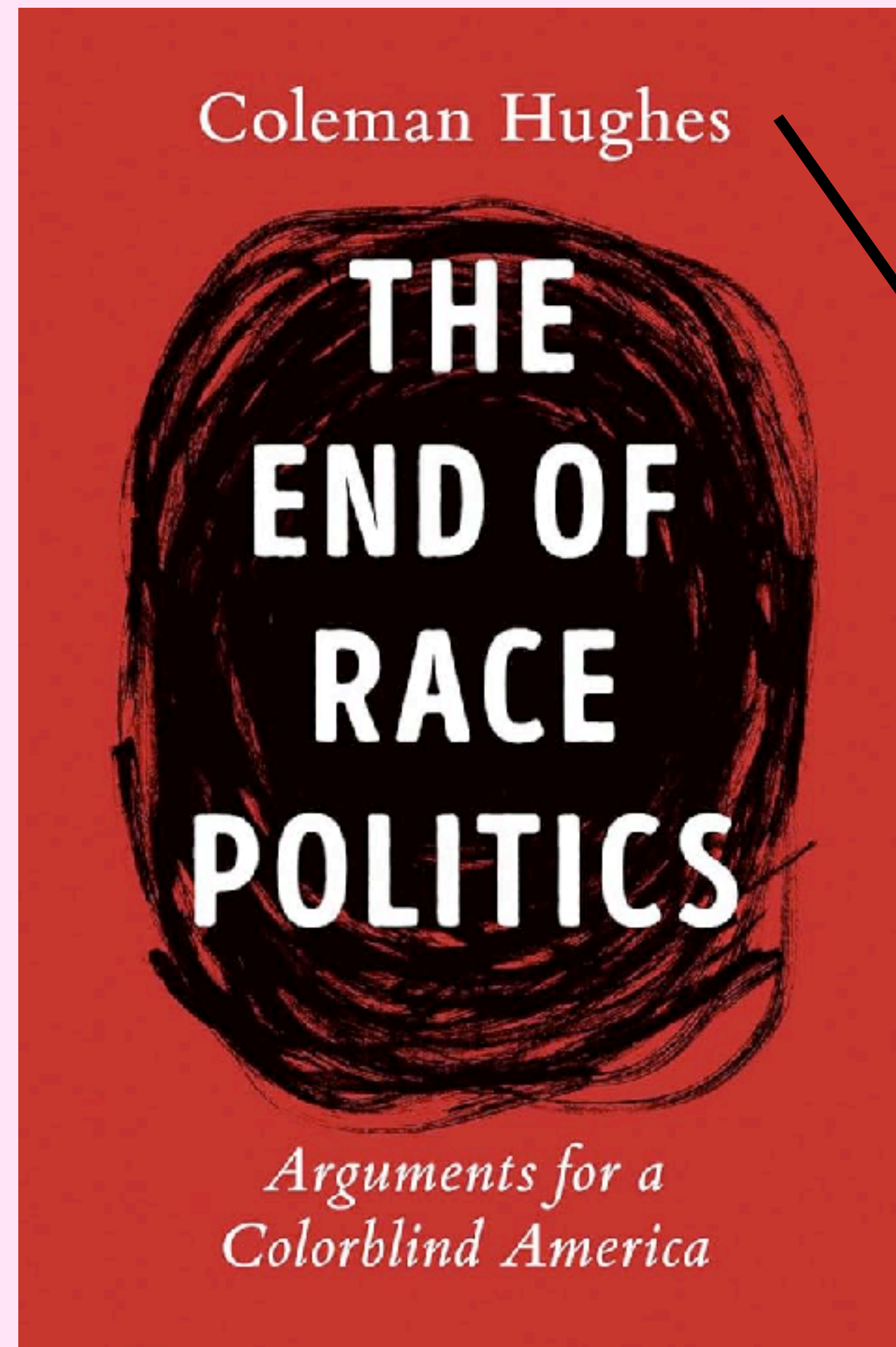


Notes on:



Jacob Williams, <https://brokensandals.net>, June 2024

Disclaimer: My goal is to *understand* the book's claims, which are highly controversial. *I'm not well-informed enough on these issues to endorse or denounce those claims with any confidence.*

I occasionally provide commentary in orange boxes like this one. The rest of the content in these slides is my attempt at representing the book's perspective (by quotes and summaries), and should not be assumed to mean I agree with that perspective.



“Introduction”

Hughes’s background

- “half-black, half-Hispanic” (p.ix)
- “Where I grew up in Montclair, New Jersey, racists existed, but they were the exceedingly rare exceptions” (p.x)
- Racially-diverse public school up through 5th grade (p.x), then private school with “only four black students” (p.x)
- First encountered “anti-racist”-adjacent ideology at workshop he attended in 2012 at age 16 (p.xi), then much more at Columbia University (p.xiv)

In 6th grade, Hughes was distressed by classmates continually messing with his afro. He diminishes the severity of this compared to the non-race-related bullying some kids experienced. He implies that being “taught to frame [that] experience” as “a microaggression” was unhealthy. (p.xi-xiii)

“I worried that rather than approach me as a blank slate, these students would approach me as a black man, and, by implication, a victim.”

(p.xiv, about his unease after an orientation-week activity at Columbia where students “were asked to divide ourselves up by race and discuss ... systemic oppression”)

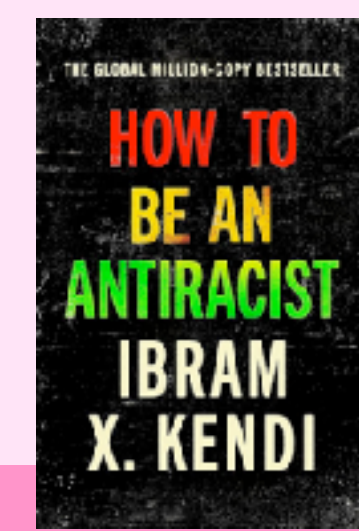
“It felt as if I was dropped into a simulation where the Real Racism dial was set close to zero, but the Concern About Racism dial was set to ten.” (p.xiv, about Columbia)

Thesis statements

“...the new race obsession that brands itself **‘anti-racist’** is in fact the opposite. It is racist, destructive, and contrary to the spirit of the civil rights movement.” (p.xv)

“The lesson of the centuries-long history of racism against black Americans...is that racial discrimination tends to create an enormous amount of justified resentment in the population discriminated against. Instead of learning that lesson, many people want to implement new regimes of discrimination against new groups of people.” (p.xvi-xvii)

“...**colorblindness is the wisest principle** by which to govern our fragile experiment in multi-ethnic democracy.” (p.xvii)



Hughes disapproves of “DiAngelo etiquette” (p.xv) and “Kendi laws” (p.xvii)

1. “Race, Anti-racism, and Neoracism”

Race

- Race is “a social construct *inspired by* a natural phenomenon” (p.4)
- The racial categories we recognize, and how we assign people to them, are both pretty **arbitrary** (p.6-7)

“...it seems...anyone with one drop of ‘black blood’ is considered fully black... an arbitrary rule that was originally developed to uphold racial apartheid.” (p.6)

“To qualify for certain government programs ... someone needs to have one-fourth Native American ancestry” (p.6)

“...unlike ‘black’ and ‘white’, ‘Hispanic’ and ‘Asian’ are not terms that belonged to the self-concept of the people in those categories when they were created” (p.7)



Hmong neuroscientist Kao Lee Yang was ineligible for “a fellowship aimed at supporting underrepresented groups in science” because *Asians* are “overrepresented in American higher education”, even though the *Hmong* are “on average, low-income and very underrepresented in American higher education.” (p.9)

the impetus for defining “Asian” was “the Chinese Exclusion Act—a racist law that existed to define a group of people to exclude” (p.6)

Race as a proxy

“Even if it were possible to create rational racial categories (which it isn’t), **those categories still would not map onto the things that we should really care about:** namely addressing poverty, disadvantage, and disparities of luck.” (p.11)

“When we have more accurate proxies, we should ditch race and use those better proxies instead.” (p.12)

- for **privilege**: look at “income, wealth, or some combination measure” instead of race (p.12)
- for **historical victimhood**: “One in five black Americans is either a first- or second-generation immigrant,” so “policies aimed at addressing the descendants of American slaves ... cannot use black identity as a simple proxy for historical victimhood.” (p.12)

It doesn't seem like Hughes suggests any better proxy for this, though.

“Colorblindness” is good, actually?

“The colorblind principle: we should treat people without regard to race, both in our public policy and in our private lives.” (p.19)

don't try to: “pretend you don't notice race” (p.19)

instead: “consciously disregard race as a reason to treat individuals differently and as a category on which to base public policy” (p.20)

Who's the real anti-racist?

- “Anti-racism” often refers to ideas promoted by authors like DiAngelo, Kendi, and Coates (p.xv,xvi,17,21)

But Hughes thinks their ideology is actually racist, so he calls them **neoracists**. (p.17,20)



Robin DiAngelo



Ibram X. Kendi



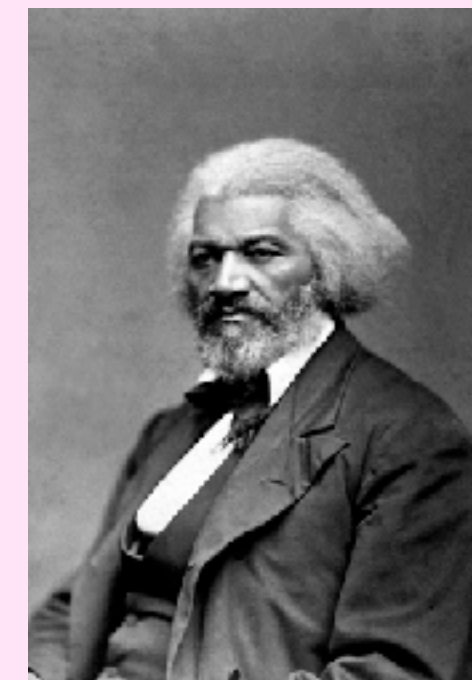
Ta-Nehisi Coates

- The *genuinely* anti-racist philosophy, in his view, is colorblindness. (p.18)

He lists King, Douglass, and Hurston as famous proponents (p.22,23)



Martin Luther King, Jr.



Frederick Douglass



Zora Neale Hurston

Defining “racism”: Hughes says that instead of “[t]he commonsense definition of racism” that “leaders of the civil rights movement consistently had in mind” (p.30), neoracists “redefine racism so that their own brand of racism doesn’t count.” (p.31) “To qualify as racism, they say, the discrimination, stereotyping, prejudice, hatred, or hostility needs to be backed by power—which white people have and black people don’t.” (p.31) He thinks this generalization about who has power is inappropriate (see next slide).

Neoracism is built on stereotyping

Quotes by DiAngelo (p.20) and Coates (p.21) stereotype white people as having negative moral traits

Biden's "then you ain't black" comment illustrates how "[n]eoracists have even built political support into the concept of race" (p.22)

[Bernstein/Zambrotta/Martin/Micalizzi 2023](#) study found Democrats tended to call an MLK quote (that condemned "Black supremacy") racist if they were told it was a Trump quote (p.29)

- "The real problem with stereotypes is that they reduce unique individuals to the average characteristics of their group, provoking justified anger and resentment." (p.21)
- "Does the *average* white person have more power—on any given definition of power...? Sure. But **we don't experience our lives in terms of averages.**" (p.32)
- "The power dynamics between any two people is not predetermined by their race or by the average statistics of their group, as neoracists assume, but by their individual situations with respect to each other." (p.32)
- "**The animating feeling behind neoracism** is that people of color are morally superior to white people—that **people of color are better at being good people.** That's at the core. The truth, which should be obvious, is that no race is morally superior to any other." (p.35)

New York Magazine's The Cut video
["So What Exactly Are White People Superior At?"](#)
illustrates popular media endorsement of the idea that white people are morally inferior (p.34)

[Bernstein & Bleske-Rechek 2023](#)
study found 55% "of college students in his sample agreed with at least one of three quotes from Adolf Hitler's *Mein Kampf* once he swapped out the words 'Jewish' and 'white.'" (p.35)

Neoracist hypocrisy—examples

Traffic cameras

In Chicago, automated traffic tickets had significant measurable safety benefits (p.37), including in “[m]ajority black and Hispanic neighborhoods” (p.39-40). “They also eliminate the potential for human racial biases to play a role in stopping and ticketing violators.” (p.37)

But “black and Hispanic drivers were receiving more tickets than white drivers...” (p.38) Hughes says neoracists assume “discrimination is somehow built into the system ... and claim that the only solution is to dismantle the system as a whole,” (p.38), which he thinks would “end up hurting the very people that [the neoracists] claim they’re trying to help.” (p.39)

I found a [ProPublica article](#) with some discussion of possible factors contributing to the disparity in ticketing.

Police defunding

[2020 Gallup poll](#): “Only 19 percent of blacks wanted less police presence” (p.40)

This is in contrast to “[a]dvocates of the neoracist agenda” who “claim to be speaking on behalf of black Americans that black people want less police presence in their neighborhoods.” (p.40)

I want to note that the poll addresses “preference for amount of time the police spend in your area”, not funding specifically.

I found a [2022 Gallup poll](#) which says “Half of Black Americans support reducing the budgets of police departments and shifting the money to social programs”, and it indicates this is a decrease from 2020. Also, 1 in 5 want to “abolish police departments”. Both stats are higher for Blacks than the general population. I think this suggests a more nuanced picture than what I got from this chapter of the book or from the leftist zeitgeist.

Selective anti-racism

If people like Kendi really think that racial disparities are automatic evidence of racism, and they see themselves as “anti-racists”, Hughes thinks they should be concerned about disparities that affect whites—like the fact that whites have a much higher suicide rate. (p.39)

I don’t think this is a good example, since it could just be an issue of prioritization. It would work better if Hughes could show that “neoracists” are actively *thwarting* progress on this issue. Or, maybe, if he showed that white suicide is receiving disproportionately little effort relative to the magnitude of the problem, when compared with problems that “neoracists” do prioritize (I suspect such a comparison would involve too many fuzzy judgment calls to yield a compelling conclusion).

2. “The Real History of Colorblindness”

A new ideal?



✗ False: Colorblindness was “an idea created by white racists, conservatives, and reactionaries” (p.46)

examples of this view

✓ True: “Colorblindness was a key goal of the anti-slavery movement, and the main goal of the civil rights movement.” (p.46)

“Randolph’s March on Washington movement had a list of demands—first of which was ‘the abrogation of every law which makes a distinction in treatment between citizens based on religion, creed, color, or national origin’” (1942; p.52)

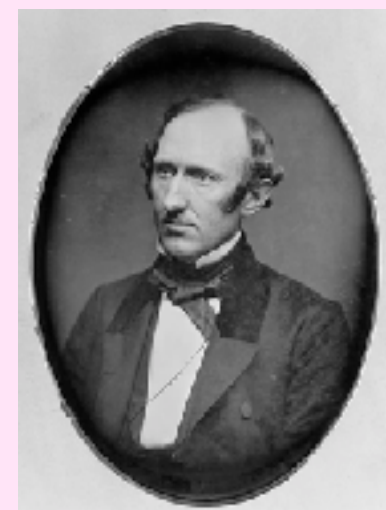


A. Philip Randolph



Bayard Rustin

My activism did not spring from my being gay, or for that matter, from my being black. Rather it is rooted, fundamentally, in my Quaker upbringing and the values that were instilled in me by my grandparents who reared me. Those values are based on the concept of a single human family and the belief that all members of that family are equal. (1986; p.63)

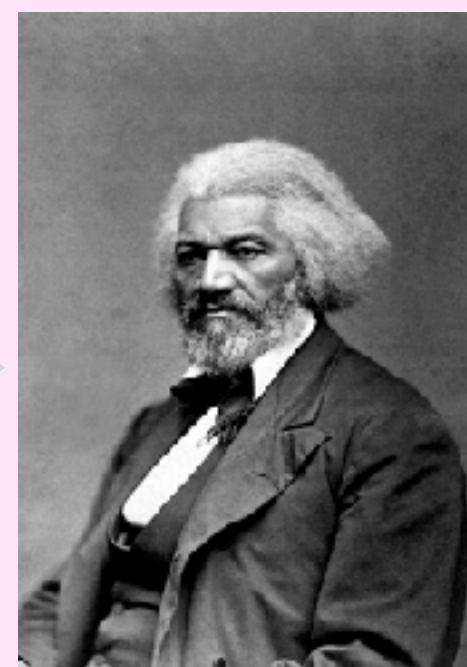


Wendell Phillips

After abolition, led the ASA in (failed) fight for a stronger, colorblind version of 14th amendment (p.47)

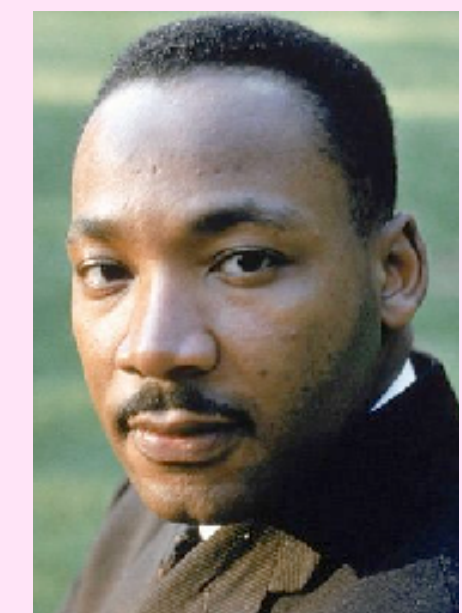
When once the nation is absolutely, irrevocably pledged to the principle that there shall be no recognition of race by the United States or by State law, then the work of the great anti-slavery movement which commenced in 1831, is accomplished. (1867; p.48)

If I have advocated the cause of the colored people, it is not because I am a negro, but because I am a man. The same impulse which would move me to jump into the water to save a white child from drowning causes me to espouse the cause of the downtrodden and oppressed wherever I find them. (1884; p.63)



Frederick Douglass

In an effort to achieve freedom in America, Asia, and Africa we must not try to leap from a position of disadvantage to one of advantage, thus subverting justice. We must seek democracy and not the substitution of one tyranny for another. Our aim must never be to defeat or humiliate the white man. We must not become victimized with a philosophy of black supremacy. (1959; p.65)



Martin Luther King, Jr.

Black supremacy is as dangerous as white supremacy, and God is not interested merely in the freedom of black men and brown men and yellow men. God is interested in the freedom of the whole human race. (p.65)

“Why the sudden pivot away from colorblindness?” (p.57)

- One factor: **race riots** meant “**politicians** wanted to be seen implementing policies to directly address the problems facing black ghettos” (p.58)
- But: “None of these policies reflected the goals of the civil rights movement.” (p.58)

“It is worth noting that whereas civil rights legislation transformed the *South*, the major rioting occurred in the *North*. So to view the riots as a negative comment on the achievements of the civil rights movement is, at best, oversimplified.” (p.58)



Bayard Rustin

Quotas are the progeny, not of the program of the civil rights movement, but rather of the economic policies of the Nixon administration and of the shortcomings of the administration’s bureaucracy. (1974; p.58-59)



“Clarence Mitchell, the pro-colorblindness chief lobbyist of the NAACP, called Nixon’s Philadelphia Plan a ‘calculated attempt . . . to break up the coalition between Negroes and labor unions.’” (p.58)

I thought this section (p.56-59) could have used a lot more expansion. How does Hughes interpret the riots? What should politicians have done, instead, to address the rioters’ concerns (or if they should have done nothing, why)? Hughes says the “pivot” had “to do in part with the race riots” (p.57)—what were the other parts?

3. “Elite Neoracist Institutions”

Examples of neoracism

Government

- American Rescue Plan
 - “\$4 billion of aid for farmers with debt, but ... only non-white farmers” (struck down) (p.69)
 - Restaurant Revitalization Fund gave priority to “veterans, women, and people of color” (p.70); struck down, but “\$18 billion of the \$28.6 billion had already been given to the ‘priority group’” (p.71)
- COVID vaccination/treatment
 - CDC knew prioritizing the elderly would save “the most lives”, but instead was going to “prioritize ‘essential workers,’ a category that encompasses everything from baristas to bank tellers ... because the elderly ... are not racially diverse enough” (“public outcry ... led to a last-minute reversal”) (p.72)
 - New York Department of Health required whites to meet extra conditions to be eligible for antivirals (p.73)

Education

- Aruna Khilanani talk at Yale: “I had fantasies of unloading a revolver into the head of any white person that got in my way...” (p.75) Yale expressed some concerns about the talk but *not* about its racism (p.74)

I think the book omits important context: Khilanani was talking about the fact that she had cut (almost) all white friends out of her life, and mentions these fantasies not necessarily to endorse them but to as part of why it was a good idea for her to avoid white people.

She does do a lot of generalizing about white people that would qualify her as a neoracist by Hughes’s definition. Katie Herzog has [an interesting interview with Khilanani](#).

- Optional segregated dorms, orientation programs, and graduation ceremonies are now widespread (p.75-76)
- “Texas A&M set aside \$2 million available only for new non-white hires” (p.78)
- Policy “requires Minneapolis public schools to lay off or reassign white teachers before ... non-white teachers” (p.79)

Media

- Media fails to publicize when police kill “unarmed white Americans” (p.81), even though cops kill more unarmed white people than unarmed Black people (p.81)
 - “Had Tony Timpa’s death received more attention and more outrage, there is a decent chance that George Floyd would still be alive today.” (p.85) Timpa was a white man police knelt on in 2016 ([video](#)) (p.81)

Although a disproportionate percentage of unarmed people killed by police are Black, Hughes says the studies that “control for confounding variables” have not “found a racial bias in deadly shootings: [Mullainathan 2015](#); [Miller et al. 2017](#); [Fryer Jr. 2019](#). (p.84). I found the Mullainathan article helpful for understanding that claim.

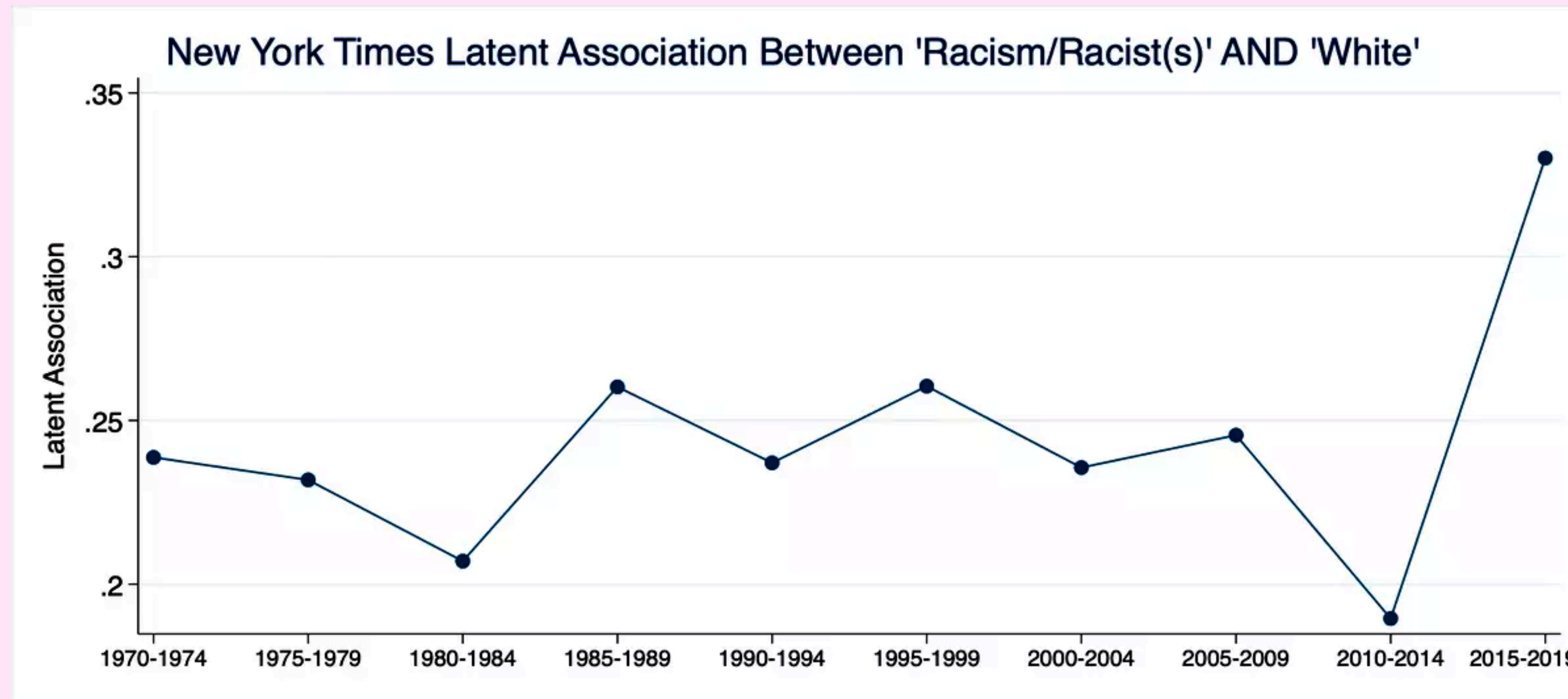
- History is altered where necessary to support narrative that “whiteness is inherently evil and blackness is inherently good” (p.88)
 - NYT published 1619 Project essay saying slavery was a main motive for the War for Independence despite strong objection from fact-checker (p.85-86)
 - 1619 Project makes “wildly misleading” claim that whites had little involvement in fighting “against slavery and Jim Crow” (p.86)
 - Movie *The Woman King* adds an anti-slavery hero and doesn’t show the Dahomey “as the slave-raiding, slave-trading tribe that they in fact were” (p.88)
 - Movie *Hidden Figures* misrepresents Katherine Johnson—“she stated in [an interview](#) that she ‘didn’t feel any segregation’ at NASA.” (p.88)

However, I note she also says “I knew it was there”.

4. “Why Neoracism Is Spreading”

Evidence of spreading

Zach Goldberg’s research shows “the frequency with which various media sources use **terms like ‘systemic racism’ and ‘whiteness’** ... has **skyrocketed** in the past decade.” (p.89)



I think the fast rise of “wokeness” is obvious to most people living in the US, but it’s interesting that the timing of the uptick aligns with the timing of the decline in sentiment on race relations (next slide).

From <https://www.tabletmag.com/sections/news/articles/media-great-racial-awakening>, used on p.91

The cause of the spread

Background conditions:

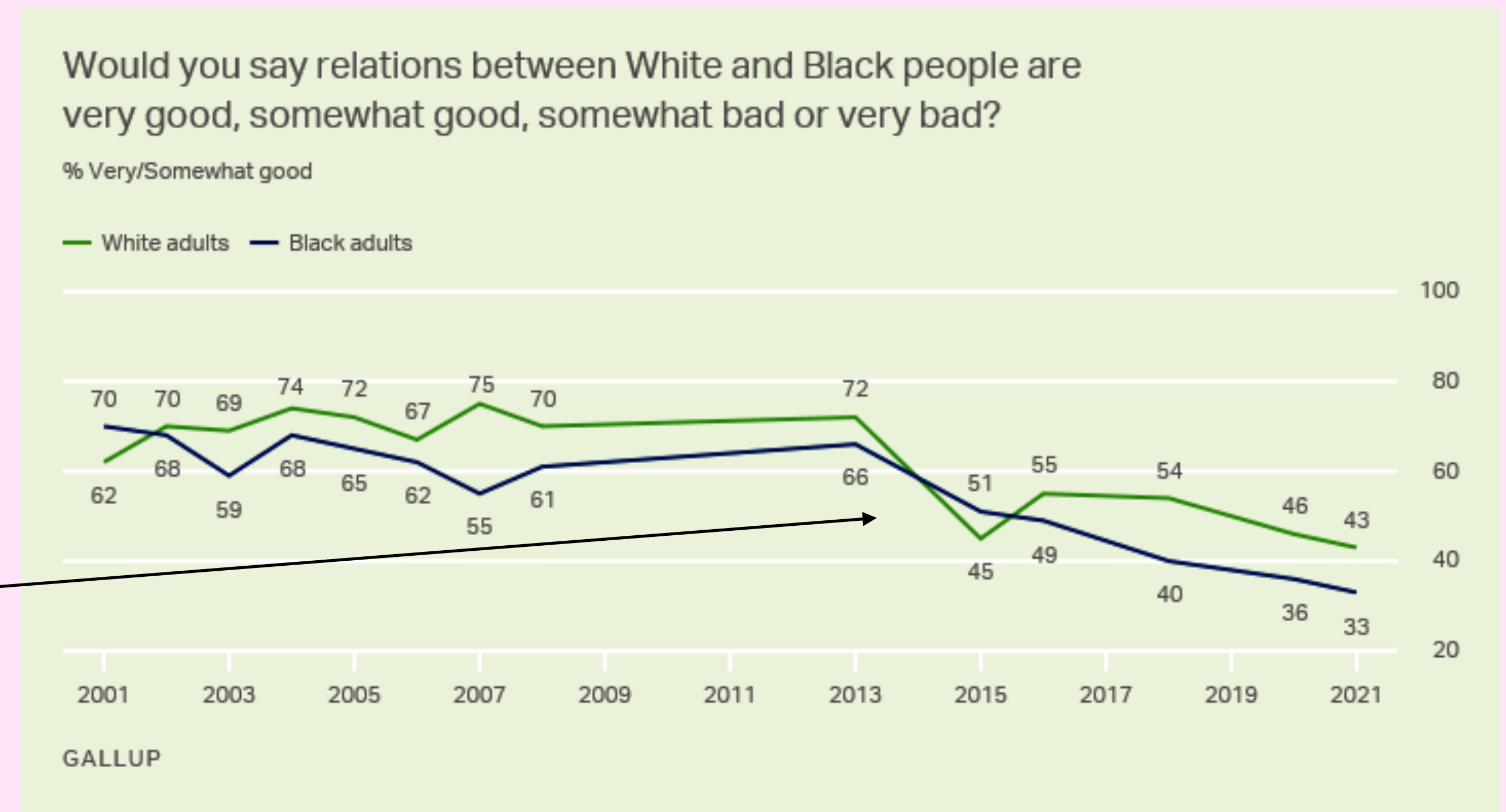
1. “the United States no longer has a scary foreign enemy to fight” (p.91)
2. “ideological vacuum” from “the decline of Christianity” (p.91)

Catalyst:

- “camera-enabled smartphones and social media” (p93-94)

“a critical mass of Americans had [that] tech” around the same time that “American attitudes toward race relations took a nosedive” (p.93)

“We can ... rule out the idea that actual racism suddenly increased in 2013. ... Support for white supremacy has been steadily declining for decades, and so has the annual number of police shootings.” (p.93)



From <https://news.gallup.com/poll/1687/race-relations.aspx>, used on p.92

Blame technology, incentives, and human nature

“Anything that appeals to our tribal identities, us versus them narratives, or historical grievances travels fast.” (p.94)

“Anything that emphasizes common humanity, rational analysis, or fact-checking ... travels far more slowly.” (p.94)

Example: “When Michael Brown was killed by Darren Wilson...the narrative that a racist cop had killed an unarmed black teenager who had his hands up spread quickly. ... The fact-check of this event—that Michael Brown did not have his hands up, had physically overpowered the officer, punched him, and tried to steal his gun—traveled slowly because it appealed more to reason than to outrage.” (p.95)

“Correlational data show that black people who use social media are more likely to report being victims of racial discrimination than black people who don’t. Correlation does not imply causation. But the data, at least, are consistent with the view that **social media has caused a major shift** in how people view themselves and the world—a shift **away from reality** and **toward paranoia, pessimism, and catastrophizing**.

(p.97; references <https://manhattan.institute/article/the-social-construction-of-racism-in-the-united-states>)

“...the media is heavily biased toward reporting emotionally charged stories of racism—stories that create a misperception that racism is a more widespread social problem than it is.” (p.98)

“...54 percent of ‘very liberal’ Americans—the section of the population most active on social media—believe that over one thousand unarmed black men were killed by the cops in 2019. The real number was twelve. **Social media isn’t educating us. It’s miseducating us.**” (p.98)

5. “The Neoracist Narrative”

Seven “falsehoods” (p.107-108)

“The **Disparity** Fallacy” : Racial disparities provide direct evidence of systemic racism. ”

Rebuttals: “benign disparities” (p.109) are common (next slide); fair processes sometimes yield disparities (example: “75 percent of NBA players being black”) (p.115)

“The Myth of **Undoing the Past**” : New acts of racial discrimination can undo the effects of past racial discrimination. ”

Rebuttals: this creates a cycle of violence (p.120); new discrimination can’t cancel old injustices, only creates new ones (p.121-122); can’t “compensate the dead” (p.123)

“The Myth of **No Progress**” : American society has made little or no progress combating racism against people of color since the civil rights movement. ”

Rebuttals: major progress in “attitudes toward interracial marriage”, Blacks in government, “incarceration rate”, “social mobility”, “decline of white supremacy” (p.125-128)

“The Myth of **Inherited Trauma**” : Black people who are alive today inherit the trauma that was inflicted on their enslaved ancestors. ”

Rebuttals: unscientific; if real, would apply to everyone: “What human alive doesn’t have ancestors who suffered trauma?” (p.136)

“The Myth of **Superior Knowledge**” : The knowledge that people of color have about racism is superior to any ... that a white person could have. ”

Rebuttals: our “lived experience” is more individualized than race; we can “move past our limited perspective and learn about the lived experiences of others” (p.142-143)

“The **Racial Ad Hominem**” : You can dismiss any claims about race and racism that white people make simply because they are white. ”

Rebuttals: “a fallacy for the same reason that any ad hominem is a fallacy” (p.144)

“The Myth of **Black Weakness**” : White people have power in society, but black people don’t. ”

Rebuttals: Blacks have less economic power but proportional political power and “more cultural power” (p.148-149); even most whites lack economic power (p.150-151)

Why shouldn't we assume all racial disparities indicate racism?

- Need to control for other variables, else statistics can be misleading
 - Example: **Median age** for whites is **10 years older** than for Blacks; “human beings generally earn more money and commit less crime as they age (in addition to a host of other changes)” so “comparing the outcomes of whites and blacks without controlling for age exaggerates the disparity” (p.110) Googling for an explanation of this age gap led me to a [National Equity Atlas article](#) which attributes it to aging boomers and a difference in birth rates.
 - Example: Black credit scores may be lowered by the fact that Black people are **geographically** concentrated in the South, where credit scores are lower across the board: “the blackest areas of the South had the same low credit scores as the least-black” (p.110; references [Washington Post article](#))
- Culture matters
 - It's obvious in other contexts: “Why are approximately 80 percent of ... pianists Chinese”? “Why are there many chess grand masters from Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan but none from Japan?” (p.112-113)
 - Example: Differences in culture/outcomes in “blacks of American descent and blacks of Caribbean descent” in NYC (p.111-112; references Van Tran article “More Than Just Race” from [The Cultural Matrix](#))
 - “The more I have studied disparities in multicultural societies, the more I have found the language of ‘overrepresentation’ and ‘underrepresentation’ to be fundamentally misleading. These words assume that there is something normal or ‘to be expected’ about seeing different ethnic groups represented at precisely their share of the total population in every domain, statistic, and occupation, when in fact nothing is more normal than for different subcultures to specialize in particular sectors and occupations and experience very different group-wide statistics as a result. The vast majority of such disparities are not plausibly explained by bigotry, systemic racism, or unfairness...” (p.113)

“In the mid-twentieth century, the Puerto Rican minority in St. Croix, at one-quarter of the population, owned and operated over half of the businesses on the island.” (p.114)

“During World War I, black soldiers from northern states scored higher than white soldiers from southern states in tests of mental ability.” (p.114)

“In 1998, Americans raised in Jewish households had almost six times the median net worth of Americans raised in conservative Protestant households.” (p.114)

On systemic racism in hiring (p.116-118)

- Callback studies “have found a **large and clear bias** against minorities in the labor market.”
 - “black applicants were 32 percent less likely to receive a reply” than whites
- However, “ethnic groups who face the same level of labor market discrimination nevertheless occupy opposite ends of the socioeconomic spectrum”
 - Indians “were 30 percent less likely to receive a reply” than whites
 - Yet, Indian Americans make “\$1.50 for every dollar earned by a white American”
 - Bengali Americans only “earn \$0.65 on the median white dollar”
 - “Most would-be employers could not tell the difference ... between an Indian and a Bengali.”
- **Conclusion:** “current racial **discrimination** is **not a significant cause of** current **racial disparities in income**”
- **Note:** “None of this implies that racial discrimination doesn’t matter ethically, socially, and psychologically.”

6. “Solving the Problem of Racism in America”

Hughes’s narrative

“There’s a different narrative of race and racism in America—a story of **missed opportunities** to achieve a colorblind state. Key chapters in that story include the founding of our republic on the backs of **slaves**, the ratification of a **weaker version of the Fourteenth Amendment** that opened the door to Jim Crow, a Supreme Court decision that upheld the **constitutionality of racial segregation** (*Plessy*), another Supreme Court decision that **fell short of affirming colorblindness** (*Brown*), the **betrayal** of colorblindness at just the moment when the civil rights movement was enjoying its greatest success, and the **rise of race consciousness** that’s turned elite American institutions into neoracist strongholds.

This series of missed opportunities describes what I view as the real problem of racism in America: **our society keeps failing to enshrine colorblindness** as its guiding ethos.” (p.153-154)

Proposals

- Generally: “maintain **race-neutral standards** of entry” (p.155)
 - “[R]acial diversity isn’t inherently good or bad” (p.155) “nobody really believes that Earth, Wind & Fire would have been inherently better if they had added a white musician” (p.155)
 - Exceptions: sometimes jobs like **police officer** require racial diversity, to “be perceived as legitimate by” the people they serve (p.155)
- “[**S**]tigmatize expressions of racism—*any* type of racism” (p.156)
 - In addition to “the N-word”, we should stigmatize “racial slurs directed at white people” (p.156)
 - “Racial double standards, no matter how understandable their origins may be, perpetuate unfairness. If we want a more just society, and a society with less racial tension and racial resentment, then we need to **treat all forms of racial stereotyping and insult as toxic.**” (p.156)

Against the objection that “people of color are forced to think about their race all the time” and that having white people do the same is just “remedy[ing] this unbalanced situation”, Hughes says this “concedes one of my central contentions: that **constantly paying attention to race is burdensome and harmful**”. Trying “to increase the sum total of this burden in society” is like “spread[ing] [a] disease to the entire population” instead of “keep[ing] it contained and cur[ing] the people suffering from it.” (p.157)
- “[C]reate **blinded processes** wherever possible” (p.159)
 - “Almost no effort or money has been put toward creating blinded grading systems...” (p.159)

On affirmative action

- Affirmative action is “a **euphemism**” for “racial discrimination” (p.163)
- Comparing two polls reveals how “[t]he euphemism has **made a difference in public perception**”: [Pew found](#) a majority were *against* considering “race or ethnicity ... in college admissions”, but [Gallup found](#) a majority were *for* “affirmative action programs for racial minorities” (p.164)
- “Imagine if every college rejection letter included the honest reasons for rejection: ‘If you had been black rather than Asian, we would have accepted you.’ How long would the policy survive?” (p.166)
- However: “...I very much **support** affirmative action in the original sense of the term: aggressively **recruiting** minority candidates and candidates from less-privileged backgrounds and then judging them by **race-neutral standards**.” (p.162)
- “Race-based policies (as opposed to class-based policies) tend to **benefit the people of that race who need them the least**.” (p.171)
 - “...affirmative action has **done little** to help the truly disadvantaged ... the percentage of students from **low-income backgrounds** attending Ivy League schools remains in the low single digits” (p.167)
 - “The **gains** from race-based policies adopted in response to the George Floyd murder were **overwhelmingly captured by elites** of color—high-income, highly educated people of color who were already well positioned to reap society’s benefits—while **poor communities had their police forces dismantled and defunded**.” (p.172)
- Instead: “...we should be channeling our resources to programs that focus on skill development during the **critical formative years**: high-quality pre-K and kindergarten programs, high-quality weekend learning programs, high-quality charter schools, and high-quality after-school tutoring programs.” (p.173)

Thomas Espenshade’s suggestion: “selective colleges and universities ... putting their endowments and influence behind a comprehensive effort to close the learning gap that starts at birth”
(p.173, [quoting NYT article "Moving Beyond Affirmative Action"](#))

Cites [research by Roland Fryer on NYC charter schools](#)
(p.173)