

Develop, verb. (used with object) \dih-vel-uh p\:

- to bring out the capabilities or possibilities of; bring to a more advanced or effective state: *develop natural resources*; *to develop one's musical talent*.
- to cause to grow or expand: *develop one's muscles*.
- to elaborate or expand in detail: *to develop a theory*, to bring into being or activity; generate; evolve.
- biology:
 - to cause to go through the process of natural evolution from a previous and lower stage.
 - to cause to progress from an embryonic to an adult form. ("develop," *Dictionary.com*.)

Development, noun. \dih-vel-uh p-muh nt\:

- the act or process of developing; growth; progress.
- “...a large group of private houses or of apartment houses, often of similar design, constructed as a unified community, especially by a real-estate developer or government organization.”
- mining: the work of digging openings, as tunnels, raises, and winzes, to give access to new workings, and of erecting necessary structures. ("development," *Dictionary.com*.)

"Development is a frayed flag, an emblem in its final agony and a catchword used to sell toxic products." (Gustavo Esteva, *Universidad de la Tierra*.)

DEVELOPMENT FOR DUMMIES STEP ONE: REMOVAL AND DIVISION

Editor's Note: *The first people to live in Louisiana were the Atakapa, Avoyel, Bayogoula, Biloxi, Chatot, Chawasha, Chitimacha, Choctaw, Houma, Koasati, Koroa, Mugulasha, Muskogee, Natchez, Natchitoches, Olelousa, Opelousa, Pascagoula, Qapaw, Quipmissa, Souchitioni, Taensa, Tangipahoa, Tawasa, and Washa.*

Monique Verdin, 2018: "In the Houma origin story, a crawfish is at the bottom of the water and starts building his crawfish mound; that's what made the land: pulling the mud together and building the banks. The Houma are part of this greater American mound-building culture. There are ancient mounds in the Mississippi Delta." (Monique Verdin, Councilmember, United Houma Nation.)

EN: *And then the Europeans arrived.*

1620: *Vacuum domicellum*, the legal justification for the systematic theft of Indigenous land, was coined by John Winthrop, Puritan election rigger, founder of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, and father of the 'City Upon a Hill' School of **American Exceptionalism**. Winthrop declared Indigenous land use to be valueless because it was in balance with nature—regenerative rather than extractive; collective rather than individualistic. Indigenous methods of land stewardship, rather than land ownership, rendered their ancestral lands 'empty' and available for European occupation. **[See: Gentrification]**

Verdin: "Our modern society has such a narrow view of tribal people, presuming that they were living in isolation. What's really fascinating about this territory is that there were petite nations here prior to colonization. There were eight languages spoken right here in the Mississippi Delta. This land was called **Bulbancha**, meaning, in the Mobilian trading language of the region, **Land of Many Languages**."

Benjamin Franklin, "Founding Father," 1751: "And while we are, as I may call it, **Scouring our Planet**, by **clearing America of Woods**, and so making this Side of our Globe reflect a brighter Light to the Eyes of Inhabitants in Mars or Venus, why should we in the Sight of Superior Beings, darken its People? **Why increase the Sons of Africa**, by Planting them in America, where we have so fair an Opportunity, by excluding all Blacks and Tawneys, of increasing the lovely White and Red?" (Franklin, Benjamin. *Observations Concerning the Increase of Mankind, Peopling of Countries, etc.*, 1751.)

EN: *The "White and Red" above refers to bloodllow visible under blushing white folks' skin. Franklin and Thomas Jefferson considered visibility of blood due to heat and temper as evidence of White physical superiority over Blacks. [See: Blight]*

EN: *In 2018, New Orleans celebrated its Tricentennial. Three hundred years. Yet, people lived here for thousands of years prior to the city's founding, so what exactly were we celebrating?*

Verdin: "My grandmother was always of the strong, moral [stance] that you don't ever use more than you need and you never waste. It was really hard for her to see hunters who we had trained not to be that way and they would take way more. [...] You live in a certain balance. It's okay to feed yourself but it's not okay to take more than you need."

Codify, verb. \kod-uh-, fahy\:

- To justify behaviors, procedures, or rules through their establishment as legal code. Systematize. Classify. ("codify," *Dictionary.com*.)

1830: **The Indian Removal Act** further codified the genocide and displacement of Native Americans across the United States. The Act empowered the U.S. Army to forcibly remove around 100,000 Native people from their ancestral homes and march them to State-sanctioned "reservations" out west between 1830 and 1869. Nearly one-third of this group died along the march or shortly thereafter.

1887: "[...]The President of the United States [shall] be, and he hereby is, authorized, whenever in his opinion any reservation or any part thereof of such Indians is **advantageous** for agricultural and grazing purposes to cause said reservation, or any part thereof, to be surveyed, or resurveyed if necessary, and to allot the lands in said reservations in **severalty** to any Indian located thereon in quantities as follows:

To each head of a family, one-quarter of a section; To each single person over eighteen years of age, one-eighth of a section; To each orphan child under eighteen years of age, one-eighth of a section; and, To each other single person under eighteen years now living, or who may be born prior to the date of the order of the President directing an allotment of the lands embraced in any reservation, one-sixteenth of a section [...]" (The Dawes Act of 1887, Forty-Ninth Congress of the United States of America.)

EN: *Chipping away the frontier closed, the U.S. government declared away at reservations and further isolated Indigenous people on small parcels of land with The Dawes Act, which authorized the President to abolish tribal and communal land ownership and **divide** reservations into private property in order to divide and conquer; those who accepted individual allotments and lived separately from the tribe were granted the security of U.S. citizenship and property title.*

"Between the declared **closing of the frontier** in the 1887 Dawes Act and the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934, more than 80% of the 156 million acres of land awarded by federal treaty to Indian tribes were seized by or transferred to non-Indian homesteaders, investors, and corporations." (Moberg, Mark and Sesi Moberg, Tawnya. "The United Houma Nation in the U.S. Congress: Corporations, Communities, and the Politics of Federal Acknowledgment," *Urban Anthropology and Studies of Cultural Systems and World Economic Development*. Vol. 34, No. 1, Spring 2005, p. 85-124.)

PBS: "Congressman Henry Dawes, author of the Act, once expressed his faith in the **civilizing power of private property** with the claim that what to civilized was to 'wear civilized clothes [...] cultivate the ground, live in houses, ride in studebaker wagons, send children to school, drink whiskey [and] own property.' (PBS Archives of the West, 2001. *The West Film Project and WETA*). **[See: Auction]**

2006: "A global dimension to the frenzy for Native land is reflected in the fact that, as economic immigrants, the rabble were generally drawn from the ranks of Europe's landless. The cattle and other stock were not only being driven off Cherokee land; they were being driven into private ownership. Once evacuated, the Red man's land would be mixed with Black labour to produce cotton, the white gold of the Deep South. To this end, the international slave trade and the highest echelons of the formal state apparatus converged across three continents with the disorderly pillaging of a nomadic horde who may or may not have been 'lawless' but who were categorically 'White.' (Patrick Wolfe, "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native," *Journal of Genocide Research* 8, no. 4, Dec. 2006, p. 392.)

EN: *The "development" of America required the theft of Indigenous land, the enslavement of Africans to cultivate it, and the promise of white privilege for landless Europeans to defend it.*

STEP TWO: CONSOLIDATION

EN: *What does it mean for Black people to occupy Indigenous land, whether enslaved upon it, stewarding it, or demanding the right of our 40 acres and a mule?*

1790: The town of **Mossville, LA**, is founded by Jack Moss, a formerly enslaved person. Over the years, the town grows to 600 people, but is never formally incorporated.

1865: In the wake of Emancipation, hundreds of towns began to form throughout the rural South. Formerly enslaved Blacks began building community, wealth, and a sense of autonomy. Yet this nation developed through slave labor remained unwilling to grant the recognition and rights of full citizenship to Black people. The fate of these fledgling communities remained fragile.

"The **13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments**, respectively, abolished slavery, recognized African Americans as citizens, and guaranteed African American men the right to vote. [...] By 1875, African Americans across the South, supported by the federal government, had established nearly **four thousand schools** for Black students. In addition, more than fifteen hundred had run for office as state and national representatives." (Brown, Nikki, "Jim Crow," *Know Louisiana*, the Digital encyclopedia of Louisiana and the Home of Louisiana's Cultural Vistas.)

EN: *Fearing the erosion of white supremacy, states began to impose the **Black Codes** in efforts to restrict newly granted rights. Yet inspite of this reaction, in Southern Louisiana, Black people fought for and won the greatest gains in liberty in the Deep South, including integrated politics, schools, and public transportation. The 1874 Battle at Liberty Place in New Orleans effectively brought an end to Reconstruction in Louisiana. With the removal of federal troops from the South in 1877, the segregationist laws of Jim Crow (1877-1970) were installed, and Blacks were one again stripped of their inherent rights and dignity.*

"As Reconstruction ended, most African Americans in Louisiana rented **small plots** of land, hoping to become self-sufficient farmers. Former slaves tended to stay geographically close to their former masters, usually living no more than fifty miles away. In place of slavery, Whites developed an agricultural system called **sharecropping**. Whites gave African American farmers access to land with the understanding that these farmers would give the landowner part of the crop as 'rent.' Sharecropping quickly evolved into an **exploitative relationship between farmers and landlords**. Often illiterate and uneducated, sharecroppers rarely understood the written contracts they were compelled to sign. Further, landlords set the price of the crop, often **ignoring its market value**, while Black farmers were left without recourse. Sharecropping undergirded Black poverty in Louisiana—profits were scarce, weather and climate were often uncooperative, and corruption was rampant. While there were attempts to unify White and Black farmers in the immediate postbellum period, sharecropping allowed class and racial distinctions to persist." (Brown, Nikki. *ibid*.)

EN: *In the face of the growing threat of violence , disenfranchisement and WWI's promise of manufacturing jobs, 6 million African Americans left the agricultural South and dispersed to the urban Northeast, Midwest and West of the United States between 1916-1970 in a period known as **The Great Migration**. By 1960, of those African Americans still living in the South, half now lived in urban areas, and by 1970, more than 80% of African Americans nationwide lived in cities.*

Bryan C. Lee, Jr., 2018: "The system of White supremacy, which existed long before Black neighborhoods tried to sustain themselves, was able to destroy those neighborhoods whether by small codes or laws, or by outright violence."

EN: *Amid racial hatred and fears of racial and economic degeneration [See: Blight], this era saw the emergence of **white flight and suburbanization**, along with the feared*

sundown town, which banned African Americans from existing within town borders after dark upon penalty of death. While these practices were rarely codified into policy, they were enforced by police and organized mobs. The first **Red Scare** was in full swing and white Americans spread malicious rumors that Black resistance was part of a Bolshevik conspiracy.

Woodrow Wilson, 28th President of the U.S., 1919: "The American Negro returning from abroad would be our greatest medium in conveying Bolshevism to America."

1919: **The Red Summer.** In response to twin economic fears over Black exodus from the South and influx to cities in the North and West, White race riots break out in 33 cities across the nation between May 10 and Oct. 1, including in New Orleans.

3,500 Black people were lynched between 1882 and 1968.

EN: *Starting in the 1910s, the ideologies and systems that kept Black people either bound to the former plantations of their past enslavement or uprooted in landless migration evolved into **municipal zoning laws**.*

1917: With **Buchanan v. Warley**, the Supreme Court strikes down an overtly racist zoning law in Louisville, KY. The decision inspired city planners, among them Harland Bartholomew of St. Louis, later hired by the City of New Orleans **[See: Blight]**, to craft zoning laws that would allow for racial exclusion without the overt use of racialized language.

EN: *Zoning allowed governments to dictate a primary "use" for specific neighborhoods as well as where resources could be allocated and what types of buildings could exist: Zoning was used to prevent apartment buildings from being constructed in neighborhoods with single-family homes, expressing an explicit class and an implicit racial bias to preserve White, middle-class neighborhoods.*

1926: Village of Euclid v. Ambler Realty Company affirms the practice of zoning as constitutional. A Lower Court initially ruled against Euclid, noting in their judgment that the ordinance in question was being aimed implicitly, if not explicitly, at stopping "the colored or certain foreign races [from] invading] a residential section." The Supreme Court, on the other hand, ultimately sided with Euclid and with racial segregation.

Lee: "[With Euclid v. Ambler] the Supreme Court essentially made neighborhoods into spaces that were now imminently enforceable by **police power**. **[See: Property]**

EN: *In the U.S., "police power" grants the State the power to control the organization of neighborhoods and communities. **Exclusionary, or single-use, zoning** prevents the organic growth of neighborhoods and communities according to the need of its residents. Urbanist, **Jane Jacobs** criticised exclusionary zoning for creating urban sprawl, urban decay, chronic poverty, disinvestment, and displacement.*

Lee: "What Euclid v. Ambler did was allow for cities to reach out and zone particular areas for [specific] functions, so education went here, industrial went here, commercial went here, residential over here. [...] When you create zones that are defined by simple functionalities, you start to strip away the consolidated resources that are in a particular neighborhood. When you have food and education and healthcare within a proximal distance of a neighborhood center, it makes the cost go down [and] it makes the functionality of living much easier. The side effect of this deconsolidation is that zoning became a way to excise or move resources to control the flow of certain people in certain spaces. It made it so you could actually spread those things out, making it more difficult for Black and Brown people to concentrate themselves around those things and thusly making it easier to thin them out over space."

Atlanta City Planning Commission, 1922: "Home neighborhoods had to be protected from any further damage to values resulting from inappropriate uses, including the encroachment of the colored."

"Zoning thus had two faces. One face, developed in part to evade a prohibition on racially explicit zoning, attempted to keep African Americans out of White neighborhoods by making it difficult for lower-income families, large numbers of whom were African Americans, to live in expensive White neighborhoods. The other attempted to protect White neighborhoods from deterioration by ensuring that few industrial or environmentally unsafe businesses could locate in them. Prohibited in this fashion, polluting industry had no option but to locate near African American residences. The first contributed to the creation of exclusive White **suburbs**, the second to creation of urban African Americans **slums**." (Rothestein, Richard. *The Color of Law: a forgotten history of how our government segregated America*, 2017. p. 57.)

EN: *Populations in the North and Midwest increased so rapidly among both Black migrants and recent European immigrants that there were housing shortages in most major cities. With segregationist zoning laws in place and fewer resources available, Blacks and European immigrants were forced to compete for the oldest, most run-down housing. **[See: Blight]** Oftentimes, poor, Black neighborhoods would be zoned as Industrial, Creating neighborhoods without access to basic life necessities like grocery stores, zoning is responsible for the advent of **food deserts**.*

1918: "Rigs will be in place and drills will be **penetrating the earth** in Terrebonne Parish within 60 days. It was promised Thursday by the Louisiana Southern Oil and Gas Corporation—the state's newest development concern." ("Drilling For Oil To Be Undertaken In Nearby Held New Concern Promises Extensive Development in," *The Times-Picayune*, 22 Feb. 1918, p. 7.)

Verdin, 2018: "[My Grandmother] was of the generation that witnessed the oil and gas come in and canals dredged and the refineries built and the land really go. It's crazy to think how quickly our reality has changed. With that, it's really interesting to see how **complex** it's become here in the vein of taking more than you need and having so many Houma and other people of this coast who are **dependent** on this extractive economy being the oil and gas industry. We don't have any other economic engine aside from the port—that's still tied to oil and gas—and service industry—which is also, arguably, tied to oil and gas. I think that we're in a **time of transition** where people's moral compass has been influenced by decades of this industry controlling everything from the politics to our air quality at this point."

Tulsa, Oklahoma, 1921: Thousands of White folks marauded through the all-Black **Greenwood community** for two days, burning and looting homes and businesses. The massacre destroyed the wealthiest Black business district in the U.S. at the time, known as "**Black Wall Street**". **In the first aerial bombing on U.S. soil**, incendiary devices destroyed 35 blocks. Over 6,000 Black residents were arrested; there were over 1,200 casualties, including an estimated 300 deaths. Around 10,000 Black families were left homeless. Direct property damages amounted to more than \$2.25 million (\$31 million in 2018). The massacre has been largely omitted from history education.

STEP THREE: EXTRACTION

Extract, verb. \ik-strakt\:

- to draw forth (as by research): extract data.
- to pull or take out forcibly: extract a wisdom tooth.
- to obtain by much effort from someone unwilling: extracted a confession.
- to withdraw something by physical or chemical process: extract oil and gas. ("extract," *Dictionary.com*.)

1901: The S.A. Spencer Company, later renamed **Jennings Oil**, is the first to drill for oil in Louisiana. "They drilled deeper and deeper into the earth until finally at 1700 feet, oil gushed forth." (Zebrowski, Ernest, and Mariah Zebrowski Leach, *Hydrocarbon Hucksters: Lessons from Louisiana on Oil, Politics, and Environmental Justice*, 2014. p. 25.)

1905: Jennings Oil and its competitors collectively drain about 48,000 barrels of oil per day from the Jennings Oil Field in Jefferson Davis Parish. **The companies begin building oil pipelines along, across, and through rivers and baysos.**

"The 4-inch pipe line of Carnes, Bass, & Benckenstein from the Jennings field to Butte la Rose, on the **Atchafalaya River** at the head of the **Grand River**, is completed from the field to a point of the Southern Pacific branch near Egan. Two gangs are laying pipe and it is expected that the work will be completed in a month [...] the oil will be loaded on Barges at Butte la Rose and then down Grand River and up Plaquemine Bayou to Devil's Elbow, near Plaquemine, from which point it is only two miles overland to the **Mississippi River**. [...] A contract has been let by Carnes, Bass & Benckenstein to the Petroleum Iron Works for the construction of two 55,000 barrel steel tanks, to be located on the **plantation of B.C LeBlanc at Plaquemine**." (Jennings Oil Field, "The Times-Picayune, 6 Apr. 1905, p. 15.)

Verdin: "Part of the **Houma Nation** were living in the Yakeshido, the 'Big Country,' between the Mississippi and Atchafalaya Rivers, until the '40s [...] when my grandfather started to migrate to St. Bernard Parish from Terrebonne/Lafourche to trap. That was the end of the days of big fur trapping—they were trapping mink, muskrat, otter, towards the end they started trapping nutria."

"90 million acres of tribal land were stolen from Native American Indians and retailed to non-natives. [...] The ownership of the land in Jennings was controversial, yet the White settlers were able to make a **profit from oil extraction**, even though, just decades before, it was Choctaw and Cherokee land." (Reid, Eloise. "Losing Land to Oil," 2018.)

EN: *Across the U.S., reservations that settlers previously assessed as **worthless** quickly became **profitable**. As land values rose, so did property taxes, leaving the Houma and other Indigenous tribes vulnerable to **tax sales and evictions**, among other predatory land-grab strategies. **[See: Auction]***

"In one such instance, **150 families were rendered landless for a single oil company payment of \$20**." (Moberg and Sesi Moberg, p. 100.)

Verdin: "In Terrebonne/Lafourche, if you had a last name like Verdin, people knew that you were Indian and you were treated as such. Land had been swiped up in the '20s and '30s, so [people] were really suffering. That's why they were coming [to St. Bernard Parish] to trap—because they **didn't have land of their own**."

EN: *Underhanded business deals left Indigenous tribes with only a fraction of the profit of the oil and gas extracted from their communities. Some prospectors tricked tribal members into selling their property, offering fake leases printed in English that were actually bills of sale. Other oil companies simply began drilling with no permission. Indigenous peoples were barred from employment within the oil industry until the 1950s. By then, with traditional systems for self-sufficiency broken, the industry had become the sole option for employment.*

"Due to the significant economic interests at stake in [federal nationhood] acknowledgment decisions, petitioning tribes often find their **claims opposed by corporations** whose control of land and other resources would be **threatened by federal tribal status**." (Moberg and Sesi Moberg. *ibid*.)

EN: *Oil companies promised wealth for the region, as well as an unending supply of oil.*

1903: "The investment of millions of dollars in refineries is one of the main reasons for assuming that the industry has reached a **permanent** basis. It is argued the men who are putting their money into these large plants would not risk it on an uncertain supply of oil." ("The Oil Industry Of Texas And Louisiana, Source of Great Wealth to Both States," *The Times-Picayune*, 1 Sep. 1903, p. 52.)

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STEP FOUR: DEVELOPMENT OIL IS POWER

1936: The Louisiana Mineral Board is constituted.

1953: "As governmental agencies go, the mineral board is an **infant**. [...]As] an **adult breadwinner**

of the Louisiana family, the mineral board has more importance than most of the older agencies." ("Olvey Describes Board Policies," *The Times-Picayune*, 10 Oct. 1953, p. 66.)

EN: *Further entrenching a culture and economy of extraction, the LA Mineral Board operated as both a profit-seeking corporation and a state agency charged with "serving" the people and needs of Louisiana. It positioned itself as the government, the **benevolent Father of Louisiana**, and a business all rolled into one. Cunning personification of the industry helped to endear people to it. **[See: Corporate Personhood]***

1953: "Like other corporations, the board must use the best business practices to ensure **maximum operations at maximum profit**, both for you and for us. [...] our profit comes directly from leasing state-owned resources. You of the oil and gas industry make our profit possible by leasing our state lands and water bottoms for mineral development." (*ibid*.)

Verdin: "I've been reminding people lately that if you speak out about the oil and gas industry in South Louisiana, you're really gambling with a risk of being **blacklisted**. That can mean a multitude of things if you work in the environment or the arts and everything in between. Especially if you work in the industry. We are constantly duck-taping ourselves and putting ourselves in the corner because we are afraid, and the industry has been telling us for a long time that if you don't have oil and gas you have nothing. We've been believing that and we don't have any outside investment into alternative solutions because the industry is so strong here."

EN: *As the state's income from oil exploration grew, so did the political power of oil corporations. Nicknaming crude oil as "**black gold**", supporters of the extractive industry saw oil production as key to **post-slavery economic development**.*

1937: "Already, [black gold] is worth over \$25,000,000. Some Infant! And everyone who has seen this belching youngster predicts a world champion, big-time operator in the near future." ("Terrebone Parish Announces A Birth and a Rebirth," *New Orleans Item*, 30 May 1937, p. 140.)

1952: "The oil industry is playing a major role in the **industrial development** of New Orleans. New Fields are opening, new refinery capacity is building, new petrochemical plants are rising as South Louisiana continues its substantial production of crude petroleum." (Industrial Development Staff, New Orleans Public Service Inc. "New Orleans Grows with Oil Industry," *The Times-Picayune*, 12 Oct. 1952, p. 122.)

EN: *By the early 1950s, oil extraction was the 4th largest industry in the world. One might think that Louisiana's centrality in the oil industry would make the state among the wealthiest in the country. Not so; Louisiana ranks among the poorest. What gives?*

Corruption, noun. \kuh-ruh-p-shuh'n\:

- the act of corrupting or state of being corrupt.
- moral perversion; depravity.
- perversion of integrity. ("corruption," *Dictionary.com*.)

"**'Judge' Leander Henry Perez** (1891-1969) was one of the most powerful political bosses in American history, ruling Plaquemines Parish with absolute control for five decades, from the 1920s through the 1960s. A millionaire oil speculator, he rose to power as a race-baiting Southern political leader, becoming a virtual dictator and an ally of fellow outspoken white supremacists of his era, including George Wallace, Strom Thurmond, and Lester Maddox." (Jeansonne, Glen, "Leander Perez," *Encyclopedia of Louisiana, Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities*, 4 Nov 2013. Web: 7 Jun 2018.)

CORRUPTION 101: HOW TO MANIPULATE PUBLIC LANDS FOR PERSONAL PROFIT !!! The Leander Perez Story

Step 1: Get the governor to support a constitutional amendment that will allow you to control the assets of indebted, land-owning public agencies!

EN: *In 1928, a constitutional amendment proposed by Perez and passed by Huey P. Long gave the **Plaquemines Parish Police Jury** (the official governing body of the parish) the authority to take over the bonded debt of levee districts, confiscating their assets for the duration of their indebtedness. As district attorney, Perez was the legal adviser of the Levee Board and easily kept the Board in perpetual debt.*

Step 2: Enlist your friends working for the State Land Office to help!

*Perez then persuaded friends in the **State Land Office** to acquire federal swamplands and transfer them to the indebted Levee Boards. He also used the Board's powers of **eminent domain** to acquire private property. Finally, Perez interfered in the Parish School Board elections to gain power over the school district's land. The indebted levee board then set out to lease its new land's mineral rights.*

Step 3: Help your friends and relatives form shell companies to buy those leases!

EN: *Perez leased the levee board's mineral rights at 10 cents per acre to shell companies formed by close friends and family who then flipped the leases to legitimate oil and gas companies for \$1-2 per acre, plus royalties. Perez profited by issuing lifelong contracts for his legal services.*

Step 4: Put that stolen money in your bank account and be rich!!!!!!

EN: *Although he never earned more than \$7,000 per year as a public "servant," at the time of his death in 1969, Perez's estate was worth \$100 million (\$500 million today). Plaquemines Parish sued Perez heirs for \$87 million, settling for \$12 million.*

"There were two themes in Perez's career: **race and power**. He exercised domination over his constituents and crushed all opponents. He attained this unassailable status by way of creating a **miniature welfare state** for Plaquemines Parish, with schools, roads, and recreational facilities financed by the parish's mineral wealth rather than taxation." (Jeansonne. *ibid*.)

EN: *Although oil and gas claims to contribute more than \$60 billion annually to the economy, **industries of extraction, from enslavement to oil, tend to burden public health and concentrate wealth in the hands of a few**, leaving little money for the "development" of public schools, hospitals, and housing.*

1948: "Perez played a pivotal role in a decision during President Harry Truman's administration that denied Louisiana its potential share of revenue from **offshore oil leases**. [...] Perez, acting out of personal interests from his lucrative leases in Plaquemines Parish [...] prevailed upon Long to turn down the deal and threatened to take Long's nephew Russell, Huey's son and a candidate for U.S. Senate, off the States' Rights ticket, virtually handing the election to Shoreport Republican Clem Clarke. If Long accepted Rayburn's offer, Caving to Perez's arm twisting, Long turned down the proposal. The federal government subsequently filed suit against Texas and Louisiana, **claiming sovereignty over all mineral resources beneath oceans**. [...]

"The estimated loss to Louisiana over the course of seven decades has been calculated at \$100 billion." (Jeansonne. *ibid*.)

EN: *While oil industry insiders were riding high on the oil boom of the mid-20th century, the oil glut of the 1980s led to **blight**, sending New Orleans' economy into a nose-dive. Industry employees left the city a wave of abandonment left tens of thousands of blighted properties across the city. **[See: Blight]***

1985: "By the mid-1980s, one in eight workers was unemployed in Louisiana, the highest unemployment rate in the nation. The cruelest impact was on families, as fathers left their children and young adults left their parents to find work in prosperous places such as Atlanta and Dallas." ("1985: The oil bust hits the New Orleans economy," *The Times-Picayune*, 28 Dec. 2011.)

EN: *The "development" of a city is dependent on the whims of the market. The cessation of the market's ability to extract profit from a place is cause for the abandonment of the place and its people. The relationship between the oil industry and the people of Louisiana is akin to **Stockholm Syndrome**. We are prisoners, yet we have been conditioned to love the abuse of our captors.*

STEP ZERO: DEATH

1916: **The New Orleans Refining Company** purchases 366 acres of suga cane field from the **Good Hope Plantation** in St. Charles Parish to establish a marine petroleum supply terminal.

1920-1929: The New Orleans Refining Company begins refining oil in Sellers, LA. The town is renamed **Norco**, an abbreviation of the company name. The Shell Petroleum Corporation (later Shell Oil Company), a subsidiary of **Royal Dutch Shell**, operates the Norco Refinery in 1929. A chemical plant is added in 1955.

EN: *The Sarpy, Good Hope, and Prospect Plantations became the towns of New Sarpy, Good Hope, and Norco. Collectively, these towns are part of a region known as **Cancer Alley**. The landscape of extraction is continuous and unbroken: former plantations have become petrochemical plants; the survivors of the old "**peculiar institution**" are the fenceline victims of today's peculiar institution, which threatens all life on Earth.*

2002: "The town of **Norco, Louisiana**, [...] is divided between those who consider Shell a fair neighbor that carefully monitors its chemical emissions and the all-Black Diamond Community. As a result of Shell's industrial expansion, the size of the Diamond Community has been reduced to four streets that extend from the plant's **fence line**. Chemicals that have been identified in the air in the Norco community include **Benzene**, which is known to cause cancer in humans; **Epychlor Hydron**, which is a suspected human cancer causing agent and has been linked to testicular dysfunction; and **Toluene**, Ethyl Benzene and **Sulfur Compounds**, which are all linked to birth defects. Out of concern that these chemicals are adversely affecting their health, the Diamond Community has been asking Shell to relocate them.

"The rest of Norco is a mainly White community that **owes its existence to the petrochemical industry**. Like many residents, Vicki Reneau has lived in Norco her entire life, and is fiercely proud of this company town. Her father, Kirby, spent 40 years working for Shell and the family grew up enjoying the benefits associated with being part of the **Shell family**—free access to the company swimming pool, bowling alley, theater, and golf course. Along with the country club lifestyle, Shell