



# The Color of Wealth: The Story Behind the U.S. Racial Wealth Divide

By Meizhu Lui, Barbara Robles, Betsy Leondar-Wright, Rose Brewer, Rebecca Adamson

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**The Color of Wealth: The Story Behind the U.S. Racial Wealth Divide** By Meizhu Lui, Barbara Robles, Betsy Leondar-Wright, Rose Brewer, Rebecca Adamson

For every dollar owned by the average white family in the United States, the average family of color has less than a dime. Why do people of color have so little wealth? *The Color of Wealth* lays bare a dirty secret: for centuries, people of color have been barred by laws and by discrimination from participating in government wealth-building programs that benefit white Americans.

This accessible book—published in conjunction with one of the country’s leading economics education organizations—makes the case that until government policy tackles disparities in wealth, not just income, the United States will never have racial or economic justice.

Written by five leading experts on the racial wealth divide who recount the asset-building histories of Native Americans, Latinos, African Americans, Asian Americans, and European Americans, this book is a uniquely comprehensive multicultural history of American wealth. With its focus on public policies—how, for example, many post–World War II GI Bill programs helped whites only—*The Color of Wealth* is the first book to demonstrate the decisive influence of government on Americans’ net worth.

The authors are all part of United for a Fair Economy, a national nonpartisan organization based in Boston, Massachusetts, that campaigns against growing income—and wealth inequality and inspires action to reduce economic inequality.

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

"This book shows how class and race intersect and suggests that economic and racial inequality are so intertwined that only a double assault on both can bring justice to an unjust society." —Howard Zinn, author of *A People's History of the United States*

"Regardless of their points of origin, all American families engaged in vigorous bootstrap tugging, but with widely divergent results. This important book debunks wealth creation mythology. Read it!" —Bill Fletcher Jr., president, TransAfrica Forum

"Never mind the income gap. Measuring and explaining the wealth gap gets to the foundation of the power differences that exist in the United States. This book is an important contribution to critical work on race and economics." —Julianne Malveaux, author of *Wall Street, Main Street and the Side Street*

"Urgently confronts how race and class are entwined in the United States. Guided by a compelling vision of greater equality, this fine book combines clarity with learning both to instruct and to imagine a better future." —Ira Katznelson, author of *When Affirmative Action Was White*

#### About the Author

Meizhu Lui is the director of the Closing the Racial Wealth Gap Initiative at the Insight Center for Community Economic Development. She was previously the executive director of United for a Fair Economy where, with Bárbara Robles, Betsy Leondar-Wright, Rose Brewer, and Rebecca Adamson, she co-authored *The Color of Wealth: The Story Behind the U.S. Racial Wealth Divide* (The New Press).

Bárbara Robles is an economist and a former member of the board of directors of United for a Fair Economy where, with Meizhu Lui, Betsy Leondar-Wright, Rose Brewer, and Rebecca Adamson, she co-authored *The Color of Wealth: The Story Behind the U.S. Racial Wealth Divide* (The New Press).

Betsy Leondar-Wright is an economic justice activist, sociologist, and author. She is currently the project director and senior trainer at Class Action, a non-profit that raises consciousness about class and money. She was previously the communications director at United for a Fair Economy where, with Meizhu Lui, Bárbara Robles, Rose Brewer, and Rebecca Adamson, she co-authored *The Color of Wealth: The Story Behind the U.S. Racial Wealth Divide* (The New Press).

Rose Brewer is a professor of African American and African studies at the University of Minnesota. She is a co-author (with Meizhu Lui, Bárbara Robles, Betsy Leondar-Wright, and Rebecca Adamson) of *The Color of Wealth: The Story Behind the U.S. Racial Wealth Divide* (The New Press).

Rebecca Adamson is a co-author (with Meizhu Lui, Bárbara Robles, Betsy Leondar-Wright, and Rose Brewer) of *The Color of Wealth: The Story Behind the U.S. Racial Wealth Divide* (The New Press). *Color of Wealth* was written when the authors were all affiliated with United for a Fair Economy, a national nonpartisan organization based in Boston that campaigns against growing income and wealth inequality and inspires action to reduce economic inequality.

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