

INHERITANCE - Discussion Guide Questions

1. What lessons can be learned from these efforts at reparations from across the globe?
2. In each global case, what were reparations seeking to amend or repair?
3. How do moral reparations feature in the reparations process? (By moral reparations, we mean acknowledgement of the abomination of slavery.)
4. Can victims and perpetrators reach closure after reparations processes are followed?
5. Should African American reparations be granted?
6. Why has the United States government granted reparations to interned Japanese Americans during WWII and White Slaveholders during the Civil War but not African Americans who have requested reparations for several generations?
7. Should reparations be paid only to direct descendants of enslaved African Americans?
8. Do you agree or disagree that challenges faced today by the African-American community are the "legacy of slavery"? Why or why not?
9. What complementary elements of the reparations process are vital to the African American case?
10. I am an American citizen, but my family did not own slaves, what do reparations have to do with me?
11. "We only inherited our ancestors' wealth and heritage, not their sins or pain." How is this statement applicable to reparations debates in the United States today? Where do you see yourself in this statement?
12. What institution should be responsible for delivering reparations? Who is best placed to act as a negotiating representative for reparations? Should a new commission be formed to oversee this process?
13. Who needs to be involved in reparations conversations? How should those discussions take place?
14. What would a successful reparations project in the United States look like to you? What outcomes would you like to see?
15. Are moral and social changes in attitudes and historical understanding of oppressive and racist pasts an essential part of reparations movements?
16. How can we create a public culture of atonement and acknowledgment as part of African American reparations?
17. What could reparations look like at the local, state, and federal levels? What would changes to major systems and institutions of power ideally look like?
18. Should US federal courts continue to preside over international cases of human rights violations as it did for the Nama & Herero people of Namibia when it has not adequately addressed the human rights violations that occurred during slavery and under Jim Crow laws?
19. Why are reparations controversial?
20. What are potential impacts of reparations?