

## A Concern for the Human Race

**Jeffrey Omar Patrick, MPH**

Instructor of Medicine  
New York Medical College  
40 Sunshine Cottage Road  
Valhalla, NY 10595  
Tel: (914) 594-2831  
Mobile: (646) 342-7371  
Email: jpatrick@nymc.edu

### Author Note

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*“When ‘I’ is replaced by ‘We’ even Illness becomes Wellness.”*

--Malcolm X

### Acknowledging Anti-Racism

Racism is not simply a public health epidemic. It is a serious worldwide pandemic, affecting all people in all aspects of our society. Poetically speaking, the sun never sets on racism. Unmistakably and ubiquitously, however, the monstrosity of racism is the actual source responsible for so many illnesses and all health inequities throughout the underserved communities (Basset, 2016). Furthermore, the deeds of racism are hindering the true potential of humankind, especially when we consider the nonsensical acts of those who are destroying life for no particular reason at all (Silverstein, 2013). Moreover, racial discrimination creates unnecessary stress for all those who are overpowered by it (Silverstein, 2013); and this leads to various reasons for sickness (USC, 2019). Unfortunately, any attempt to deconstruct racism has been met with all types of repulsive measures. Racist actions are now blatant for all to see, particularly in the murdering of the innocent. For instance, where in the world would it be acceptable to kneel on a man’s neck for almost nine minutes until he is dead? Life lost is the ultimate price paid for racism. Thus, this cost has divided the people of the United States of America, and, the only way to build a more perfect union is to incorporate new rules of engagement for an anti-racist world.

Hypothetically, if a well-informed intellectual were to be asked the question of whether or not race is a real or tangible disposition, she would assertively respond with a resounding: no, absolutely not! You see, she fully understands why this racialized concept was created in the first place. And she would also be able to explicate why race is truly a well thought out scheme of nothingness--a worthless idea that has allowed us to partake in the worst act known to humankind, namely the senseless killing of guiltless people. The construction of the White and Black races lends to the fact that certain individuals have neglected rational reasoning and have embraced ideals and behavior that dehumanize their fellow human beings (Rubio, 2001).

Therefore, the definition of racism is nothing more than the universal acceptance of an empowered systematic effort geared to benefit one race over the other (Rubio 2001, Allen, 1994). Basically, race is not an actual entity. Rather, it is a made-up societal paradigm in order to build wealth for those who are in power as it deprives others of their fundamental rights (Norton, 2014). Evidently, "...race may be a social construct, but racism materializes in poor health" (Silverstein, 2013); and perceptibly, it has set a trend of discrimination that is providing untimely death to the so-called "other."

### Worrisome Whiteness

Ideally, "...racism is fundamentally a theory of history. It is a theory of who is who, of who belongs and who does not, of who deserves what and who is capable of what" (Jacobson, 1998). Ever since US colonizers and landowners realized the possible financial gains of race, this idea made complete sense; even though potentially it had the chance to be the most barbaric undertaking of all time (Takaki, 1993). Also, written in his book entitled: *The Invention of Whiteness*, Theodore Allen proposed that the White colonial labor force had an obligatory responsibility to be a superior race in order to provide social control over the slave population (Allen, 1994). Henceforth, racism was theoretically developed to support the idea of how "White" was ultimately better while providing inexpensive labor, maintaining control and detecting rebellion (Rubio, 2001). Because of this ill-advised notion, our contemporary world is now in complete disarray. However, recent events have fully revealed that it is definitely no longer just chattel slavery that needs to be addressed, but also racism and the covert validation of whiteness.

White superiority then conveys the action of racism and brings the theory to real-life outcomes. This seems like a never-ending story. If racism is the theory then White power is the actionable organizer of the authority to oppress, control, disempower and kill people of color (Gardiner, 2009). Those of us who believe that racism is benefiting White people must realize that this perspective is a hoax and an outright sham. As one author states: "There's a perception that whiteness is working for white people. It's not. Whiteness is one of the biggest and most long-running scams ever perpetrated" (Norton, 2014). This is the reality check that the entire world needs--the first necessary step towards dismantling racism and providing a life that is more meaningful for all the inhabitants of this planet.

According to historical accounts, there were four major countries involved in colonizing the United States of America: France, Spain, Holland and England (Gardiner, 2009); however, according to Audrey Smedley's book: *Race in North America: Origin and Evolution of a World View*, it was the English who held the most dominating position when it came to race ideology, and apparently these ideas are still perpetuating systemic racism (Smedley, 2007). Seemingly, it was the aim of these Europeans to capitalize by any means necessary from their interactions with non-white nations. For example, the conquest of the Native Americans, although met with furious opposition, unfortunately still led to the last of their kind of people (Gardiner, 2009). The settlers had all intentions of confiscating the land from the demonized Native Americans, so much so, that they were willing to unfairly conquer them with wars, infections of smallpox, lies and broken treaties. When the Europeans came to the US there were approximately 7,000,000 Native Americans divided up amongst 600 indigenous communities, but by the end of the 19th century a mere 225,000 subsisted the encounter of racism (Gardiner, 2009). Throughout history and especially during the era of colonization, there are many instances

about the racial encounters between Whites and all other non-White people. However, it should be made clear that the nature of racism encapsulates the insurmountable odds faced by all nations while illustrating that it is not a “square-off” between Whites and Blacks only. It is a human-made obstruction that prohibits equitability at the highest level of our existence.

Lucidly, the story of American racism can be summed up in one simple word: power. But racism is much deeper than just power alone, and by definition it entails a more inclusive take on several elements of contemporary society, specifically: housing, the criminal justice system, education, media and wealth (Rose, 2017). Dr. Tricia Rose, the Chancellor’s Professor of Africana Studies at Brown University, defines racism in the United States as “the normalization and legitimization of an array of dynamics--historical, cultural, institutional and interpersonal--that routinely advantage Whites while producing cumulative and chronic adverse outcomes for people of color” (Rose, 2017). Of course, each one of these communal components can be fully examined via Dr. Rose’s definition, but in the essence of time and consideration for brevity our focal point will be the origin of race.

Therefore, donning a thinking cap, the question then must be asked: How on God’s green Earth did racism actually get started in the United States of America? Duly researching this question, one quickly discovers that the labor force of early America was comprised of both Whites and Blacks until a very significant event happened: Bacon’s Rebellion. But before considering this uprising it is worthy to re-emphasize the fact that the first reason for this racialized system was cheap labor and the second reason was social control (Gardiner, 2009). This idea of racism was not entirely a southern reality either, because the first slave ship was manufactured in the year 1636 and launched out of the Massachusetts Bay Colony (Robinson, 2017). Unbeknownst to some, the first Africans in North America were slaves, but they worked alongside indentured servants, who were their White counterparts in the fields (Gardiner, 2009). However, there were differences in the law when it came to the slaves and indentured servants, such as the Virginia law of 1669 that granted plantation owners the right to whip or even execute their slaves (Robinson, 2017). The reason for implementing these types of punishment were for simple matters such as resisting authority, planting their own food, learning to read, assembling in groups and even beating the drum (Robinson, 2017). The indentured servants were not under these types of pressure; but they still found their lifestyle unlivable and despicable.

Thus, these early White laborers found themselves working in the most demanding and unfit circumstances along with the Africans; so naturally they wanted a better working environment and better outcomes for their lives. Hence, the yearlong revolt of 1675, known as Bacon’s Rebellion, was the unification of both Black slaves and White workers as they joined Nathaniel Bacon to burn down Jamestown, Virginia (Gardiner, 2009). According to the legal scholar Jacqueline Battalora, this was the birth of the White nation and the cause for the word “Whites” to have lawful meaning. There is no evidence that indicates that the term “White people” existed before this violent insurgency, but it is clear that from this point on racism was now a matter of law in the American colonies (Battalora, 2014). In this light, consider the following:

Large landowners could see that the social order would always be in danger so long as they had to depend on white labor. They had come to a crossing. They could open economic opportunities to white workers and extend political privileges to them. But this would erode their own economic advantage and potentially undermine their political hegemony.

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Or they could try to reorganize society on the basis of class and race. By importing and buying more slaves they could decrease the proportion of white indentured servants. They would then be able to exploit a group of workers who had been enslaved” (Takaki, 1993).

This was now the mindset of the powerbrokers in the new land and they were willing to make the necessary changes within the communities, mostly because of what took place during the frightful Bacon’s Rebellion. Officially and legally, the White social status was created in the Virginia’s 1691 legislative documents that utilized the term “White man or woman” for the first time (Gardiner, 2009, Battalora, 2014). Also, Battalora notes that since this White world had never existed before this moment in time then there is a claim that is truly false and that statement is: The White race is biologically superior to all other races (Battalora, 2014). Therefore, this is evidence that debunks this social order and, furthermore, affirms that no one race is knowledgeable of all things or more capable of doing remarkable feats over another. More importantly, this means that racism can be undone by the will of the strong and diligent-minded individuals. Evidently, Bacon’s Rebellion terrorized the elites and ultimately, this led to the creation and confirmation of the French social terminology known as the “gran blancs” and the “petite blancs;” the slave owner versus the common worker (Malveaux, 2015). Moreover, the subtleties of racism were promptly being rooted in the genetic make-up of this country. The “White” law was now the linchpin of racism and it pivoted the settlers in the new frontier towards the most beneficial environment for all White people, especially the elects of high society.

Subsequently, with the creation of racial slavery the two reasons of cheap labor and social control were no longer enough to uphold order; mostly because, of the new concern for the dreaded slave insurrections. Hence, the White population in the south were compelled into becoming this “White superior race” in order to secure the slave population (Allen, 1994). It is also clear that the new rights, monetary gains and privileges granted to the working Whites cultivated a new level of superiority to Blacks and all other non-White people (Rubio, 2001, Battalora, 2014). In addition, the economic trajectory for the “White race” developed a new caste consciousness and loyalty, which corroborated the idea of a White nation that was committed to preserving their power (Gardiner, 2009). This particular notion of domination has continued from this point up until now and is the main reason for racism and all its ill-considered views. Bacon’s Rebellion established a new paradoxical scheme of racism that illustrated the fact that “a broad social liberty had been born but at the cost of a complete denial of liberty to a portion of society” (Malcomson, 2000). Also, Malcomson elucidates that “Whiteness had stolen upon White people like a ghost, a result of their thoughts and actions toward non-White people” (Malcomson, 2000) Accordingly, the urgency for change should not be downplayed and it is extremely important that our society begins to address these issues that are supporting the quick and steadfast formulation of racism in America. The best way to do this is to obviously change the way in which we think of and act towards our fellow human beings.

### Closing Cost

Due to the terrorizing of their communities, homes and lives, the US Black experience cries out for relief; but it is important to note that they are not the only ones subjugated to racism. Clearly, White people are also dominated, controlled and, yes, even suffer from the ramification of ideological racialism, especially when we consider the emotional and spiritual cost they are paying for Whiteness (Gardiner, 2009). This effect on White people is not an isolated incident, but it is an accurate generalization and the result of an unintended consequence.

Apparently, the interconnectedness of life plays out the way in which all things are united and what happens on one end of the life spectra ultimately affects everything else. Thus, the theory of racism and the actions of White supremacy are not only destroying the Black agenda and welfare, but they also have a cost for everyone else, even White people (Gardiner, 2009). For clarity sake, the imperative to remember is that race is not a White against Black thing, because apparently, both White and Black police officers are participating in the killing of Black residents. Rather, it is the addiction to power supported by the infrastructure of racism and its foundation of fear that should be cogitated and altered for the betterment of all people. Truly a matter of fact, this unfair racial system influences the entire "board." For instance, the idea of Whiteness has a socio-economic cost, a cultural cost, a mental health cost, a public health cost and, as mentioned already, most importantly it sadly has a human life cost.

Clearly, there is a need for a renewed mindset when it comes to race and all that accompanies it, mostly because we are all losing something to racism. The previous costs mentioned above demonstrate how this philosophical practice is eroding the very foundation of society while outrightly staining the human fabric. Economics 101 informs us that the principle of supply and demand runs the marketplace and that there is no such thing as change without a trade-off, meaning that as one matter changes it affects something else. This ultimately means that there is really no such thing as a Utopia. However, when considering racism, we should be totally mindful of how to ameliorate racist theories and the actions of White supremacy. These two tenets are the foundation for racism that are causing a pandemic which portends for the future of the human race--the only race that should concern us all.

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