This 90-minute remote presentation addresses the following questions:

- How and why were the “Black” and “White” “races” developed?
- How and why did anti-Black Racism first develop in the U.S. (Colonial era)?

This presentation explores the following big ideas:

1. Early (early-mid 1600s) Colonial America was more of a class-based rather than race-based society. “White” and “Negro” racial identities were recognized and anti-Black bias/prejudice certainly existed. However, neither the binary, essentialized concept of races as we know them today, nor had racism as a legal system been constructed.

2. Initially, slavery was neither lifelong nor inheritable, and was not legally associated with race. It took about 75 years for chattel slavery to develop in the colonies.

3. Early Colonial America was home to a prosperous community of Free Blacks. A few were wealthy large landowners who owned indentured whites and enslaved Blacks, voted, and held office. *(primary sources)*

4. Interracial marriages and mixed-race children were not uncommon. *(primary sources)*

5. Colonial elites faced several class rebellions of poor Whites allied with poor Blacks.

6. Race is a social construct; our nation’s racial binary is arbitrary and unique.

7. Racism = Prejudice + Power/Law.

8. Racism did not lead to slavery; rather, slavery lead to racism.

9. Elites constructed racism by intensifying and codifying anti-Black societal prejudice.

10. Racism and slavery were supported and justified by racist stereotypes, white Christianity and Enlightenment ideas, and later by pseudoscience/eugenics.

11. Racism *(the myth of Black racial inferiority)* was the narrative that white elites/slave owners created *(“the story we tell”)* to:
   a) Uphold slavery and white supremacy *(economic interests)* and 
   b) Divide poor Whites and Blacks *(political interests)*.

12. Systemic racism consists not only of racial bias/prejudice but also the underlying economic and political structures/incentives that these racial narratives justify.

13. "*[Our] history makes clear that systemic racism as it developed in the United States was not an inevitability, it was a series of intentional choices. If the framework for white supremacy was deliberately built in this country, it can also be deliberately dismantled*."
   ---Vanessa Williamson, Senior Fellow, Brookings Institute