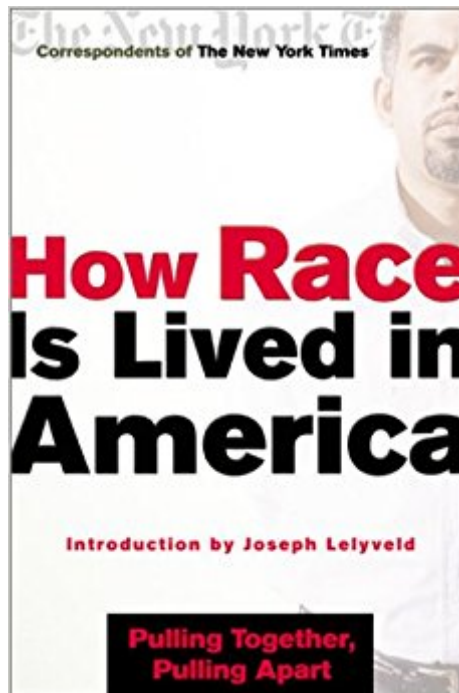


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How Race Is Lived In America: Pulling Together, Pulling Apart



Synopsis

In 1999, the New York Times embarked on the most ambitious project in its history. Starting with one central question--What are race relations like today?--a dedicated group of editors and writers began work on an intense, demanding form of narrative journalism, finding compelling stories in fifteen communities around the nation and following their subjects for up to a year until their stories played out. The result, *How Race Is Lived in America*, captures the emotions and candid words that often churn just below the surface and presents an uncommon view of the country's private and public discourse on race. Whether it's the struggles of a biracial partnership in a high-tech start-up, the tension-filled merger of a white church with a black church in the South, the simmering resentments of a multiracial slaughterhouse workforce, or the hip-hop dreams of a suburban white teenager, the powerful and intimate stories in this book follow real people leading complex lives, often but not always side by side. Aqeelah Mateen, one of a trio of young friends in Maplewood, New Jersey, finds herself torn by racial identity as she approaches adulthood. Sergeant Maria Brogli suspects that the black undercover officers on her Harlem narcotics squad fear being accidentally shot by white officers. Achmed Valdes, a white immigrant from Cuba, wonders why his best friend from Havana has chosen to align himself with Miami's black community. As each shares hopes, fears and assumptions, an intricate and poignant understanding of race relations emerges. Throughout these chronicles, which are enriched by an extensive poll and commentary from the journalists and citizens, it is clear that America has not become two distinct nations--one black and one white--as was feared a generation ago. America is now an inescapably multiracial society, discovering day by day how perceptions of race affect the fabric of human relationships. But deep divisions and frustrations persist, in minds and hearts if not in the laws of the land. This landmark book offers a personal yet panoramic view of real-world conflict and aspiration, pain and resolution--a portrait of a country torn apart and brought together by its attitudes towards race.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Editors & writers for The New York Times asked one central question: "What are race relations like today?" These are the raw stories & candid observations they found just below the surface of this country's private & public discourse on race relations. That said hold onto you seat for a bumpy read about a subject that upsets most of us & still fills us with dread & hope. There are 15 articles written by 15 very different reporters - each focusing on an aspect of race relations that speaks particularly to them. I cannot separate them here for you - suffice to write that each article will put you through your complacency paces, set your nerves ajangling & raise a host of old ghosts most of us wish would lay low. How are race relations lived today? Very, very carefully & rather schizophrenically for the most part & for other parts? Pure, teeth-grinding swallowings of crow food, blundering inconsiderations - hell, they treat their dogs better! & hope - what a faint & fragile zephyr is hope! While we may no longer have to storm into Cicero to demand equal rights to live in equally pleasant homes - we sure are determined to judge each other for the way we talk, about what we talk, the way we walk & to where we walk, even the way we say hello - the color of our skin may be the least of it! In the end both photographers & reporters speak their piece about their piece & make peace with the process - their stories are as vital as the previous ones & just as telling as they tell about their own prejudices, foregone assumptions & epiphanies.

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