



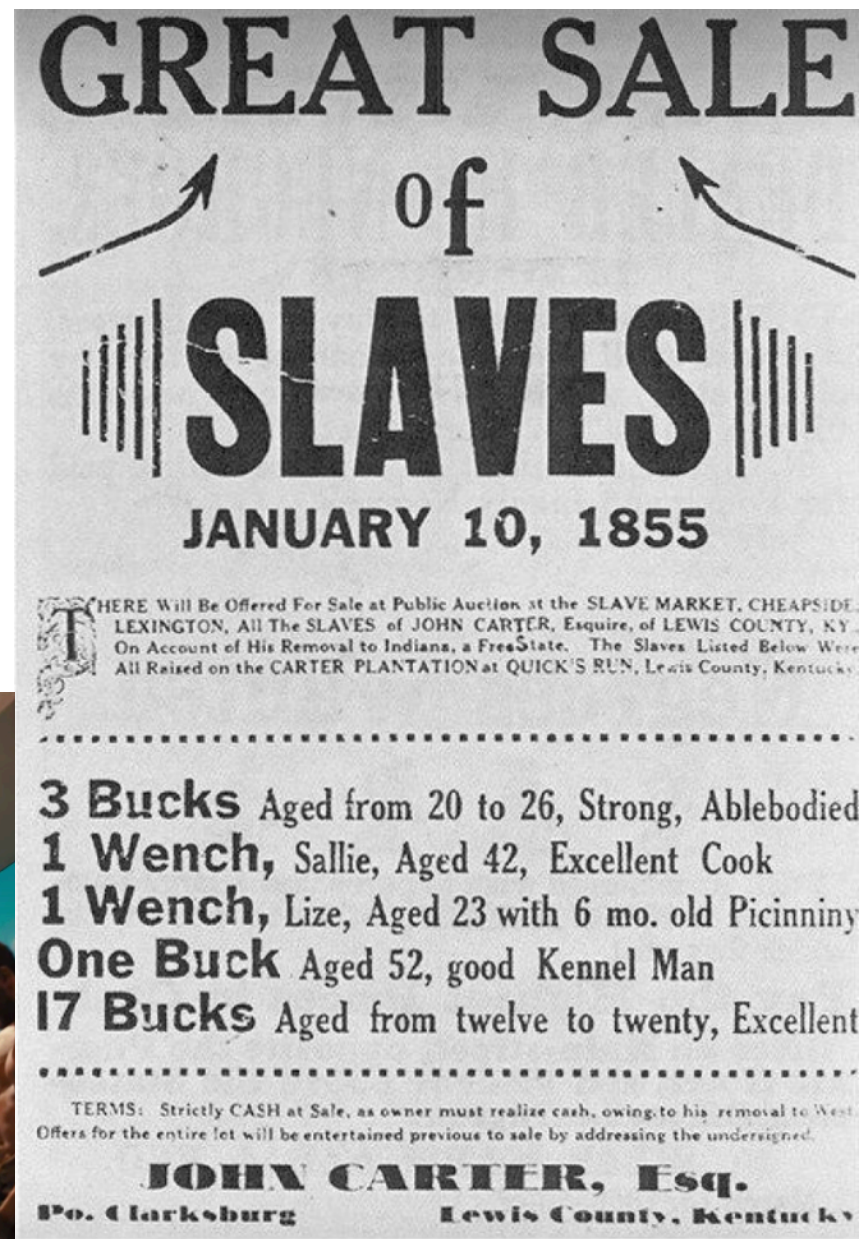
VIEWER'S GUIDE

EP.1: CORNROWS

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SECTION 1: Present-day Colin argues that the NFL Combine and enslavement-era auction blocks are driven by many of the same power dynamics. Why do you think this comparison is made? Are there additional or different ways you see a connection between these practices? Where else in society do you see similar practices and power dynamics show up?

What did you first think and feel when you saw athletes transition into portrayals of enslaved people? Was your conscience challenged? If so, how? Did you know that former NFL cornerback Anthony Prior made a similar argument in his 2006 book *The Slave Side of Sunday*? For more, check out this short [interview](#) Prior did with sports writer Dave Zirin for *The Nation*.



Source: John Winston Coleman, *Slavery Times in Kentucky* (1940)



SECTION 2: Colin was born in Wisconsin and grew up in Turlock, California. He describes both places as “known for dairy farming and a scarcity of Black people.” The type of residential segregation that present-day Colin describes has its roots in anti-Black 20th and 21st-century U.S. housing policy.

Between 1935-1940, the Home Owner's Loan Corporation (HOLC), an agency of the U.S. government, created color-coded “residential security” maps of over 200 major U.S. cities to evaluate neighborhoods based on their potential risks as investments. Neighborhoods that were considered financially high risk or “hazardous” — the vast majority of which were Black and Brown — were often “redlined” (literally colored in red) and were deemed unworthy of long-term investment.

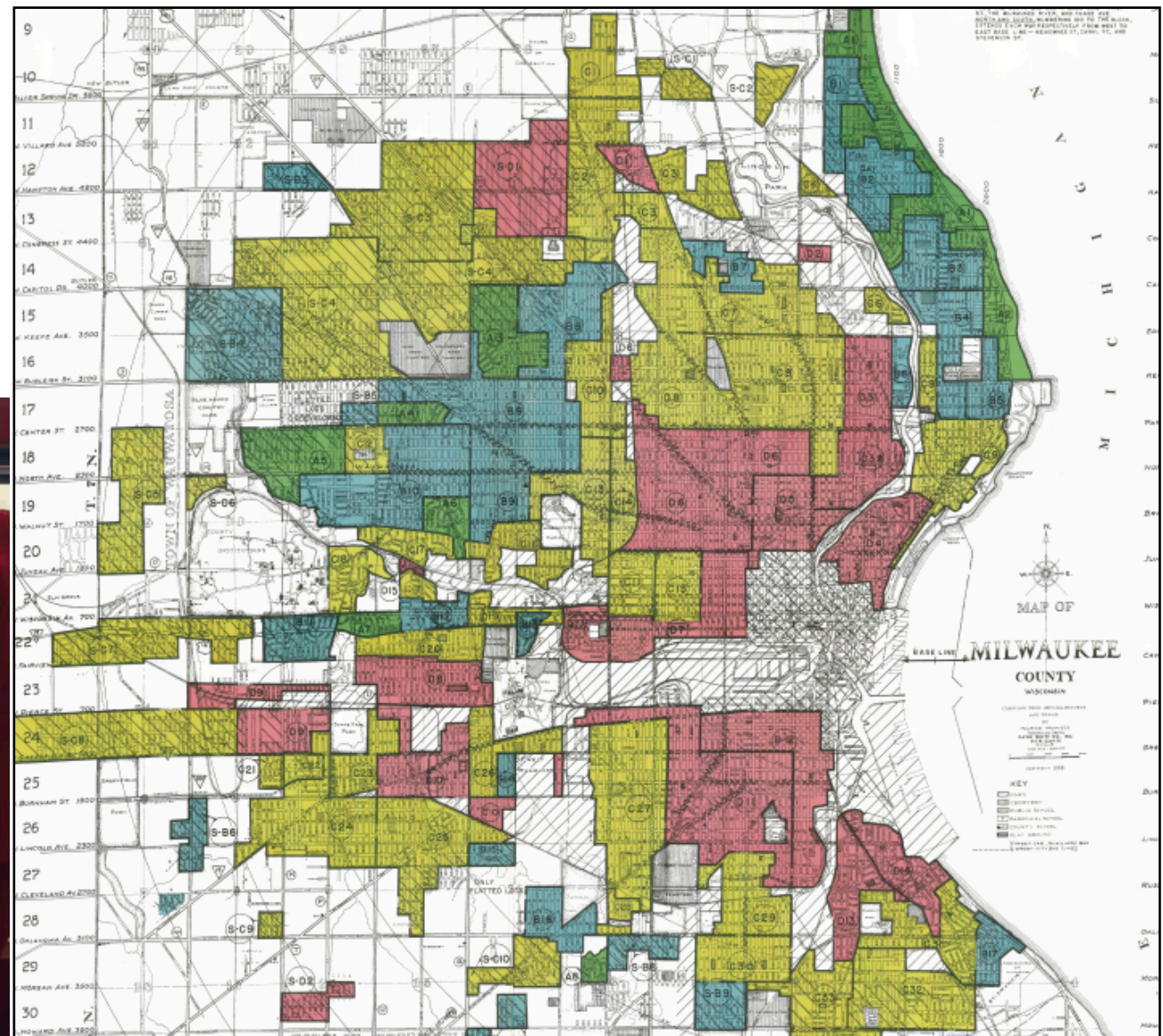


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Check out [Mapping Inequality: Redlining in New Deal America](#) — an interactive mapping project — to learn more about the history of residential segregation in your own city, state, and neighborhood. What did you discover? How does this expand your understanding of your community today? How can you get involved in eliminating disparities in equal access to housing faced by Black communities?



SECTION 3: Throughout this episode, cornrows are seen as an aesthetic choice based in resistance to the cultural status quo. What aesthetic choices (i.e: clothes, accessories, hair, etc.) in your life might also be considered resistance to the cultural status quo? For more, check out this short essay in *Teen Vogue* entitled "[A Brief History of Black Hair, Politics, and Discrimination](#)" by Jameelah Nasheed for a deeper dive into the centuries-long criminalization of what scholar bell hooks calls "Black looks."

Young Colin's hair was repeatedly described as "unprofessional." Who gets to define what it means to act or look "professional" and how has this shown up in your own life or the lives of people you know?

For a closer consideration of the politics of Black hair, check out Kobena Mercer's 1987 essay, "[Black Hair/Style Politics.](#)"

