Racial Equity, COVID-19, Public Policy: The Triple Pandemic

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Outline

• Context and motivation for the book
• Broad overview of three sections
• Critical lessons learned
• Q and A
Motivation for the Book: Context

“It’s either COVID is killing us, cops are killing us, or the economy is killing us” (Priscilla Borkor per Altman, 2020)

• Convergence of major threats to public health economic well being and access to justice
• Pandemic highlighted systemic inequality
• George Floyd May 25th 2020 and Black Lives Matter
• Needed to focus on action
• “We can do better than this..... We MUST do better” L. Douglas Wilder
Wilder School Racial Equity Action Plan:

“Our faculty, staff, students and alumni are not bystanders to social injustice and believe we must aggressively contribute to eliminating institutional racism” (Wilder School, 2020).

I. Policies and Practices
II. Student Support
III. Teaching and Curriculum
IV. Research and Scholarship
Book Overview:

- Twelve chapters, Forward by Governor L. Douglas Wilder
- Three broad themes (health, criminal justice, economics)
- 25 authors, including 16 Wilder School faculty members, three Wilder School Ph.D. students, three Wilder School alumni, three faculty members from other universities and two practitioners.
Primary Questions for Each Chapter:

- **Historical context**—What were the pre-pandemic issues that set the stage for what occurred later?
- **Pandemic impacts**—What occurred during the pandemic to exacerbate or accentuate the issue to a new level?
- **Analyses**—What data or information can be brought to document the nature, seriousness, and any trends of racial inequities?
- **Implications**—What are recommendations for public policy, private sector, or civil society actions moving forward to improve the situation as it now exists?
Part I: Health Pandemic

2. Unmasking Disaster Disparities and Inequality in Local Emergency Management; Hans Louis-Charles, Lemir Teron, Nakeina E. Douglas-Glenn, and Amidu Kalokoh


5. Immigrant Equity and Lessons From the Triple Pandemic; Grant E. Rissler
Part II: Justice Pandemic


7. Demanding Change and Racial Justice: Public Protests and Demonstrations During the Covid-19 Pandemic; Steven Keener and William V. Pelfrey, Jr.

8. COVID-19, Race, and Justice: Implications for Reentry of Justice-Involved People (JIP) Going Forward; Christina Mancini and Frances G. Stadlin
Part III: Economic Pandemic


10. COVID-19 and Housing Instability: From Emergency Response to Longer-Term Transformation; Kathryn Howell, Benjamin F. Teresa, and Maria Dougherty

11. The COVID-19 Pandemic Response by Institutions of Higher Education: Negative Consequences for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color; Jacqueline Smith-Mason, RaJade M. Berry-James, and Blue E. Wooldridge

Cross Cutting Themes

(1) The pandemic exacerbated preexisting inequities and magnified uneven racial impacts in almost every aspect of life.

(2) Public institutions have had to quickly build capacity to serve the needs arising from the pandemic.

(3) Cross-sectoral partnerships are critical for addressing complex problems.

(4) Data are critical for effectively and accurately assessing and addressing inequality.

(5) The increased reliance on technology during the pandemic has highlighted the pervasiveness of the digital divide and its wide-reaching equity implications.
Cross Cutting Themes:

(6) Policies designed without consideration of race lead to further marginalization.

(7) As the pandemic (hopefully) winds down, resources put in place to deal with the economic, health, and justice concerns will dry up, and the underlying structural issues perpetuating inequality during the pandemic will remain and may intensify.

(8) The structural issues uncovered in this volume are not new.

(9) While there are hopeful signs, much work remains.
Conclusion:

This deepening racial division is not inevitable. The movement apart can still be reversed. . . . The alternative is not blind repression or capitulation to lawlessness. It is the realization of common opportunities for all within a single society. . . . From every American, it will require new attitudes, new understanding, and above all, new will. (Kerner Report 1968, 1)
THANK YOU!