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More Beautiful And More Terrible: The Embrace And Transcendence Of Racial Inequality In The United States



Synopsis

For a nation that often optimistically claims to be post-racial, we are still mired in the practices of racial inequality that plays out in law, policy, and in our local communities. One of two explanations is often given for this persistent phenomenon: On the one hand, we might be hypocriticalâsaying one thing, and doing or believing another; on the other, it might have little to do with us individually but rather be inherent to the structure of American society. *More Beautiful and More Terrible* compels us to think beyond this insufficient dichotomy in order to see how racial inequality is perpetuated. Imani Perry asserts that the U.S. is in a new and distinct phase of racism that is âpost-intentionalâ: neither based on the intentional discrimination of the past, nor drawing upon biological concepts of race. Drawing upon the insights and tools of critical race theory, social policy, law, sociology and cultural studies, she demonstrates how post-intentional racism works and maintains that it cannot be addressed solely through the kinds of structural solutions of the Left or the values arguments of the Right. Rather, the author identifies a place in the middleâa space of ârighteous hopeââand articulates a notion of ethics and human agency that will allow us to expand and amplify that hope. To paraphrase James Baldwin, when talking about race, it is both more terrible than most think, but also more beautiful than most can imagine, with limitless and open-ended possibility. Perry leads readers down the path of imagining the possible and points to the way forward.

Book Information

Paperback: 263 pages

Publisher: New York University Press; 1st Edition edition (February 28, 2011)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0814767370

ISBN-13: 978-0814767375

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.7 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 12.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars 9 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #231,574 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #29 in [Books > Law >](#)

[Constitutional Law > Discrimination](#) #489 in [Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Social Sciences](#)

[> Specific Demographics > Minority Studies](#) #1253 in [Books > Politics & Social Sciences >](#)

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Customer Reviews

Imani Perry has done it again. With an uncanny ability to merge art, law, social science, and cultural studies, she weaves a powerful analysis of race in contemporary America. • -Patricia Hill Collins, author of *Another Kind of Public Education* "Perry offers an insightful 'third way' analysis...the book...is a good fit for cutting-edge graduate and faculty research." -M. Christian, *Choice* "[Perry] offers provocative essays exploring various aspects of the societal contradictions between continuing racial inequalities and public professions of equality...Perry provides probing and original analyses of racial narratives such as the 'acting white' narrative that numerous prominent Americans, white and black, have periodically emphasized." -*Contemporary Sociology*

Imani Perry is Professor at the Center for African American Studies at Princeton University. She holds a Ph.D. in American Civilization and a J.D. both from Harvard and is the author of *Prophets of the Hood: Politics and Poetics in Hip Hop*.

An essential guide to both the history and implementation of racial discrimination. Breaks down the insidious ways that race and racial bias seep into public policy and daily life in clear, easily to understand terms, backed with thorough research. Best of all, it manages to do so without getting too deep into the academic language that can make studies on social issues inaccessible to many people.

In these days when 4 seconds is about all the time one gets to establish a position, this remarkable book by Princeton Professor Imani Perry asks us, no requires us, to think long and hard about the driving force in building and reproducing US society -- racism. Dr. Perry does not provide any easy answers for what must be done but provides many crucial questions about what we must think about in order to rid the US of this plague. In the end Perry suggests several strategies for proceeding towards a civilized society free of discrimination. All serious anti-racists should read this book and discuss it wherever possible. As Lorraine Hansberry wrote: "The matter of admitting the true nature of a problem before setting about rectifying it, or even pretending to, is of the utmost importance." Steve Whitman

Just a great book for helping me, as a white person, see how racism operates in its less obvious forms in post-Civil Rights era American society. I couldn't stop underlining and notating it. Just one example of Perry's ability to create eye-opening explanations of what is going on is her paradigm of how race fits differently between the four quadrants created by plotting high/low status with

insider/outsider status.. INSIDERS OUTSIDERS
HIGH STATUS
..professional whites. . .professional Asian Americans
LOW STATUS ...inner-city blacks . . . "illegal
Mexicans"* So called "illegal immigrants"--Latino and Latina undocumented residents and anyone
perceived to be such--get slotted in the "low status/high outsider" quadrant, making them
noncitizens who are seen as a drain on society.* Urban blacks without a college degree are
pigeonholed as insiders (therefore citizens) but low status, which paints them as problem citizens
who are also a drain on society.* High-status outsiders--such as the educated Asian American--are
perceived as contributors to society rather than "scabs" on society but are also judged to be
members of the outgroup--"perpetual foreigners"--no matter the generations in America.* Perry
notes that, relative to nonprofessional urban blacks who are seen as citizens but problem citizens,
high status outsiders have more in common with high-status insiders (such as educated whites)
even though they are perceived as non-citizens (regardless of whether they are or not). I wish every
college student in America would read this before graduating.

Perry's style is beautiful, insightful and deeply honest. Aptly title, "More Beautiful. . ." follows in
Baldwin's footsteps by depicting ugly patterns with poetic, illuminating and incisive analyses. This
book is a must read for everyone who endeavors to leave the twenty-first century a better place for
the next generation. If you follow Perry's scholarship, read her op-eds, read "More Beautiful..." and
her many other publications, you will soon realize that she is one of this century's premier
intellectuals.

Important work! I purchased the Kindle version and will be buying the paperback version soon. I still
love the idea of having book in hand.

This remarkable book by Princeton Professor Imani Perry speaks to the enormous impact that
racism has on American society both overt and covert. Weaving literature, epidemiology, critical race
theory, law and history into a compelling and accessible narrative Perry urges us to embrace the
truth about the enduring legacy of racism in America. No, we have not achieved a post racial
society... not even close. Dr. Perry presents a compelling case for the persistence of the "color line"
in American society to disastrous effect. Perry's writing is both engaging and lyrical, poetic, pointed
and pertinent. She makes the case that most Americans fail to appreciate the constraints that racial
inequality (often maintained by force) places on individuals, families and whole communities to the
detriment of all of us. Her examples are illuminating and instructive (for example the leadership

"glass ceiling" Asian Americans face or the role of police brutality on African-American community life.)Perry's solutions are more elusive than her powerful explication of race in American society. But "More Beautiful and More Terrible" does us all a service by stating the case for the lasting and deadly consequences of racial inequality and urging rectification at the individual and community levels. This should become a must read for all those interested in the "why" of American life.

This book truly brought me on an exploration journey. Dr. Perry is so wise, and her ideas on race are piercing and memorable. In her book, I was confronted with the "why" behind the persistence of inequality and the undying effect of discrimination in our daily lives. Ignoring racism, deciding to avoid discussing it, or claiming to be "post-racial" in the foolish hope that racism will go away will get us nowhere. I want to buy a copy for every person I've ever discussed race with. I now want to find them all & resume our conversation with the use of this book to guide us. This is an ABSOLUTE must read!

This is that rare type of academic literature that wakes up the mind and helps clarify real world dynamics without losing the reader in tangents. It causes you to pause and reflect on what you've just read.

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