL, A PUBLIC SCHOOL IN SOUTH BOSTON ...**

**A PLACE THAT ILLUMINATES BOTH OUR PRESENT AND OUR PAST …**

**IN 1974, THIS SCHOOL WAS A FOCAL POINT OF THE NOTORIOUS BOSTON BUSING CRISIS--A BATTLEGROUND SITE IN WHITE AMERICA’S EFFORT TO RESIST INTEGRATION...**

*ARCHIVAL: 1974 SOUTH BOSTON HIGH SCHOOL*; *BLACK KIDS GETTING OFF THE BUS*

**[01:28:22]**

*ARCHIVAL REPORTER: “The buses brought in 56 black students from Roxbury while whites stood outside and jeered.”*

**[01:28:28]**

*ARCHIVAL MALE STUDENT: “They just want to start trouble. They think they own the place. I got news for ‘em. They’re going to be dead if they try anything else.”*

**[01:28:36]**

**VO: AS A NATION, WE LIKE TO THINK WE’VE MOVED ON FROM THESE UGLY SCENES, BUT THE FACTS ARE MORE COMPLICATED.**

**[01:28:44]**

MARCUS WALKER: First of all, what was the goal of busing? What was the whole point in the first place? Dennis.

**[01:28:50]**

MALE STUDENT #1: To have them go to schools that were mostly all whites and everything, to have everybody come together as one.

**[01:28:57]**

MARCUS WALKER: Yes, yes, yes. So the whole point was to have everybody kind of mixed together.

**[01:29:02]**

**VO: BEFORE THE BUSING CRISIS, NEARLY EVERY CHILD AT THIS SCHOOL WAS WHITE.**

**AND WHILE BUSING PRODUCED A BRIEF PERIOD OF INTEGRATION--IT DIDN’T LAST.** **TODAY, ALMOST ALL THE STUDENTS HERE ARE PEOPLE OF COLOR.**

**[01:29:17]**

MARCUS WALKER: Where are the white students going? What’s going on? What does it mean? Go ahead, Trace.

**[01:29:21]**

MALE STUDENT #2: They’re either in a private school or they moved out of Boston.

**[01:29:26]**

**VO: I WOULD NEVER HAVE IMAGINED THIS WHEN I BEGAN SCHOOL MYSELF--AT THE DAWN OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ERA.**

**BACK THEN, WE THOUGHT THE SEPARATION OF STUDENTS BY RACE WAS ENDING FOR GOOD.**

*SKIP AND MARCUS INTERVIEW*

**[01:29:39]**

GATES: How do you make sense of the re-segregation of the school system?

**[01:29:43]**

WALKER: I don’t think the average person see the Boston public schools as still being a segregated school system….My students, they see an overabundance of cultural diversity, the nationalities.

**[01:29:55]**

GATES: That’s literally on their faces.

**[01:29:56]**

MARCUS WALKER: Absolutely.

**[01:29:58]**

GATES: Except white America wasn’t represented.

**[01:30:00]**

MARCUS WALKER: Exactly.

**[01:30:02]**

GATES: Okay. Uhm. Do your students ever talk about how non-white their school is?

**[01:30:07]**

MARCUS WALKER: Yeah, so we’ve had that conversation, we’re still having that conversation. Why does our school look the way it does? And not just racially, but also economically. Excel High School, South Boston high school, is almost 86 percent, just this school is low income. It’s deep… as far as the effect that poverty has on my students.

**[01:30:26]**

B-Roll

MARCUS WALKER: Today, do people that are low-income and people who are high-income have the same opportunities?

**[01:30:33]**

STUDENT: No.

**[01:30:33]**

MARCUS WALKER: You say no, what makes you say no?

**[01:30:37]**

STUDENT: Because they get a better push in life.

**[01:30:45]**

**VO: EXCEL REFLECTS A NATIONAL TREND…**

**MANY AFRICAN AMERICANS CHILDREN TODAY ARE AS RACIALLY AND SOCIOECONOMICALLY ISOLATED AS THEY WERE IN THE 1960S--MORE THAN A THIRD ATTEND SCHOOLS THAT ARE LESS THAN TEN PERCENT WHITE**

**AND DISPROPORIONATELY LOW-INCOME...**

**--IN NEIGHBORHOODS WITH HIGH POVERTY RATES**

**ALL OF WHICH FLIES IN THE FACE OF A VAST BODY OF EVIDENCE ON THE POWER OF INTEGRATION…**

**[01:31:14]**

NIKOLE HANNAH-JONES: Integration does this magical thing. It suddenly allows black kids to get the same education that white kids are getting, and that’s really it. I think sometimes we get confused and we think that there’s something about sitting next to white kids that makes black kids smart. There’s something about sitting next to white kids that allows black kids to get the same textbooks, and to get the same instruction and to get physics in their high school, and that’s really it.

**[01:31:38]**

**VO: THE CONDITION OF AMERICA’S PUBLIC SCHOOLS IS JUST ONE ASPECT OF OUR FAILURE TO FULFILL THE IDEALS OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT…**

**THE RECENT ASSAULT ON VOTING RIGHTS MARKS ANOTHER...**

**[01:31:50]**

*ARCHIVAL ANCHOR: “The Supreme Court upheld a controversial new voter ID law in Texas…”*

**[01:31:55]**

*ARCHIVAL: ...in the swing state of Pennsylvania, which is requiring people to show photo I.D. in order to vote.*

**[01:32:00]**

*ARCHIVAL ANCHOR: “Nearly 600,000 voters, mostly blacks and Latinos, don’t have this kind of identification...”*

**[01:32:07]**

**SINCE 2010, DOZENS OF STATES HAVE PASSED VOTER IDENTIFICATION LAWS THAT HAVE SERVED TO RESTRICT AFRICAN AMERICAN ACCESS TO THE POLLS…**

**[01:32:18]**

*ARCHIVAL BARACK OBAMA: “It is wrong to change our election rules just because of politics. It is wrong to make citizens wait for five, six, seven hours just to vote. It is wrong to make a senior citizen who no longer has a driver's license jump through hoops and have to pay money just to exercise the right she had cherished for a lifetime. America did not stand up and did not march and did not sacrifice to gain the right to vote for themselves and for others, only to see it denied to their kids and their grandchildren!”*

**[01:32:45]**

DONNA BRAZILE: People died for the right to vote And now, when you go to register, bring every form of ID you can find. Bring your driver’s license, bring your marriage license, bring your passport. Bring it all. Bring a utility bill. I mean, how sad is that in America?

**[01:33:02]**

**VO: BUT NOTHING ILLUSTRATES OUR NATION’S PERSISTENT RACIAL INEQUALITY LIKE THE PROBLEM OF MASS INCARCERATION.**

**THE UNITED STATES HAS THE LARGEST PRISON POPULATION IN THE WORLD. AND THAT POPULATION IS DISPROPORTIONATELY BLACK.**

**[01:33:22]**

SHERILYNN IFILL: We have used the prisons essentially as a warehouse for our race problem, we used that as the place where we could warehouse particularly young African-American men, where we could warehouse young people who needed support in some way or another and didn’t get it and acted out.

**[01:33:41]**

LAWRENCE BOBO: So we have a circumstance of this persistent and

rising jobless in urban Black communities and rather than a

major investment in education or training or jobs, we get a major investment in policing and prison building and incarceration.

**[01:33:57]**

ERIC HOLDER: We looked for simple solutions to complex problems. The thought was let’s just put people in jail as opposed to asking ourselves: what are the sociological reasons? What are the social dysfunctions, the deficits that we see in the people who are committing these crimes? What are we going to do to try to deal with those? The thought was never to deal with those. The thought was always simply to lock them up, get them away from us and hopefully they’ll stay there for extend periods of time.

**[01:34:22]**

**VO: MASS INCARCERATION HAS BECOME AN INTERNATIONAL EMBARRASSMENT--IMPOSING AN ENORMOUS FINANCIAL AND HUMAN COST TO OUR NATION...**

**SO MUCH SO THAT, IN RECENT YEARS, VOICES FROM ALL SIDES OF THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM HAVE BEGUN CALLING FOR REFORM...**

**[01:34:41]**

*ARCHIVAL ANNOUNCER: “Highest law enforcement official has announced new clemency rules.”*

**[01:34:47]**

*ARCHIVAL SENATOR CHUCK GRASSLEY: “We’re cutting back many of the severe mandatory minimums so that they apply more fairly.”*

**[01:34:55]**

**VO: YET THE CONSEQUENCES OF OUR PRISON POLICIES WILL NOT BE EASY TO REVERSE...**

**PEOPLE WITH CRIMINAL RECORDS FACE AN ARRAY OF CHALLENGES TRYING TO RE-ENTER SOCIETY: THEY CAN BE BARRED FROM JOBS, DENIED FINANCIAL AID FOR COLLEGE--AND BANNED FROM PUBLIC HOUSING.**

**IT’S NO WONDER MANY END UP BACK IN PRISON.**

**[01:35:20]**

SHERILYNN IFILL: So now that we recognize that mass incarceration is out of control, how are we going to deal with it? Are we just going to say, well we should stop, we should lower some of these sentences? What do we do with the lives of the people who were harmed by the system, and what do we do with the problem that we didn’t want to deal with, which is young people who need jobs, who need support?

**[01:35:39]**

**VO: THESE QUESTIONS BROUGHT ME BACK TO RONALD DAY--WHO I FIRST MET IN THE SOUTH BRONX, WHERE HE GREW UP...**

*RONALD DAY AND GATES IN SOUTH BRONX*

**[01:35:47]**

RONALD DAY: “So I lived in this building right here and one of my earliest memories was seeing a guy get stabbed right across the street and walking up the block…”

**[01:35:58]**

**VO: AS A YOUNG MAN, DAY WAS A DRUG DEALER--AND HE SPENT 15 YEARS IN PRISON.** **HE KNOWS FIRST-HAND THE DAUNTING OBSTACLES FACED BY EX-CONVICTS...**

**[01:36:10]**

RONALD DAY: when I knew that I was going to be released, there was a tremendous amount of trepidation. I knew that I wanted to get a job and to take care of myself but I knew that there were a lot of individuals who said that but they ended up back in prison.

**[01:36:31]**

**VO: BUT RONALD WAS DETERMINED TO AVOID THAT FATE”.**

**HE’S EARNED A MASTER’S DEGREE… AND HE’S WORKING ON HIS PHD.**

**AND TODAY, HE’S AN EXECUTIVE AT THE FORTUNE SOCIETY--AN ORGANIZATION THAT WORKS WITH EX-CONVICTS...**

*SKIP ARRIVES AT FORTUNE SOCIETY*

**[01:36:46]**

**VO: RONALID AND HIS COLLEAGUE, STANLEY RICHARDS--WHO ALSO SERVED TIME IN PRISON—HAVE NOW DEDICATED TO HELPING FORMER PRISONERS LIKE THEMSELVES.**

**[01:36:55]**

*SKIP, RONALD AND STANLEY VISIT JOB SKILLS CLASS AT FORTUNE SOCIETY*

**[01:37:09]**

STANLEY RICHARDS: The bar organization identified 47 thousand statutory barriers for people coming home from prison, be it state.

**[01:37:18]**

GATES: Forty-seven thousand?

**[01:37:19]**

STANLEY RICHARDS: Forty-seven thousand local, state, or federal barriers to employment.

**[01:37:26]**

RONALD DAY: You need to remove these barriers so that people can rebuild their lives and reclaim their lives.

**[01:37:32]**

To be able to say I was involved in crime but now I turned that whole process around. Went from being someone who was considered a criminal. Went from being someone who was locked up and thrown away and thought didn’t have any value to went to college to earning the master’s degree, to earning the PhD.

**[01:37:48]**

GATES: So you are the criminal justice system’s worst nightmare?

**[01:37:51]**

STANLEY RICHARDS: At one point I was the one who was devastating my community. Selling drugs and robbing and now I’m giving back in ways that I couldn’t even have imagined back then, I’m raising my family in the Bronx I work, I give back, I contribute, and I keep my voice in the mix.

**[01:38:10]**

RONALD DAY: It shows. It shows the capacity of people to change.

**[01:38:16]**

STANLEY RICHARDS: We don’t give up on people. We know that by holding people accountable, by providing them some support and by giving them

the opportunity to reclaim their life it works. It works.

**[01:38:30]**

**VO: DAY AND RICHARDS ARE INSPIRING--BUT THEY’RE WELL AWARE THAT HELPING PEOPLE ON THEIR WAY OUT OF PRISON IS ONLY ONE PART OF THE SOLUTION.**

**TO REDUCE OUR INCARCERATED POPULATION, WE’RE GOING TO HAVE TO ALTER OUR FUNDAMENTAL ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT RACE--ASSUMPTIONS THAT INFORM THE VERY WAY WE POLICE.**

*ARCHIVAL: AFRICAN AMERICANS IN JAIL/PRISON*

*ARCHIVAL: POLICE OPERATING IN BLACK COMMUNITIES*

**[01:38:53]**

JELANI COBB: One of my formative memories was, me coming home from a baseball game, I played baseball, my local team, and I was coming home in my uniform, and a police officer pulled up and claimed that I fit the profile of someone who had committed a robbery, and put me up against a mailbox, and frisked me to see if I was carrying any weapons. And I was wearing a baseball uniform and carrying a glove. It’s not like I was an inconspicuous figure. But this had been something that I had been prepared for by my parents, because they understood this relationship between black men and police. So one of the early formative lessons I got from my father was that if a police officer tries to hand you something, never take it, because they simply want to get your fingerprints on something to set you up.

**[01:39:39]**

VINCE BROWN: It’s assumed that you’re a suspect when you’re black on the street before anybody knows anything else about you. Automatically you’re assumed to be a potential disturbance of the peace. That’s not something that everybody has to deal with. It’s not something that is comfortable for people to deal with. To always be scared that every time you see a police officer they might be thinking you’re a suspect in a crime that happened someplace else. That’s not full citizenship, that’s not full equality.

**[01:40:08]**

**VO: ON A SHOCKING NUMBER OF OCCASIONS, RACIAL PROFILING HAS LED TO TRAGEDY…**

**THESE SENSELESS DEATHS OFTEN DISAPPEARED QUICKLY FROM THE NEWS CYCLE--IF THEY WERE EVER NOTED AT ALL…**

*ARCHIVAL: MONTAGE OF HEADLINES AND PHOTOS HERE, SHOWING OTHER VICTIMS OF POLICE OVER-REACTION OR UNPROVOKED VIOLENCE… AMADOU DIALLO, SEAN BELL, OSCAR GRANT, ETC. -- ENDING UP WITH MIKE BROWN*

*ARCHIVAL: TWEETS OF MIKE BROWN LYING IN THE STREET*

**[01:40:23]**

**VO: THAT BEGAN TO CHANGE ON AUGUST 9, 2014, WHEN A POLICE OFFICER SHOT AND KILLED 18-YEAR-OLD MICHAEL BROWN DURING AN ALTERCATION IN FERGUSON, MISSOURI.**

**THE CONFLICTING ACCOUNTS OF WHAT LED TO THE SHOOTING HAVE NEVER BEEN RECONCILED. BUT REGARDLESS OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES, THE SIGHT OF BROWN’S BODY LYING IN THE STREET FOR HOURS WAS AN OUTRAGE...**

*ARCHIVAL: MICHAEL BROWN IN THE STREET AT A DISTANCE WITH YELLOW POLICE TAPE*

**[01:40:56]**

BRITTNEY COOPER: The picture of his body in the street is being tweeted, and they still haven’t removed it, and folks are already beginning to pay attention. Why is this happening? Why is this boy lying dead in the street? Black people know what it means when a black kid is killed by somebody that is white with power, and the body is left there to terrorize the community.

**[01:41:14]**

*ARCHIVAL LESLEY MCFADDEN, MIKE BROWN’S MOTHER: “You took my son away from me. You know how hard it was for me to get him to stay in school and graduate? You know how many black men graduate? Not many. Because you bring them down to this type of level where they feel like I don’t got nothing to live for anyway.”*

**[01:41:35]**

*ARCHIVAL: PROTESTS IN FERGUSON “HANDS UP, DON’T SHOOT”*

**[01:41:39]**

**VO: THE NIGHT AFTER BROWN’S DEATH, LOCAL RESIDENTS GATHERED IN PROTEST.**

**THE POLICE RESPONSE SHOCKED THE COUNTRY.**

**IT LOOKED MORE LIKE A SCENE FROM WAR-TORN IRAQ THAN A SUBURB OF MISSOURI.**

*ARCHIVAL: MILITARISTIC RESPONSE IN FERGUSON*

**[01:41:53]**

BRITTNEY COOPER: It was the tanks that made everybody pay attention. Conservative White folks and Republicans and Democrats and White people across the spectrum saying: “What? Why do you have a tank in Ferguson, Missouri? Why are the police in military riot gear?”

*ARCHIVAL: MILITARISTIC RESPONSE IN FERGUSON*

**[01:42:17]**

DERAY MCKESSON: The police had every type of, you know, machinery you could ever have, and we got tear gassed, and I was like, this is just not the America I know, right?Like, I cannot believe I’m getting tear gassed when the police have killed somebody. And I was like, this just isn’t okay, right? And I’m just one of many who, like, stopped being silent because of...because of what happened.

*ARCHIVAL: DERAY PROTEST STILLS*

**[01:42:37]**

**VO: DERAY MCKESSON--A FORMER MATH TEACHER--WAS APPALLED BY WHAT HE SAW ON THE STREETS OF FERGUSON.**

**[01:42:44]**

**HE LEFT HIS JOB TO BECOME A FULL-TIME ACTIVIST… JOINING A RISING GROUNDSWELL OF OUTRAGE...**

*ARCHIVAL: PROTESTS IN CITIES ACROSS AMERICA – MARCHES, DIE-INS, FREEWAY SHUTDOWNS, ETC. BLACK LIVES MATTER SIGNAGE VISIBLE*

**[01:42:51]**

**VO: UNIFIED BY A SIMPLE, BUT POWERFUL SLOGAN THAT HAD BEEN CREATED JUST A YEAR BEFORE BY THREE YOUNG WOMEN: PATRISSE CULLORS, OPAL TOMETI, AND ALICIA GARZA...**

*ARCHIVAL PROTESTERS CHANTING: “BLACK LIVES MATTER, BLACK LIVES MATTER!”*

**[01:43:05]**

ALICIA GARZA: I felt like it was important to have another voice out there that was saying, you know, this isn’t about some deficiency that black people have. This is actually about the racism that’s in the DNA of this country. Something like: black people, I love you, I love us, we matter, our lives matter. Black lives matter.

*ARCHIVAL PROTESTERS CHANTING: “BLACK LIVES MATTER, BLACK LIVES MATTER”*

**[01:43:32]**

CORNEL WEST: We know black lives matter the way all lives matter, but unfortunately in America you gotta say “black lives matter” because when you say all lives matter oftentimes you don’t get to the black lives.

*ARCHIVAL: BLACK LIVES MATTER PROTESTS*

**[01:43:46]**

**VO: AS PROTESTS SPRUNG UP ALL OVER THE COUNTRY, IT QUICKLY BECAME CLEAR THAT BLACK LIVES MATTER WAS A PROFOUND RESPONSE TO AMERICA’S RACIAL LANDSCAPE…**

**[01:43:56]**

*ARCHIVAL ALICIA GARZA: “Just a few months ago you weren’t hearing conversations about race in America. In fact, we were being told that we lived in a post-racial society. What has been exposed is that that’s certainly not only not true, but that the lives of black folks, both black Americans and black immigrants and black people all over the country have been unfairly targeted for demise.”*

*ARCHIVAL: SOCIAL MEDIA REPORTS OF POLICE BRUTALITY*

**[01:44:19]**

**VO: AMID THE UPROAR, POLICE BRUTALITY CONTINUED TO OCCUR WITH DISTURBING FREQUENCY… CAPTURED BY CELL PHONE CAMERAS, DASH CAMS, AND HANDHELD DEVICES, THEN SHARED WITH THE WORLD.**

**[01:44:35]**

DONNA BRAZILE: Watching those videos--the video of Ms. Bland, the video of Tamir Rice, the video of Eric Garner, “I can’t breathe, I can’t breathe, I can’t breathe”--eleven times. That has stirred so many. That has stirred something in so many.

*ARCHIVAL MONTAGE: PROTESTERS*

**[01:44:58]**

GATES: Are there more incidents of violence against black people by the police, or are we just more aware of it because of digital media?

**[01:45:06]**

DERAY MCKESSON: The only thing that’s different now is that the truth is becoming mainstream.

**[01:45:09]**

GATES: Mm-hmm.

**[01:45:10]**

DERAY MCKESSON: And we get to control it. We don’t need a breaking report. We can be the breaking report, right?

**[01:45:14]**

GATES: But I think the people have the sense that more of these acts are being committed because they’re seeing it more.

**[01:45:20]**

DERAY MCKESSON: That feeling makes sense to me. It’s probably a natural response, uhm, because for some people, they had never, ever thought about the police as anything other than the most, uh...the most heroic of all...

**[01:45:31]**

GATES: Mm-hmm.

**[01:45:32]**

DERAY MCKESSON: Public servants but we know that so many other people were killed before, but in those moments, we didn’t necessarily have the tools to talk about it…

**[01:45:42]**

**VO: AS YOUNG ACTIVISTS EXCHANGED PHOTOS, VIDEOS, AND EYEWITNESS ACCOUNTS ON SOCIAL MEDIA, THEY KEPT RACIAL INJUSTICE AND POLICE BRUTALITY IN THE PUBLIC EYE...**

**[01:45:54]**

**RAISING HOPES THAT EXPOSURE WOULD BRING CHANGE.**

**[01:46:00]**

**BUT THE KILLINGS HAVE CONTINUED...**

*ARCHIVAL: KEITH LAMONT SCOTT AND ALTON STERLING KILLINGS*

**[01:46:02]**

*SOT: “And the officer just shot him in his arm.”*

**[01:46:05]**

*NEWSCASTER: “Shooting death of Keith Lamont Scott...”*

**[01:46:06]**

*NEWSCASTER: “An unarmed father of four, with car trouble, is no longer alive...”*

**[01:46:10]**

*NEWSCASTER: “The shooting that killed Alton Sterling...”*

**[01:46:13]**

**VO: AND IN CASE AFTER CASE, WHAT LOOKED LIKE HARD EVIDENCE FAILED TO YIELD CONVICTIONS...**

*ARCHIVAL: FREDDIE GRAY, ERIC GARNER AND TAMIR RICE*

**[01:46:18]**

*NEWSCASTER: “It has happened again. Yet another grand jury has failed to indict yet another white police officer...”*

**[01:46:23]**

*NEWSCASTER: “...a grand jury’s decision not to file charges against officers in the shooting death of twelve year old Tamir Rice.”*

**[01:46:30]**

BRITTNEY COOPER: So we know now, really clearly, whether we began at Hurricane Katrina, or we began at Trayvon Martin, or we began at Michael Brown, that this country is having a real problem affirming at the level of policy and treatment that black lives matter.

**[01:46:46]**

OPRAH WINFREY: Some things are still not right. You know, we’re unevenly yoked here. If you can’t acknowledge that then we can’t make it better.

**[01:46:56]**

**VO: AT TIMES, THE ANGER AND FRUSTRATION BUILDING ON ALL SIDES SEEMED LIKE IT WOULD TEAR OUR COUNTRY APART...**

*ARCHIVAL: TRUMP AND CLINTON SUPPORTERS CLASHING*

**[01:47:03]**

*DONALD TRUMP: “We’re gonna build a high wall, it’ll be higher than...”*

**[01:47:06]**

*CROWD SOT: “All lives matter! All lives matter! All lives matter!”*

**[01:47:13]**

**VO: YET THROUGH IT ALL, ACTIVISTS WORKED TIRELESSLY TO KEEP THE COUNTRY FOCUSED ON THE LARGER ISSUES AT STAKE...**

**[01:47:21]**

DONNA BRAZILLE: This is an uneasy period. But if not now, when? And if not them, who? Who will lead the fight, because I’m glad people are ready to fight, and ready to organize, and ready to do battle, because the fight’s not over.

**[01:47:40]**

**VO: FROM SPORTS ARENAS--TO CITY STREETS--TO THE CORRIDORS OF POWER...**

*ARCHIVAL: CONGRESSIONAL HEARINGS*

**[01:47:48]**

*CONGRESSMAN GREGORY MEEKS: “America I hope you’re looking. I hope you’re looking and your eyes are open.”*

**[01:47:54]**

**VO: BLACK AMERICANS HAVE COME TOGETHER...UNITED BY A SHARED SENSE THAT DESPITE ALL THE PROGRESS WE’VE MADE, WE REMAIN VULNERABLE IN OUR OWN COUNTRY.**

*ARCHIVAL: BET AWARDS*

**[01:48:06]**

*JESSE WILLIAMS: “There has been no war that we have not fought and died in the front lines on, there’s been no job we haven’t done, there’s no tax they haven’t levied against us. And we’d paid all of them. But freedom is somehow still always conditional here.”*

*ARCHIVAL: D’ANGELO ON SNL WITH BLACK LIVES MATTER T-SHIRTS*

*ARCHIVAL: JANELLE MONAE, JIDENNA ET AL. AT BLM RALLY*

*ARCHIVAL: BLACK LIVES MATTER ART IN GALLERIES AND ON STREET*

**[01:48:21]**

**VO: THE CALL FOR JUSTICE HAS ECHOED ACROSS THE COUNTRY…**

*ARCHIVAL: MULTI-CULTURAL MARCHERS*

**[01:48:26]**

**VO: AMPLIFIED AND INTENSIFIED BY POPULAR CULTURE...**

*ARCHIVAL: BEYONCÉ ‘FORMATION’ VIDEO*

**[01:48:38]**

**VO: WATCHING, I SOMETIMES FEEL MYSELF BEING TAKEN BACK DECADES--BACK TO THE WORLD IN WHICH I GREW UP.**

*ARCHIVAL KENDRICK LAMAR ‘ALRIGHT’ VIDEO*

*ARCHIVAL CORNEL WEST GETTING ARRESTED WHILE PROTESTERS SING “ALRIGHT”*

**[01:49:05]**

**VO: AND WHILE IT HEARTENS ME TO SEE YOUNG PEOPLE REVIVING THE PASSION OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ERA, IT SADDENS ME THAT WE’RE STILL FIGHTING SOME OF THE SAME BATTLES DR. KING FOUGHT HALF A CENTURY AGO...**

**[01:49:20]**

VINCE BROWN: The Civil Rights Movement removed a lot of restrictions for middle class people and well-to-do black people so they could achieve great things. That is a fantastic thing. It didn’t solve those major problems of social inequality. What we’ve had happen since is that blackness has still been associated with low social status in many people’s minds. So, if I don’t already know that you’re well-to-do, if I can’t tell by your clothes, if you’re wearing a hood instead of suit then I’m going to associate you with all those negative things that blackness has meant for a very long time.

**[01:50:00]**

**VO: AFRICAN AMERICANS HAVE INDEED STRUGGLED FOR FAR TOO LONG TO CLAIM OUR RIGHTFUL PLACE IN AMERICA.**

**EVEN SO…**

**SURVEYING THE LAST FIFTY YEARS OF OUR HISTORY--THROUGH ALL THE HIGHS AND LOWS--I CAN’T HELP BUT FEEL INSPIRED.**

**WHAT STANDS OUT TO ME MOST IS THE STRENGTH... THE WILLINGNESS--SEEN TIME AND AGAIN--TO FIGHT AGAINST THE ODDS…**

**TO STAND AND BE COUNTED--NO MATTER WHAT THE RISK…**

**LOOKING BACK, SEEING HOW HARD WE’VE FOUGHT, HOW FAR IWE’VE COME—IT FILLS ME WITH HOPE...**

**[01:50:45]**

SHERILYNN IFILL: I don’t know how you can be optimistic without looking at the past. It’s only through seeing that arc that you have the optimism that you can take it a step further. you make two steps forward and you make one step back… But it doesn’t mean that it’s not a step on the journey.

**[01:51:07]**

AL SHARPTON: My mother passed and I stood up at her funeral and read a letter from the first black president and thought about how when she was growing up she couldn’t vote in that town until she was 39 years old, couldn’t vote. In one lifetime to go from not being able to vote to a black president, you can’t say a lot hasn’t happened.

**[01:51:32]**

DERAY MCKESSON: The story of blackness in America has always been making a way out of no way, like, defying the odds that we’ve been given, and keeping this sense of joy, like, in the midst of all of the trauma and pain. And that keeps me hopeful.

*GATES PTC ON EDMUND PETTUS BRIDGE IN SELMA*

**[01:52:08]**

**VO: FIFTY YEARS AGO, AFRICAN AMERICANS MARCHED ACROSS THIS BRIDGE, DREAMING OF A FUTURE IN WHICH THEY WOULD FINALLY TAKE THEIR PLACE AS FULL AND EQUAL CITIZENS OF THE UNITED STATES..**

**THEY WERE MET WITH SHOCKING VIOLENCE.**

**BUT THEY REFUSED TO BE DEFEATED.**

**TODAY, AMERICA HAS BEEN TRANSFORMED--AND AFRICAN AMERICANS HAVE RISEN TO UNDREAMT-OF HEIGHTS.**

**OUR JOURNEY IS FAR FROM OVER…**

**AND YET STILL WE PRESS ON WITH THE TALENT AND DETERMINATION BORN OF GENERATIONS OF RESISTANCE AND HOPE--AND THE UNSHAKEABLE, DETERMINED BELIEF THAT THIS LAND IS OUR LAND...**

**STILL: WE RISE.**

*END OF PART 4*