**Racism**

**Some 43 percent of the United States' 1.3 million active service members are people of color, but there are only two African-Americans among the 41 most senior military commanders. In a survey last year, more than a third of active-duty soldiers said they had encountered white nationalism or ideologically driven racism, up from 22 percent the previous year. *(The New York Times, as it appeared in The Week magazine, June 5, 2020)***

**I am America. Only, I'm the part you won't recognize. But get used to me. Black, confident, cocky; my name, not yours; my religion, not yours; my goals, my own -- get used to me! *(Muhammad Ali, activist, heavyweight champion, 1975)***

**Fifty-four percent of Americans said they might leave an organization if it did not speak out against racial injustice, according to a Harris Poll survey; 68 percent said you should be able to discuss racial justice issues at work. *(CNBC.com, as it appeared in The Week magazine, June 4, 2021)***

**Wherever Pearl Bailey traveled, she talked plain sense about racism. "I don't see any color in front of the footlights or behind," she said. "God has no complexion." Practicing what she preached, she had married Louis Bellson, Jr., a white drummer, in 1952. Pearl loved most to talk about her husband and their two adopted children, Tony and Dee Dee. *(Cab Calloway, in Reader's Digest)***

**Say it loud. I'm black and I'm proud! *(James Brown, singer, songwriter, bandleader, 1968)***

**The day before Martin Luther King was assassinated, he held a speech asking people to boycott Coca Cola and stop buying their products because of the way the company was treating black workers. *(Charlotte Lowe, in Fact-O-Pedia, p. 57)***

**Republicans and Democrats define "racism" differently, said Philip Bump in The Washington Post. Republicans "prefer to see racism as an outlier, a function of explicit racists" who openly say Blacks are inferior. Democrats focus on the "structural" or "systemic" racism that produces these results: Black families have on average one-tenth the wealth of their white counterparts, are rejected at an 80 percent higher rate for mortgages, attend more dysfunctional schools, lead shorter lives, and are more likely to be stopped or killed by police. It's "obvious" that our political and economic institutions aren't working equally for everyone. That's the real issue, not "the straw man" question of whether America itself is racist. *(The Week magazine, May 14, 2021)***

**About 70 percent of the 364 convictions overturned because of DNA evidence since 1992 involved witnesses who identified the wrong person. Nearly half of those cases involved a witness and suspect of different races. *(The New York Times, as it appeared in The Week magazine, March 29, 2019)***

**I am for the "immediate, unconditional, and universal" enfranchisement of the black man, in every State in the Union. Without this, you might as well almost retain the old name of slavery for his condition. *(Frederick Douglass, former enslaved person, abolitionist, author, activist)***

**The epidermis is a very thin outer layer of our skin. It is only 1 millimeter in thickness, but it contains one of the few things that seems to justify millennia of oppression between human pigmentation. Were it not for this tiny layer of our skin, we would all appear very similar. Thus, at its core, racism is bigotry against the epidermis, and yet this minute human difference was enough for many of our nation's historical leaders to enable beliefs in racial superiority. The justification for racism in America is thin indeed, but it continues even now to restrain us from moving forward as a society. *(Dr. Haywood Brown, in Tampa Bay Times)***

**The struggle continues. After the 15th Amendment recognized the African-American right to vote in 1870, some states responded by using violent intimidation, poll taxes and literacy tests as barriers to voting. Today those laws have mutated into voter-suppression efforts that target low-income and minority communities with disheartening effectiveness. I fight for the real enfranchisement of black people. *(Eric Holder Jr., former U.S. attorney general)***

**What the people want is simple. They want an America as good as its promise. *(Barbara C. Jordan, U.S. congresswoman, 1977)***

**I have a dream that one day down in Alabama ... little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers ... With this faith, we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope. With this faith, we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our Nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood. With this faith, we will be able to work together; to pray together; to struggle together; to go to jail together; to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day. *(Martin Luther King Jr., Baptist minister, civil rights leader, 1964)***

**People, I just want to say ... can we all get along?... Can we stop making it horrible for the older people and the kids? *(Rodney King, whose beating by police sparked riots in Los Angeles, 1992)***

**Sixty-five years have passed, and I still remember the face of young Emmett Till.... Despite real progress, I can't help but think of young Emmett today as I watch video after video after video of unarmed Black Americans being killed, and falsely accused. My heart breaks for these men and women, their families, and the country that let them down -- again. My fellow Americans, this is a special moment in our history. Just as people of all faiths and no faiths, and all backgrounds, creeds, and colors banded together decades ago to fight for equality and justice in a peaceful, orderly, nonviolent fashion, we must do so again*. (John Lewis, U.S. congressman, civil rights icon, 2020)***

**The function of racism --- is distraction. It keeps you from doing your work. It keeps you explaining , over and over again, your reason for being. Somebody says you have no language and so you spend 20 years proving that you do,,, None of that is necessary. There will always be one more thing. *(Toni Morrison, novelist)***

**Does anybody hear us pray for Michael Brown or Freddie Gray? Peace is more than the absence of war.... Maybe we can finally say, enough is enough, it's time for love. *(Prince, musician, songwriter, 2015)***

**Many Americans were surprised last week to discover racism n the grocery store, said Michael Twitty in NBCNews.com. In this "season of racial reassessment" ignited by George Floyd's death, several major food companies agreed to rebrand iconic products whose smiling, submissive black mascots are meant to evoke "formerly enslaved black cooks." Quaker Oats will rebrand Aunt Jemina's pancake mixes, syrups, and other products, named in 1889 after a mammy-like character from a minstrel song. Gone, too, is the white-haired, bow-tied Uncle Ben (of Uncle Ben's Plantation Rice, named in 1937), along with the black mascots for Cream of Wheat and Mrs. Butterworth. To some Americans, those logos were just "friendly faces." But to many black people, they represented "ghosts" from a time when "slaves were happy and our pain had no consequence." *(The Week magazine, July 3, 2020)***

**I'm not concerned with your liking or disliking me. All I ask is that you respect me as a human being. *(Jackie Robinson, Major League Baseball player, 1954)***

**Smokey's American pride: Smokey Robinson is feeling enormous relief, said Craig Jenkins in Vulture.com. As someone who witnessed the civil rights movement unfolding in the 1960s, Robinson said it was disheartening to see racism grow "more powerful in the last four years than it had in the last 20," with "a bigot in the White House" fanning the flames. "The only difference between people is the texture and the color of our skin," Robinson says. "If you skinned everybody alive, you wouldn't know who anyone was. We're all human beings. It's a damn shame that people still don't get that." He found it gratifying to see black people in Atlanta, Philadelphia, and his native Detroit cast the votes that helped flip those states and defeat the president. "It meant a great deal to me," said Robinson, who rose to fame in Detroit in the 1960s as a songwriter, producer, and performer at Berry Gordy's Motown label. A proud American, Robinson thinks his story couldn't have happened anywhere else. "The concept of the United States of America is the greatest concept in the world. It's beautiful. It's a wonderful concept. There's no place like America. I'm a black man, and I've been all over the world. Here, people say 'African-American.' Don't call me no African -American. I'm a black American." *(The Week magazine, December 11, 2020)***

**I am not saying the pandemic is a conspiracy to kill or target Blacks, but it is illuminating the existing racial disparities in this country that reverberate in everything from health care to jobs, housing and more. *(Al Sharpton, Baptist minister, civil rights activist, talk show host, 2020)***

**Society has discovered discrimination as the great social weapon by which one may kill men without any bloodshed. *(Hannah Arendt)***

**New York City officials have agreed to remove a statue of President Theodore Roosevelt from outside the American Museum of Natural History. The statue show Roosevelt riding a horse flanked by a Native American and an African man who officials say are depicted "as subjugated and racially inferior." *(The Wall Street Journal, as it appears in The Week magazine, July 3, 2020)***

**A Stanford University study of 100 million traffic stops found that black and Latino drivers were stopped significantly more often than white drivers. This is true even though illegal contraband like guns and drugs were found in 36 percent of searches of white drivers, compared with 32 percent for black drivers and 26 percent for Latinos. *(NBCNews.com, as it appeared in The Week magazine, March 29, 2019)***

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