**The National Registry of Exonerations**

**Race and Wrongful Convictions**

African Americans (13%)  
U.S. Population  
Known exonerations  
African Americans (47%)

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**Murder**

Black people are 7 times more likely to be wrongfully convicted of murder than white people.

- African Americans imprisoned for murder are more likely to be innocent if they were convicted of killing white victims.

- On average, black murder exonerees spend 3 years longer in prison before release than white exonerees.

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**Sexual Assault**

A black prisoner serving time for sexual assault is 3.5 times more likely to be innocent than a white sexual assault convict. The major cause is misidentification of black defendants by white victims.

- In half of all sexual assault exonervations where mistaken identification is a factor, the defendant was black and the victim was white.

- African-American sexual assault exonerees spent 4.5 years longer in prison than white sexual assault exonerees.

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**Drug Cases**

Innocent African Americans are 12 times more likely to be convicted of drug possession than innocent white people.

- In Harris County, Texas, 133 defendants pled guilty to drug possession, but lab tests later showed they had no illegal drugs.

- Since 1989, more than 1,800 defendants have been cleared in “group exonerations” that followed 15 large-scale police scandals in which officers systematically framed innocent defendants. The great majority were African-American defendants who were framed for drug crimes that never occurred.