

"It's hard for an individual--or a country--to evolve past discomfort if the source of anxiety is only discussed in hushed tones." -Michele Norris

DISCUSSION GUIDE

for Teachers and Parents



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A Letter From the Editor

by Susan Goldberg, editor in chief. April 2018, *National Geographic* magazine. The Race Issue



It is November 2, 1930, and *National Geographic* has sent a reporter and a photographer to cover a magnificent occasion: the crowning of Haile Selassie, King of Kings of Ethiopia, Conquering Lion of the Tribe of Judah. There are trumpets, incense, priests,

spear-wielding warriors. The story runs 14,000 words, with 83 images.

If a ceremony in 1930 honoring a black man had taken place in America, instead of Ethiopia, you can pretty much guarantee there wouldn't have been a story at all. Even worse, if Haile Selassie had lived in the United States, he would almost certainly have been denied entry to our lectures in segregated Washington, D.C., and he might not have been allowed to be a National Geographic member. According to Robert M. Poole, who wrote *Explorers House: National Geographic and the World It Made*, "African Americans were excluded from membership—at least in Washington—through the 1940s."

I'm the tenth editor of *National Geographic* since its founding in 1888. I'm the first woman and the first Jewish person—a member of two groups that also once faced discrimination here. It hurts to share the appalling stories from the magazine's past. But when we decided to devote our April magazine to the topic of race, we thought we should examine our own history before turning our reportorial gaze to others.

Race is not a biological construct, as writer Elizabeth Kolbert explains in this issue, but a social one that can have devastating effects. "So many of the horrors of the past few centuries can be traced to the idea that one race is inferior to another," she writes. "Racial distinctions continue to shape our politics, our neighborhoods, and our sense of self."

How we present race matters. I hear from readers that *National Geographic* provided their first look at the world. Our explorers, scientists, photographers, and writers have taken people to places they'd never even imagined; it's a tradition that still drives our coverage and of which we're rightly proud. And it means we have a duty, in every story, to present accurate and authentic depictions—a duty heightened when we cover fraught issues such as race.

We asked John Edwin Mason to help with this examination. Mason is well positioned for the task: He's a University of Virginia professor specializing in the history of photography and the history of Africa, a frequent crossroads of our storytelling. He dived into our archives.

What Mason found in short was that until the 1970s *National Geographic* all but ignored people of color who lived in the United States, rarely acknowledging them beyond laborers or domestic workers. Meanwhile it pictured "natives" elsewhere as exotics, famously and frequently unclothed, happy hunters, noble savages—every type of cliché.

Unlike magazines such as *Life*, Mason said, *National Geographic* did little to push its readers beyond the stereotypes ingrained in white American culture.

“Americans got ideas about the world from Tarzan movies and crude racist caricatures,” he said. “Segregation was the way it was. *National Geographic* wasn’t teaching as much as reinforcing messages they already received and doing so in a magazine that had tremendous authority. *National Geographic* comes into existence at the height of colonialism, and the world was divided into the colonizers and the colonized. That was a color line, and *National Geographic* was reflecting that view of the world.”

Some of what you find in our archives leaves you speechless, like a 1916 story about Australia. Underneath photos of two Aboriginal people, the caption reads: “South Australian Blackfellows: These savages rank lowest in intelligence of all human beings.”

Questions arise not just from what’s in the magazine, but what isn’t. Mason compared two stories we did about South Africa, one in 1962, the other in 1977. The 1962 story was printed two and a half years after the massacre of 69 black South Africans by police in Sharpeville, many shot in the back as they fled. The brutality of the killings shocked the world.

“*National Geographic’s* story barely mentions any problems,” Mason said. “There are no voices of black South Africans. That absence is as important as what is in there. The only black people are doing exotic dances...servants or workers. It’s bizarre, actually, to consider what the editors, writers, and photographers had to consciously not see.”

Contrast that with the piece in 1977, in the wake of the U.S. civil rights era: “It’s not a perfect article, but it acknowledges the oppression,” Mason said. “Black people are pictured. Opposition leaders are pictured. It’s a very different article.”

Fast-forward to a 2015 story about Haiti, when we gave cameras to young Haitians and asked them to document the reality of their world. “The images by Haitians are really, really important,” Mason said, and would have been “unthinkable” in our past. So would our coverage now of ethnic and religious conflicts, evolving gender norms, the realities of today’s Africa, and much more.

Mason also uncovered a string of oddities—photos of “the native person fascinated by Western technology. It really creates this us-and-them dichotomy between the civilized and the uncivilized.” And then there’s the excess of pictures of beautiful Pacific-island women.

“If I were talking to my students about the period until after the 1960s, I would say, ‘Be cautious about what you think you are learning here,’” he said. “At the same time, you acknowledge the strengths *National Geographic* had even in this period, to take people out into the world to see things we’ve never seen before. It’s possible to say that a magazine can open people’s eyes at the same time it closes them.”

April 4 marks the 50th anniversary of the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr. It’s a worthy moment to step back, to take stock of where we are on race. It’s also a conversation that is changing in real time: In two years, for the first time in U.S. history, less than half the children in the nation will be white. So let’s talk about what’s working when it comes to race, and what isn’t. Let’s examine why we continue to segregate along racial lines and how we can build inclusive communities. Let’s confront today’s shameful use of racism as a political strategy and prove we are better than this.



For us this issue also provided an important opportunity to look at our own efforts to illuminate the human journey, a core part of our mission for 130 years. I want a future editor of *National Geographic* to look back at our coverage with pride—not only about the stories we decided to tell and how we told them but about the diverse group of writers, editors, and photographers behind the work.

We hope you will join us in this exploration of race, beginning this month and continuing throughout the year. Sometimes these stories, like parts of our own history, are not easy to read. But as Michele Norris writes in this issue, “It’s hard for an individual—or a country—to evolve past discomfort if the source of the anxiety is only discussed in hushed tones.”

Thank you for reading *National Geographic*.

Susan Goldberg
Editor in Chief

Dedication Message

A message from Katie Couric, Executive Producer and Host,
America Inside Out With Katie Couric



“As a nation, we are in the midst of unsettling, often head-spinning change — how we live, how we communicate, how we see the past, the future and each other. I wanted to explore some of the thorniest, most divisive issues facing the country and give people the tools to

have a conversation, not just an opinion. In the instantaneous, 24/7 news cycle, people seem to want affirmation, not information. That makes it all the more important to step out of our comfort zones and be open to different perspectives. I want to revive the lost art of listening, because when we understand each other, it can help us reclaim our empathy and humanity, and forge a path forward.”

*Inspired by her own journey making National Geographic’s critically acclaimed documentary **GENDER REVOLUTION**, Katie Couric traveled to dozens of cities across North America — from Freemont, Nebraska, to Montgomery, Alabama, to talk with hundreds of people to get an inside look at pressing social issues, including gender inequality, Muslims in America, political correctness, white working-class anxiety, the battle over Confederate monuments and statues and how technology is affecting our humanity. From these travels comes her newest series, **AMERICA INSIDE OUT**, in which she enlists cultural icons, experts and everyday people to help her look past the noise, politics and individual discomfort to understand complicated truths. If you enjoyed reading *The Race Issue* from National Geographic Magazine and are looking for more content and resources, watch this six-part documentary premiering on National Geographic on April 11, 2018.*

A Note to Educators

Discussing race in our learning environments is critical. Race is one social construct that impacts the everyday lives of all students in this country. We have been warned not to discuss race, politics, or religion, but those very constructs are at the heart of human identity, human conflict, and human healing. Why are these topics still considered taboo in our learning institutions?

The reality is that it is impossible to discuss race openly if we do not discuss racism—and racism in this country is too ugly, too shameful, too true. As educators, we have the unique power to change the ways in which these conversations happen and to move young people toward a better future. It is imperative that we model behavior and provide learning spaces that are safe, open, and fuel constructive dialogue and growth.

We must also understand that one story, one lens, and one source does not tell all. The new norm must include using multiple sources, listening to varying perspectives, and analyzing facts. We must provide opportunities for students to reflect on information they have received to allow for deep thought and understanding.

The U.S. Department of Education estimates that more than eighty percent of all public school teachers in the United States are white.¹ How do these teachers talk about race if race has never negatively impacted them? Why should they talk about it? What do they gain by fostering such discussions? What is the cost to them?

We must equip teachers with the tools to enrich the lives of their students and examine how race and racism are being talked about in classrooms. Below is a short list of strategies to help educators facilitate positive outcomes while having these conversations.

Establish clear ground rules for class discussion. Having students help to establish these ground rules will encourage them to follow them. Here are some suggestions:

- Be mindful of nonverbal responses and body language. Safe dialogue begins with the cultivation of trust.
- Listen for understanding instead of agreement. Maintain respectful language for each speaker across differences in perspective.
- Center “I” statements when sharing your experience and avoid generalizations such as “they,” “we,” and “you”.
- Ask respectful questions and avoid personal attacks. Focus on ideas, shared community needs and interests.
- Be direct when establishing objectives for the dialogue.
- Have students read the indicated articles from the magazine or watch the relevant television episodes ahead of discussion so that they have a shared base for understanding.
- Be an active and fully present facilitator in the room; show your students that you care for them and for what happens in your classroom.
- Do not make assumptions about your students’ understanding, experience, or background.

We hope this discussion guide can be a resource to foster authentic classroom dialogues, cultivate safe learning environments, and provide students with the opportunity for cross-cultural understanding in our collective work toward a future of racial healing. Please note that the materials presented here are part of an ongoing National Geographic series, an exploration of race that is broader than the content presented here. Be sure to check the website at <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/> throughout the year for additional resources on this important topic.

¹ <https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/report-state-racial-diversity-educator-workforce>

A Color Wheel of Humanity

Resource:

The *National Geographic* Magazine, The Race Issue: “A Color Wheel of Humanity” by Nina Storchlic.
Photographs by Angélica Dass

Throughout history the shade of a person’s skin has been a symbol of status in cultures and societies. Revisiting these times throughout history to understand the societal value of skin color on structures of power and opportunity is important. Here is an opportunity to delve more deeply into our own understanding and the perspectives of others about colorism and colorblindness. When did we begin to look at our humanity through a wheel of color? Do we understand that it is up to an individual to self-identify and that how each individual identifies may not always be obvious but should not be questioned?

- Is the Pantone Palette helpful to us in understanding arbitrary racial classifications? If so, why? If not, why not?
- How does the information provided by the Genographic Project² help us to understand the results from DNA testing and the complexity of mixed ancestry?
- How has science perpetuated the value of light skin over dark skin? Do these concepts help validate racist perspectives or combat them? When did people become “black” and “white”?
- People of color find that the word “colorism” and the experience of colorism causes negative and irreversible impacts within communities. What is our understanding of the term *colorism*? What groups are impacted? Are there ways to change this mindset? If

colorism is not addressed, what could be the long-term effects on our society and culture?

- Some believe colorblindness (the idea that ignoring or overlooking racial and ethnic differences promotes racial harmony) can eliminate racism. However, others believe it does just the opposite, allowing those who enjoy racial privilege to close their eyes to the experience of others. Is colorblindness the answer?
- In response to differences between American students and their teachers in terms of class, race, and access to education, it is becoming increasingly important to acknowledge the cultural experience of students. How can teachers bridge demographic differences? What does it mean to be a culturally responsive teacher? What kind of training should teachers have?

Reflection: Author Alice Walker is credited with coining the term “colorism” in her 1982 essay “If the Present Looks Like the Past, What Does the Future Look Like?” She defined the term as the “prejudicial or preferential treatment of same-race people based solely on their color.” Can you think of a time you may have experienced or witnessed colorism? What happened? How did you feel? How did you respond to the incident? Do you agree with Alice Walker’s definition of colorism?

² The Genographic Project is a multiyear research initiative of the National Geographic Society led by a team of renowned scientists who are using cutting-edge genetic and computational technologies to analyze historical patterns in DNA from participants around the world to better understand our shared genetic roots. The Project’s aims are (1) to gather and analyze research data in collaboration with indigenous and traditional peoples, (2) to invite, encourage, and educate the public through participation in this real-time citizen-science project, while they learn about their own deep ancestry, and (3) to support scientific research and community-led conservation and revitalization by investing a portion of the proceeds from the Genographic DNA kit sales into National Geographic Society grants.

A Place of Their Own

Resource:

The *National Geographic* Magazine, The Race Issue: “A Place of Their Own” by Clint Smith. Photographs by Nina Robinson and Radcliffe “Ruddy” Roye (pp. 118–141)

The American institution of slavery deemed it illegal for enslaved Africans and African Americans to learn to read. In his autobiography *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave*, Douglass wrote that “Knowledge makes a man unfit to be a slave.” Many enslaved people gained an education in secret, as they knew it was a major key to mental and physical emancipation.

Few white colleges were willing to accept black students after the Civil War ended in 1865, but many new colleges were founded with the purpose of educating freed blacks. Historically black colleges and universities or HBCUs have been a haven for black tradition, culture, and activism since their inception. Schools like Morehouse College, Spelman College, and Howard University have produced generations of African American leaders.

- *Recall a time when you were the only person of your race in a large group. How did it feel? Does being underrepresented create additional burdens and stressors for students of color? If so, what kind of support is needed? When white students find themselves in these situations, are the stressors the same?*

- *What is the racial make-up of your classes, social groups, and other networks? Do you find that racial groups self-segregate in certain activities or locations on campus? Which settings are more or less diverse at your school? Why might this be?*
- *Discuss some of the reasons for increased enrollment at HBCUs. What sense of safety might students who choose HBCUs be seeking that may be unattainable at predominantly white institutions?*
- *Many students who enroll in HBCUs have opted out of “educating” white students about race relations and racism in America. Whose responsibility is it to educate others on these issues?*
- *How have you seen HBCUs portrayed in the media? What things have you learned from outside resources about these institutions? Are these messages helpful or harmful? True or untrue?*
- *Last year, Apple’s Vice President of Diversity and Inclusion received widespread criticism when she stated, “There can be 12 white, blue-eyed, blonde men in a room and they’re going to be diverse too because they’re going to bring a different life experience and life perspective to the conversation.” Discuss the nuances surrounding measures of diversity and inclusion in mostly white spaces compared to measures of diversity in mostly black spaces.*



- *Historically, HBCUs have been underfunded by the government despite their proven record of innovation as well as educating and preparing black students who have become key figures in American history. Besides overt racism, what other factors might contribute to the lack of government funding of HBCUs?*
- *Discuss the intersections present at HBCUs that the students interviewed in the article touch on. In what ways do the African diaspora, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, political affiliation, and activism all intersect for students attending these schools?*

Action Challenge: Find the closest HBCU to you and research the history of its founding, its successes and challenges, and what it currently offers students who attend. What are some consistencies and changes that resonate with you? What is the significance of the location of the school? Did you always know it existed or are you only becoming aware of it now? Why do you think that is?

The Things That Divide Us

Resource:

The *National Geographic* Magazine, The Race Issue: “The Things That Divide Us” by David Berreby.
Photographs by John Stanmeyer (pp. 49–69)

Conflict theory, which originated in the work of Karl Marx, states that the uneven distribution of resources, power, and status causes tension and conflict; conflict in turn leads to social change. The article “The Things That Divide Us” reflects on the global conflicts at the intersections of identity formation, land rights, religion, and cultural traditions, inviting readers to examine these issues from multiple perspectives.

- *How do you define conflict? What are its causes? Is it inevitable? Is it always negative? What skills are necessary to mediate conflicts of identity? Of resources and faith? How do they differ?*
- *What historical examples of constructive conflict have we seen? What destructive examples have we seen in the past? What destructive conflicts have occurred in your lifetime?*
- *Do you think the concept/construct of race in the United States differs from that in other regions of the world? What evidence supports your response?*
- *When detailing the conflict between the Tiv and Hausa, author David Berreby says that the crisis changed people’s norms of behavior; getting along was no longer valued. Discuss some examples in your life when conflict shifted your norms of behavior or others around you. What did it feel like? What lessons did you take from the situation?*
- *Berreby later says, “Only humans can switch from seeing themselves as one nation to seeing themselves as two, one conservative Red and one liberal Blue. But the mutability of human groups also offers some hope, because it permits people to shift in the direction of more inclusion, more justice, more peace.” Does this apply to blackness in America? Does the deeply ingrained baseline in America that black is inferior, unworthy, and cursed allow for an optimistic perspective on bringing about social justice in this country?*
- *Does shifting the discussion on police bias from explicit to implicit offer a more effective approach to criminal justice reform and ending police brutality? What might be missing from this approach? How can communities address the racialized history of policing in America and move toward equitable treatment of people in all communities? What skills are necessary to cultivate a contemporary example of constructive conflict?*
- *Recall a time when you interacted with police. What thoughts and feelings are present as you relive that time? Has the recent media coverage and policy changes regarding police brutality influenced your attitudes and behaviors toward law enforcement?*

Action Challenge: Ask your parents, grandparents, or other older adults to recall a salient conflict that they experienced or witnessed in their lives. The conflict can be domestic, global, or personal. Did it shape their norms of behavior or strategies for conflict transformation? What was the result? Has it impacted the present?

Streets in His Name

Resource:

The *National Geographic* Magazine, The Race Issue: “Streets in His Name” by Wendi C. Thomas.
Photographs by Andrew Esiebo, Philomène Joseph, Martin Roemers, Ian Teh and Elias Williams (pp. 14–25)

In the United States, we often commemorate famous historical figures by naming streets, schools, and other locations after them; we also erect statues and place historical markers to honor people judged to be worthy of recognition. Modern conflicts have erupted over these commemorations, for they often recall not only individuals but the principles that they stood for, principles that have changed over time. Thus, recent years have seen local disputes over the dismantling of monuments to Confederate generals and the re-naming of schools to update our changing attitudes.

In Annapolis, Maryland, the statue of Roger Taney, author of the Dred Scott decision that denied citizenship to blacks, has been removed from the statehouse grounds. Violence erupted in Charlottesville, Virginia, in 2017 over the removal of a statue of General Robert E. Lee. A plaque honoring Confederate President Jefferson Davis was removed in San Diego, California. Disputes continue. On one side are those who wish to preserve history and continue honoring the historical figures portrayed. Pitted against them are those who see the monuments as a tribute to bigotry and wish either to remove them or to use them as an object lesson in correcting that bigotry.

- *What is the significance of naming a street or place after a person? What types of people are deemed worthy of this honor?*
- *A school in Salt Lake City recently changed the person for whom the school would be named to better reflect their values. This brief article found at <http://www.npr.org/2018/02/10/584757792/a-school-goes-from-andrew-jackson-to-mary-jackson> describes the school board’s decision to transition from honoring former President Andrew Jackson to honoring Mary Jackson, the first black woman to be a NASA engineer. As times change, should institutions reassess the people they have chosen to honor through community landmarks, building names and statues?*
- *What do you know about Martin Luther King, Jr.? Discuss his leadership style, the movement he led, and his ideas about race, class, international decolonization, the Vietnam War, etc.*
- *What differences exist between the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s name and the legacy of his work within the Civil Rights Movement? Are Dr. King’s personal values and nonviolent philosophy accurately portrayed today? If they aren’t, what has caused our misunderstanding?*



- *Is a commemoration of Dr. King’s name enough or should we expect streets named after him to also embody a social justice framework reflective of his movement? What would that look like?*
- *MLK was once denounced as an extremist; he was heavily surveilled by the government and constantly threatened. Only after his assassination did his approval rating increase. Today, leaders of the Black Lives Matter movement and others are being labeled “Black Identity Extremists” and are also being surveilled. What might the long-term legacy of this movement be? Do you think that society’s views of contemporary black activists will shift as time passes? What characteristics or philosophy cause an activist to be deemed radical or extreme?*

Reflection: What place in your community has a historical name? Is it appropriate? What place needs a new name? Why? What should the name be? Create a proposal for what the new name should be and support your reasoning for the suggested change.

The Muslim Next Door

Resource:

“The Muslim Next Door” from National Geographic’s new television series *America Inside Out with Katie Couric*

The importance of learning about Muslims living in America has never been clearer. As the falsehood that Islam is un-American has been perpetuated through multiple forms of socialization, including schools, churches, families, and the media, we have to remove the stigma attached to identifying as Muslim in order to truly embody the principles of our own Constitution.

The history of Muslims in America is centuries old. Harvard University’s Pluralism Project estimates that 10–50% of the Africans brought to America during centuries of slavery were Muslims.³ Muslims from Syria and Lebanon came here in the 1870s, followed by Muslims from South Asia and Europe. By the 1920s, Muslim communities could be found across the United States.

- *Where does Islamophobia come from? What is the history of anti-Muslim sentiment in the West?*
- *What false narratives of Muslims do you see perpetuated in television and movies? What about in the news? What purpose do these portrayals serve?*
- *Is there legitimacy in the heightened anxiety and fear many Americans seem to feel regarding Islam since the 9/11 attacks? Or is this more about othering a minority group in an effort to maintain the status quo? To what extent have fear and hate collided in our country when it comes to difference?*



³ <http://pluralism.org/religions/islam/islam-in-america/the-first-american-muslims/>



- *While Islam is not a race but a religion, what parallels do you see in terms of the oppression of Muslims and the oppression of people of color in the United States? Is there a formula to oppression that may be applied across all core cultural identifiers? What does that look like?*
- *How did race intersect with religion in the episode “The Muslim Next Door”? What about gender? Were any of your prior assumptions about how a Muslim looks challenged?*
- *The episode states that about 50% of Americans have never met a Muslim in their entire lives. Is proximity a possible solution to the problem of Islamophobia or could it simply incite more violence and hate?*
- *What are some long-term implications of our current political climate regarding legal protections for American Muslims and Muslim immigrants? With a spike in hate crimes toward Muslims since the 2016 election, do terms like “safety,” “bodily autonomy,” and “civil rights” mean different things for different people?*

Action Challenges: Investigate Islamophobia in France, Britain, and Germany. What are the political climates in these countries? What policies directly impact the lives of Muslims?

Challenge Islamophobia by researching the Muslim Public Affairs Council. Then write a report or editorial highlighting Muslim policymakers, opinion shapers, and community organizers working toward accurate representation in Western countries.

Alternative Action Challenge: Visit a Muslim service at a mosque in your town or city. Reach out ahead of time to someone from the center to ask about visiting hours and appropriate clothing. After visiting the service, discuss: What did you observe? Were your preconceived beliefs about what it would be like confirmed or did you gain new insight? How was the service similar to or different from other religious services? What did you learn about the culture? [Note that this type of visit will be more meaningful after students engage with Islam through research, contact with individual Muslims, and an introduction to Islamic art and architecture.]

Skin Deep

Resource:

The *National Geographic* Magazine, The Race Issue: “Skin Deep” by Elizabeth Kolbert.
Photographs by Robin Hammond (pp. 28–45)

“What is race, exactly?” Dr. Samuel Morton’s research was used by the defenders of slavery in the United States, and now Morton is known as the father of scientific racism. Yet, we now know that there is no scientific test that can determine race. It is a social construct used by those in power to dehumanize others, to instill a bias of “less than” because of the color of someone’s skin, for the purpose of gaining real or perceived power. Historically, genetics has persistently been used to support or validate racist world views.

- How does Morton’s legacy of racial distinctions and hierarchy of races still live on? How do they influence our educational, medical, and political environments? Can you think of a few examples of this theory currently being discussed in the media? How overtly or covertly are these ideas being reinforced?
- Did Darwin’s theory of evolution put in question Morton’s and other previous research perpetuating racism?
- Look at the photographs on pages 32-33 labeled “The DNA profiles of these two are nearly 99 percent the same.” How did we learn that this is the reality?
- The eugenics movement took root in the United States in the early 1900s, led by Charles Davenport (1866-1944), a prominent biologist, and Harry Laughlin, a former teacher and principal interested in breeding. In 1910, Davenport founded the Eugenics Record Office

(ERO) at Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory on Long Island “to improve the natural, physical, mental, and temperamental qualities of the human family,” as its brochure proudly proclaimed.⁴ How is it that the eugenics movement is deeply rooted in our history but very few of us have ever read about it or discussed it? How has it molded our country’s systemic structures of oppression?

- Scientific evidence is now refuting these claims of “racial inferiority or superiority,” but daily rhetoric continues to perpetuate racist ideology.
- The popularity of Ancestry DNA testing and other genetic testing is on the rise. The pie charts that provide information on our ancestry are becoming both trendy and revelatory in how we identify. What information do these DNA tests really provide? Is this a positive trend to better understanding and affirming identity? Or is this another use of data for the purpose of financial gain, validating some ethnicities versus others or for purely entertainment purposes?

Reflection: Define *race* through words or an image. What was your earliest experience around race? What is your most salient experience around race? How has racism directly affected you?

⁴ <https://www.nature.com/scitable/forums/genetics-generation/america-s-hidden-history-the-eugenics-movement-123919444>



The Many Colors of Matrimony

Resource:

The *National Geographic* Magazine, The Race Issue: “The Many Colors of Matrimony” by Patricia Edmonds. Photographs by Wayne Lawrence (pp. 70–77)

Race continues to intersect with other facets of everyday American life. Historically, before June of 1967, sixteen states still prohibited interracial marriage. In that year, the case of *Loving v. Virginia* came before the Supreme Court. Richard Loving, a white man, and his wife Mildred, who was commonly perceived as black and self-identified as Indian-Rappahannock, had been married in the District of Columbia. When they returned to their home state of Virginia, they were arrested for violating the state’s miscegenation law. The Supreme Court held that Virginia’s law was based on ideas “odious to a free people” and that it was in violation of the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. Since then, interracial marriage has been legal throughout the United States.

Research shows that interracial marriage is on the rise in this country; 17% of all marriages performed in the U.S. in 2015 were between people of different races or ethnicities.⁵ We are more apt to see interracial couples and children in the media as well. But this does not mean that all our citizens are completely accepting of interracial marriage.

- *What strengths do interracial families have? What challenges do they face?*
- *What are the reasons some people give for objecting to interracial marriage? How can you respond to those objections?*

- *Does the traditional elementary school activity of drawing a family tree lead to negative or stereotypical interactions in the classroom? If so, how would you transform it to reflect the complexity of mixed families? What alternative assignments celebrate multiracial representation?*
- *Are all interracial couples given equal privilege in society? If not, why not?*
- *How can we better acknowledge the intersectionality of core cultural identifiers in interracial marriages?*
- *Why is it important to integrate culturally responsive curricula, textbooks and media in schools? Do the instructional materials used by your school district reflect the racial, cultural and religious diversity of your community? If not, how can this change?*

Reflection: Does your extended family include interracial or interfaith relationships? If so, what kind of community affirmations or challenges have family members experienced? How has this changed over time? What kinds of traditions does your family honor to celebrate your blended family?

⁴ <https://www.nature.com/scitable/forums/genetics-generation/america-s-hidden-history-the-eugenics-movement-123919444>



The Stop

Resource:

The *National Geographic* Magazine, The Race Issue: “The Stop” by Michael A. Fletcher.
Photographs by Wayne Lawrence (pp. 100–117)

“Black motorists are pulled over by police at rates exceeding those for whites. It’s a flash point in the national debate over race, as many minorities see a troubling message: You don’t belong here.” This is a message that people of color have had to reckon with for decades all over our country. Another person’s fear of difference could cause a person of color to become a victim of violence or incarceration in any neighborhood. How is it that from a very young age, many young people of color fear police officers, the very individuals that take an oath to provide equal protection for all people? Who is really afraid?

- *As you reflect on some of the articles in The Race Issue, how do the themes of racism and classism intersect with the fundamental rationales used by law enforcement agencies for their actions?*
- *What is your definition of fear? How does the term “Fight, Flight, or Freeze” explain some of the actions by individuals? What are the long term mental and health issues of living in fear? What does neuroscience research tell us about the ability to make rational decisions when the amygdala is seized in a state of “Fight, Flight, or Freeze”?*
- *Read through the first ten amendments to the Constitution, the Bill of Rights. To what extent are you really familiar with the rights that are guaranteed there? In your experience, have actions taken by individuals in positions of power infringed on your basic human rights? Are these actions justified by the state of fear?*

- *What is “the school to prison pipeline”? Are all students equally affected by outcomes of a zero-tolerance system in schools?*
- *How does the disproportionate incarceration of men of color affect communities of color in the long run? What effect has it had on family cohesiveness and on socioeconomic status in communities of color?*

Action Challenge: List the first three words that come to mind when you hear the word “police.” Then ask 10 different people you know to do the same and record their answers. Use <https://www.wordclouds.com/> to generate a virtual word wall. Which words are repeated? Which words stand out? Which words are very different from yours? Why?

If you feel comfortable beginning a dialogue, visit a community event hosted by your local police department. Ask a police officer for three words he or she would like to be associated with.



The Rising Anxiety of White America

Resource:

The *National Geographic* Magazine, The Race Issue: “The Rising Anxiety of White America” by Michele Norris. Photographs by Gillian Laub (pp. 78–99).

In the article “The Rising Anxiety of White America,” white residents of Hazleton, Pennsylvania, react to the fact that they now live in a city where over half the population is Latino. It went from a majority white town to a majority Latino town in 16 years. In 2000 Hazleton’s 23,399 residents were 95 percent non-Hispanic white and less than 5 percent Latino. By 2016 Latinos became the majority, composing 52 percent of the population, while the white share plunged to 44 percent.

Four states in the United States (California, Hawaii, New Mexico, and Texas) already have majority populations consisting of people from racial or ethnic minority groups; so does the District of Columbia. The Census Bureau estimated that in 2015, 50.2% of babies born were from racial or ethnic minorities. While whites dominate at the present time in economic and political power, shifting demographics could eventually close the gap.

- *What does it mean when whites say they feel outnumbered when they go to the bank or the doctor’s office or to the Hazleton Funfest? Is this term “outnumbered” much more complex than meets the eye? Which cultural identifiers influence the term “outnumbered”?*
- *Is it possible for whites to understand that they are safe even if outnumbered, and that their fear has caused them to disparage people they don’t even know? Why does being in the minority have such a negative connotation?*

- *To what extent have recent electoral results reflected shifting demographics and fear of displacement on the part of the white majority?*
- *Do laws aimed at “preserving a way of life in Small Town, U.S.A.” inspire common ground and understanding or do they create further divisions?*
- *Why are some Hazleton residents so angry at the thought that a Latino family might be buying steak and seafood with food stamps?*
- *What does it mean to say that “being white was simply the default?” What do you think will be the default 20 or 30 years from now?*
- *How does the perception among whites of becoming “the minority” explain the hateful language and violence we have seen across the United States in recent years? How have our political leaders responded? Do their rhetoric and actions (or lack of action) stoke racial fears or calm them?*

Reflection: Which social principles are non-negotiable to you or to your family? Would you actually fight to preserve them? Would you fight to preserve them if it meant infringing on the rights of others?

Re-Righting History

Resource:

“Re-Righting History” from National Geographic’s new television series *America Inside Out with Katie Couric*
“The Things That Divide Us” by David Berreby from *National Geographic Magazine*, The Race Issue
Photographs by John Stanmeyer (pp. 49–69)

Since the alt-right rally to protest the removal of the statue of Robert E. Lee in Charlottesville in August 2017, there has been much debate about whether historical monuments or symbols in our country should be preserved. Many Confederate statues were erected during the period when so-called “Jim Crow” laws greatly restricted economic and social advancement for blacks in the South and the Ku Klux Klan was experiencing a rebirth.

- *What is the meaning of the title of this episode, “Re-Righting History”?*
- *Describe the debate regarding these symbols, statues or images. Is it about preserving history, maintaining an ideological position, or devaluing our past? What are the arguments on each side? Which position do you agree with? Why?*





- *Reflect on your feelings as you observe the protestors and counter-protesters in Charlottesville in this episode of America Inside Out. Name three things that stand out most to you. Why did they strike you as significant?*
- *How do we as individuals or as a country learn to listen to understand, without immediately responding? Would having this skill help us to reach common ground? Is reaching common ground critical to our survival as a society? How does learning about Maria Uwambaje and Boniface Twagiramungu (“The Things That Divide Us” article in National Geographic The Race Issue) help us to understand that such listening is possible, despite the personal cost? Have we the capacity to see the humanity in others who don’t share our same principles, culture and perspective?*
- *Is racism in the United States on the rise? Did Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and other civil rights movement leaders work (and sometimes die) in vain?*
- *What consequences do we face as a nation if we do not cultivate mutual respect and seek to understand each other to find a common ground?*

- *How do people who identify as white in our country come to terms with their privilege? Is it possible to redirect their anxiety in positive and purposeful ways? How so?*
- *The British philosopher Bertrand Russell wrote that “Collective fear stimulates herd instinct, and tends to produce ferocity towards those who are not regarded as members of the herd.” The phenomenon prevents individuals from deeply examining their own particular values and beliefs in the face of prevailing trends. Is Russell’s theory of a “herd effect” or “bandwagon effect” playing out in our country today? How does fear, real or perceived, influence the current state of our country?*

Reflection and Challenge Activity: What three specific actions, large or small, will you commit to taking to help bridge the racial divide in this country? What do you need to learn? How will you implement these actions? Who will help you? What is your goal?

Additional Resources

Organizations

Muslim Public Affairs Council
<https://www.mpac.org>

Tools for Tolerance for Law Enforcement at Museum of Tolerance http://www.museumoftolerance.com/site/ctmL6KfNVLtH/b.5052723/k.89D5/Tools_for_Tolerance174_for_Law_Enforcement_and_Criminal_Justice.htm

Forward Together
<http://forwardtogether.org/>

The #OurDream Alliance
<http://fightforourdream.org/>

Race Forward
<https://www.raceforward.org/>

Equity and Justice Initiative
<http://www.eji.org/>

Southern Poverty Law Center
<https://www.splcenter.org/hate-map>

Critical Mixed-Race Studies
<https://criticalmixedracestudies.com/>

W. K. Kellogg Foundation - Truth, Reconciliation and Racial Healing Implementation Guide:
<http://www.racialequityresourceguide.org/TRHTSummit>

Loving Day
<http://lovingday.org>

The African American Policy Forum
<http://www.aapf.org/>

Asian Americans Advancing Justice
<https://www.advancingjustice-aaajc.org/>

The League of United Latin American Citizens
<https://lulac.org/>

Teaching Tolerance
<https://www.tolerance.org>

Mixed Roots Stories
<http://mixedrootsstories.com/>

Magazine Articles

“White Nationalists Are Flocking to Genetic Ancestry Tests--with Surprising Results”

Scientific American

<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/white-nationalists-are-flocking-to-genetic-ancestry-tests-with-surprising-results/>

“Early Briton Had Dark Hair and Light Eyes, DNA Analysis Shows”

Smithsonian Magazine

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/ancient-briton-had-dark-skin-and-light-eyes-dna-analysis-shows-180968097/>

“Honoring Henrietta: The Legacy of Henrietta Lacks”

John Hopkins Medicine

<https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/henrietalacks/index.html>

“Colorblindness: The New Racism?”

Teaching Tolerance

<https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/fall-2009/colorblindness-the-new-racism>

“Toolkit for ‘Why Talk About Whiteness’”

Teaching Tolerance

<https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/summer-2016/toolkit-for-why-talk-about-whiteness>

“White Fragility”

The International Journal of Critical Pedagogy

<http://libjournal.uncg.edu/ijcp/article/view/249/116>

Blogs, Websites, Podcasts, and Videos

Online student and teacher resources about race in society, science, and history

http://www.pbs.org/race/ooo_General/ooo_oo-Home.htm

Michele Norris's The Race Card Project

<https://theracecardproject.com/>

A brief introduction to the Eugenics Movement

<https://www.nature.com/scitable/forums/genetics-generation/america-s-hidden-history-the-eugenics-movement-123919444>

A tool to assess your implicit associations about race and other identifiers

<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/>

A daily news site published by Race Forward that centers racial issues and policy

<https://www.colorlines.com/>

A high schooler's take on the commodification of black culture: "Don't Cash Crop On My Cornrows"

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O1KJRRSB_XA

"American Muslims: Facts vs. Fiction"

<https://www.upf.tv/films/american-muslim-facts/>

"What is Intersectionality?" by Teaching Tolerance

<https://youtu.be/w6dnj2lyYjE>

Deconstructing White Privilege with Dr. Robin Di Angelo

<https://vimeo.com/147760743>

Notes from the Field: School to Prison Pipeline: Anna Deavere Smith

<https://www.hbo.com/movies/notes-from-the-field>

Scene on Radio's Seeing White Series

<http://podcast.cdsporch.org/seeing-white/>

Books

Race, Monogamy, and Other Lies They Told You by Agustin Fuentes

The New Jim Crow by Michelle Alexander

The Myth of the Model Minority: Asian Americans Facing Racism by Joe Feagin and Rosalind S. Chou

When They Call You A Terrorist by Patrisse Khan-Cullors and Asha Bandele

Killing the Black Body: Race, Reproduction, and the Meaning of Liberty by Dorothy R. Roberts

What Does It Mean to Be White: Developing White Racial Literacy by Robin DiAngelo

Same Family, Different Colors: Confronting Colorism in America's Diverse Families by Lori L. Tharps

Fatal Invention: How Science, Politics and Big Business Recreate Race in the Twenty-first Century by Dorothy R. Roberts

History of White People by Nell Irvin Painter

National Geographic Magazine

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For additional free materials to bring the world to your classroom and to explore significant world issues through film, see the website <http://journeysinfilm.org>.



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