**#1 - Reconstructionists Wrestling with Reparations Pilot 5782/2022**

**Scribe Recordings**

**Thank you SCRIBES for taking the time to record your group’s closing reflections.** Snippets of these may be shared anonymously in the ongoing work of learning and teaching on Reparations.

At the end of each session, please ask participants to share some anonymous closing reflections in this shared google doc. A format you could use is asking the closing question

**What's something you learned today that you don’t want to forget?**

**OR ZARUA 5/15/22**

**How Evanston has elicited a variety of responses and opinions**

**How profound these discussions have been.**

**To move forward in some way and not get stuck with the logistics or details of how/how much; to understand the diversity of opinions among African Americans; and that we can’t tell the level of support for each writer/thinkers/advocate’s opinion/proposal just by reading/listening to what they wrote/say**

**Ncobra, and that Reconstructing Judaism will put out a statement**

**The differences in opinions of Black leaders on these matters.**

**Nothing really**

**That we have differences of opinion, that this is an incredibly complex issue, so maybe our task is to decide that morally reparations are important and leave the details to committees/commissions (X2)**

**Albany my neighboring town is presenting a resolution soon about reparations.**

**We need to start with education and acknowledgement rather than the how to accomplish reparations.**

**I learned that in a court of law, it would be absurd to bring up how the plaintiff would spend the money. (X2) I learned more about what Reconstructing Judaism is doing to respond to current events and social justice issues.**

**OR ZARUA 4/24/22**

* I learned that it is crucial for all americans to understand how complicit the US government has been in promoting implicit racism and until the wealth gap is closed little can be done to help.
* That we should be brave.
* That there are models of how reparations have been given in other times and places.
* That the differences between US and Germany enslavement/genocide should not dissuade us from taking from their solutions and being as creative as we can.
* It’s important to remember that slavery benefited the country economically rather than extermination of a people
* I feel very emotional about this topic and it’s interesting to think about how to grapple together as a group and with my own internal feelings about it
* I learned that Germans implemented reparations even before the population agreed, when most people disagreed. Makes it a good model to start for us here.

**What's a question you are leaving with, and where would you like to cultivate further learning on this question?**

**OR ZARUA 5/15/22**

**How to partner with Black community so that it feels inclusive of their community.**

**More info about local happening and questions about a white person’s place in N’COBRA**

**I hate the set up of these responses and think you would get more substantive responses in**

**a different format..like an email individually after sessions.**

**It’s interesting, I already wrote feedback on another day that it was a distraction to include the Black voices against reparations…and sure enough, we got distracted with it today.**

**What is the role of local initiatives? Do they challenge a federal approach or are they important in propelling awareness?**

**How do we not get caught up in the practical/feasibility aspect of reparations.**

**How do we keep moving forward once these sessions are over?**

**How local governments can move forward on reparations without undercutting federal policy proposals**

**OR ZARUA 4/24/22**

* How do we get things done at a Federal level?
* What are the many different forms reparations could take?
* How to help the country reckon with our history from enslavement to today regarding racism against African Americans
* How did Evanston, Amherst, etc do what they have done?
* How to make it well known in the USA that racism has to be fixed for us to become a just nation.
* How do we move forward honoring what the African American wants from us?
* I wanted to question why the Coleman Hughes material is included. It feels like a distraction to include an African-American perspective against reparations, unless it is given more context. I would like the context to know what percent of young African-Americans agree with him, and what percent of African-Americans overall agree with him. If his perspective is more wide-spread, then it may be worthwhile to consider.
* I want to learn how to implement and start reparations in all the ways and not to wait to think about it more.

**What's something you learned today that you don’t want to forget?**

**OR ZARUA 4/5/22**

* The complexity of this issue
* I appreciated the diverse views in our readings and the diverse views of our members. There is a need for a moral and historical reckoning, as well as a practical program of reparations.
* Ta-Nihisi Coates idea racism is the child of economic profiteering,not the father. I am really mulling this over because there is so much to suggest racism is the root
* That many people are very concerned about “feasibility”.
* That there are risks of the Democratic Party losing support of other minority groups by focusing on reparations for Black Americans.
* Good to learn about Coleman’s views which were different from the general selections we’ve been reading.
* I was surprised at how people were unwilling to truly engage with the question of what would you give up.
* The complexity of thgeses questionnaires everyone typing at once is not good too distracting. I felt some people in the group much more hesitant. Not sure presenting Colson Hughes so early is a good think BUT essential to have a dissenter.
* Even if we’re discouraged about the lack of progress since Floyd’s murder it’s still important to keep talking
* That I have a lot of strong feelings about this issue and i want to be respectful of where everyone else is coming from even as we disagree.

**What's a question you are leaving with, and where would you like to cultivate further learning on this question?**

**OR ZAURA 4/5/22**

* What are other models of reparations and how could we learn from them in order to think of practicalities.
* How can a reckoning happen? What would that look like? How can the education that is needed take place? How should it be structured?
* Why can’t we mount a television series to encompass the points made by Hannah Nicole? Just requiring the presentation of the cartoon movie from the first week in all 6th grade classrooms. Someone needs to take responsibility for teaching the entire nation what the federal government did to all its black people that created the wealth gap which is required learning for all.
* Still wonder how we make this happen in a very divided world.
* Can we really find a way to be effective? To get some reparations for some of the harms that have been done to people based on race in this country, given the attitudinal, political and legal challenges?
* I don’t know what I’m willing to give up, but I know it’s probably different than others because I have no kids and don’t own a home.
* I’m interested in pursuing the emotional discomfort many of us white people have about what we would have to give up to do true reparations and additionally to really resolve the wealth gap

**What's something you learned today that you don’t want to forget?**

**OR ZARUA, 3/20/22:**

* People have different views about a lot of things
* That post Civil War, Slavery continued in many many ways as institutional racism and discrimination against African Americans became another form of slavery
* Interesting to hear how members of our group have struggled differently with the meaning of “whiteness” in our lives.
* That there was some positive political engagement that happened after abolition and before the violent backlash ending Reconstruction
* I just learned that Reconstruction Era is a myth!
* The German government only paid reparations to people who were doing enforced labor, not everyone who was in a concentration camp.
* How much discomfort we feel about being “white”
* How much our group is so so aware of these issues
* I don’t want to forget that story about Joe Lewis.
* That there are different roles/ approaches for Federal, State and local governments to play in providing reparations.
* We can be “responsible for” [repairing] even if we are not “guilty of” [enslavement]
* That we don’t have to know how to solve the issues; that there is value in the conversation
* Why do some Jewish people think they can set aside their whiteness?
* I learned that some of my community members have Black family members, and this reminds me that we can never assume people’s race or the race of their families.
* I liked reading that Coates says reparations is a spiritual process and that it gave Germany something spiritually.

**What's a question you are leaving with, and where would you like to cultivate further learning on this question?**

**OR ZARUA 3/20/22**

* Will read several books; also recommend Caste
* What people think reparations should look like.
* I want to go google and learn about the Reconstruction Era now.
* Given the climate that we’re in - one where there’s so much vehement disagreement and rejection of Critical Race Theory - how do we get back to HR 40?
* Agree, it seems like there is a lot of hostility now to even thinking about this…
* Who will introduce HR 40 without John Conyers?
* How can we start the healing and monetary compensation before waiting until HR 40 is passed?
* I couldn’t tell the role of Jews in redlining or in specific acts of plunder.
* I would like to have ancestral trauma be part of our conversation
* How can we engage in a meaningful “reckoning” process, locally and nationally?
* I hope we can study possible approaches to reparations
* I believe we will come away from this believing that some form of reparations are needed. I want to know how to convince others.
* I wonder how this discussion on reparations to Blacks has some ramifications with how we should repay Native Americans
* I think that it’s important to debunk some of the myths about Jewish exceptionalism in the era we call the civil rights era.
* I wonder how the discussion of reparations for African Americans will be heard by other racial minorities in America. Should this national conversation be expanded for including other races? What are the political consequences of failing to do so?
* To implement reparations as a national process, I would trust the leadership of progressive spiritual people such as William Barber; of some of the queer progressive rabbis I know from the Reconstructionist movement and Hebrew college; Sikh Valerie Kaur; indigenous leader Corrina Gould to give spiritual leadership to a conversation around reparations. Would like to include leaders who excel at touching the hearts and minds of White people with racist ideas also, at least those White people who are open to change.