

An Opinion - What's Going on Racially
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The history of racism, and White supremacy has a long, and terrifying history. The first enslaved Africans arrived over 400 years ago. Africans who were members of royal families, chiefs, kings, queens, were taken by force from their native land through the “door of no return,” across an ocean to an unfamiliar and hostile environment. Enslaved Africans were intentionally trapped, exposed to physical violation and rape, witnessed grotesque maiming of loved ones, children and family and death rituals by their owners. It is my belief that the culmination of these traumatic atrocities on enslaved Africans and their descendants and the inability of America to make atonement, and provide reparations is why we have what is going on today.

A system of 400 plus years of designed, systematic and orchestrated White supremacy exists. Black families have consistently been denied an audible voice. Black people have been ignored when they express thoughts and feelings about treatment in employment, how Black children are treated differently by their White teachers, how Blacks are treated while attempting to purchase property, how Blacks are followed around behind when they are in department stores, negative body language and looks that White people give Black people when they apply for benefits, to name a few. Many Black people do not feel safe and are in a state of high alert because of thinking about past traumas that were, and still are being inflicted on Black people, personally and collectively. Black people might not consciously think that present and real dangers are present all the time, however Black bodies and souls act and

respond as though it is. Ask a Black person how they feel when a police car rides up behind them while they are driving and see what they tell you. The system of white supremacy has prevented Black people from having an ordinary **human** adaptation to life. Every human being should have the opportunity for an ordinary adaptation to life.

So, one might ask, why Black people are so angry. I am White, and I had nothing to do with Africans being torn from their native land? What can I do about it and how can I help? First, let me address my views about why Black people are so angry. Black people are angry because of the collective mistreatment and disregard of Black people. Black people knew rampant murders of Black people by the Police existed. In the past murders of Black people were not recorded, and recorded or not, there was little or no justice. There are hundreds of examples of Black people who are killed unjustly. There are two examples that come to my mind as recent examples. A few weeks ago the World was able to view a Police officer choke an unarmed Black man to death; in my opinion it was a modern day lynching of George Floyd, as he begged for his life for eight minutes, and forty-six seconds, while calling out to his Mama. And then you have the violent murder of a young Emergency Medical Technician, Breonna Taylor, executed, shot eight times by White police officers while she slept in her bed. Black people are beyond mad!! We are fed up with the injustice that Black people knew was happening, and it is only now that some “get it” because you witnessed firsthand the intentional atrocity, and lynching on National and World news.

Secondly, as for the sentiment, “I’m White and I had nothing to do with what happened in slavery, and I’m not a racist.” White people benefit from a system of White supremacy whether they like it or not. Every time you hear a racial slur, or stereotype, and you do not say

anything to the person hurling it, you are actively supporting white supremacy. Every time you influence a Black person to feel that they have to explain themselves, or justify their feelings on the issue of race and call upon them to provide you with empirical researched data, and statistics, you are perpetuating white supremacy. It is okay to request such data, however that type of discussion should be intentional and planned. The subject of racism is not just academic. Racism is an emotional subject for Black people and time should be taken to address and respond to questions and anecdotal innuendos and questions. Here is why the topic of racism is emotional for Black people. When white people quiz Black people on racism, we have memories of our enslaved African ancestors. These memories are a part of our collective cell memory. Black people begin to visualize our grandmothers, grandfathers, who were mistreated, raped, branded, whipped, castrated, and those thoughts influence miserable feelings that often make it extremely difficult for us to give White people the academic answers they are seeking. So Black people need time to prepare mentally, and physically for the innuendos and questions from White people.

Lastly, to address the question about what can be done to help. You can help by listening to a Black person, and not speaking until they are finished explaining their experiences, and feelings about being Black in America. You can respond by not becoming defensive and voicing that you feel attacked. You can ask the Black person with whom you are having a conversation, how you can get involved. Another way to help is to first and foremost realize that Black history is a part of American history. White people should immerse themselves in information and knowledge and take responsibility for educating themselves. Read books like, the Miseducation of the Negro, by Carter G. Woodson, White Fragility by Robin

Diangelo. White people should challenge themselves to read accounts of enslaved Africans, like *Never Caught, the Washington's' Relentless Pursuit of Their Runaway Slave, Ona Judge*, by Erica Armstrong Dunbar. Enroll in a facilitated conversation about race led by an informed Black person. Some of the challenges I am suggesting might taste like bitter medicine going down. I hope that White people will take the educational medicine about race, begin to think about and analyze what was learned, and integrate new information into their individual lives. After becoming well versed about the history of Blacks in America, it is White people's responsibility to educate others who are in their circle. The next step for White people is to acknowledge the racism, be intentional about destroying intentional and engineered barriers designed to impede Black people's progress.