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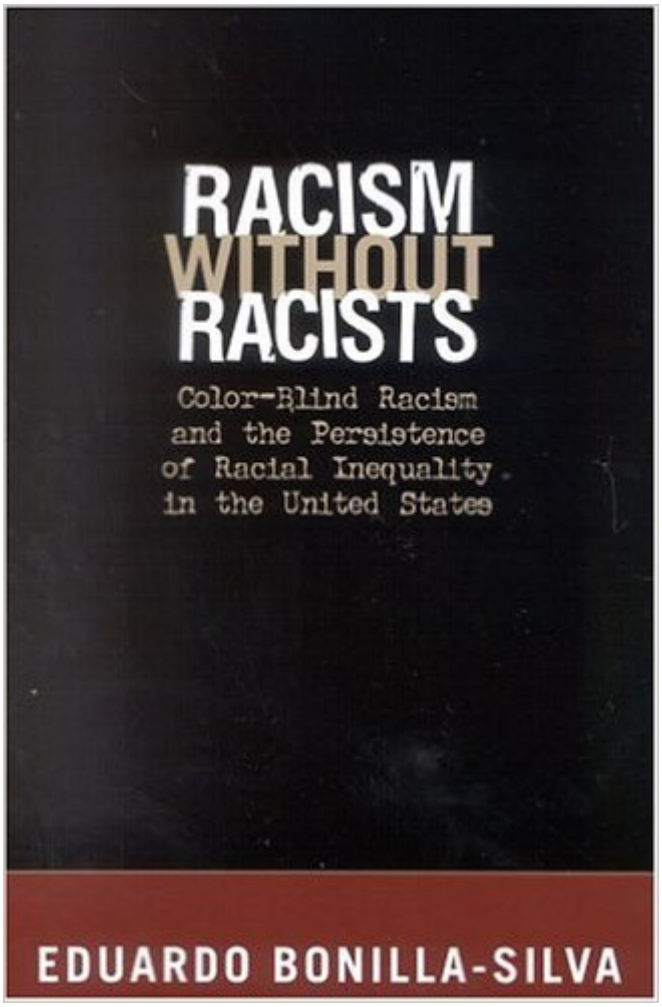
Racism Without Racists: Color-Blind Racism And The Persistence Of Racial Inequality In The United States



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Synopsis

Many Americans believe racism has all but disappeared, and that we live in a truly colorblind society. Yet people of color lag behind whites in almost all social indicators. They are poorer, less educated, and have less access to health care. If race has become largely irrelevantâ ”and racists are few and far betweenâ ”how can these conditions persist? This new book challenges our racial common sense, showing that new, more subtle forms of discrimination have emerged that help preserve white privilege. This ’new racism’ has produced a powerful ideology of ’color- blind racism’ that justifies contemporary inequities. The voices of whites and African Americans heard in this book expose how white America manufactures nonracial accounts of persistent realities like residential and school segregation. Bonilla-Silva calls for a new civil rights movement anchored in the working-class, which is made up increasingly of female and minority members. While acknowledging the obstacles this movement will face, he demonstrates why equality of results, reparations, and the end of all structures of racial discrimination are vital to America’s future. Feature points: â ”A powerful counterpoint to the writings of widely-read authors such as D’Souza, W. J. Wilson, and Steele. â ”Shows how racism has been transformed into new forms. â ”Contrasts the experiences of whites and minority Americans â ”Describes how cognitive, cultural and aesthetic factors shape racial constructions and experiences.

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Customer Reviews

I decided to purchase this book after reading a journal article by Dr. Bonilla-Silva in which he

critiqued the tendency among some social scientists to take the "social construction of race" arguments to extreme and ridiculous degrees. For example, among some guilty white liberal sociologists and anthropologists the fact that race is a "social construction" has been misused to argue that, somehow, ethnicity doesn't really exist either and that those who claim an ethnic identity are guilty of "reifying race." This ridiculous argument is made by people who are too ignorant to realize that "race" and "ethnicity" are two entirely different concepts. Additionally, while race is indeed a socially-defined variable that differs across nations and societies and throughout time, one can not deny the social importance of race as a factor in American (or any other) society.After reading that article by Bonilla-Silva, I was excited to take a look at "Racism Without Racists." In plain and simple language, Bonilla-Silva analyzes the racial rhetoric so common among white Americans in the post-Civil Rights era. How many times have you heard a white person utter the passive-aggressive qualifier of "I'm not a racist, but..."? or "I'm not prejudiced, but..."? Such phrases are used as intended buffers to qualify hostile, bigoted, racist, and/or angry statements about people of color - and they are used all the time. Even white teachers in my high school frequently issued these kind of prejudiced statements in class.Another common tendency in the post-Civil Rights era is to automatically link "people of color" with "unqualified" and "whites" to "qualified." Bonilla-Silva analyzes this trend as well.

Racism Without Racists explores the type of racism that exists in contemporary America. Eduardo Bonilla-Silva labels this new racism as "color-blind racism" because it involves the perpetuation of white dominance and privilege in a more passive way than racism was carried out in the past, and often those who display color-blind racism think they are not racist. He sheds light on the subtle methods by which white people subconsciously subdue minorities, and that the effects of this passive racism are very real. The color-blind techniques are outlined very explicitly, including fable-like stories meant to explain a stereotype, abstract liberalism in which people ignore the fact that minorities are underrepresented, and diminutive language. Bonilla-Silva is very thorough in his examination of modern racism in America, which makes it very acceptable and easy to understand for the target audience: the white majority. I greatly appreciated Bonilla-Silva's organization throughout this book. Each chapter starts with a brief outline of the points he will be making, and he elaborates on each point in turn, then finishes the chapter by tying the new information he has presented into the larger theme of the book. His ideas were easy to follow and insightful, with the statistical backing to make them quite convincing. That being said, many of his studies are from the mid to late nineties, and in our ever changing world and culture I found myself questioning the

relevance of some of these studies that were done almost 20 years ago. I found Racism Without Racists to be an enlightening book in many ways. As a part of the racial majority I find that race is not a subject that demands my attention because it is not something I have to face and deal with every day.

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