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WHAT HAPPENED AMERICA?

BY LISA MILDON ([HTTPS://COFFEEHOUSEWRITERS.COM/AUTHOR/LISA-MILDON/](https://coffeehousewriters.com/author/lisa-mildon/)) / ⌚ JUNE 15, 2020 / 👁 110 / 💬 1


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I sit here, watching the protest events unfold in front of my eyes. I am not shocked nor surprised. I am disgusted. I am disgusted by people who claim to love one another turning their backs on their fellow man. Racism is not new to the US. We've struggled with equal treatment of blacks since way before I was born... way before this country was officially founded. Hell, we all but obliterated the Native Americans when taking this country from them. So, yeah, the good 'ol USA was founded on outright racism.

Some may object, "wait, those folks have rights too." I beg to differ. Do you, as a white person, dread walking down the street for fear of your life or embarrassment as some woman clutches her purse, just because you're walking down the other side of the sidewalk? While my white privilege prevents me from truly understanding how black Americans feel, I can logically deduct how it must feel. No one should feel like a prisoner of their own country. And that's precisely what African Americans must feel like.



Why is there such race inequality? Why are they treated so differently, so unfairly, so unjustly? Melanin. Let me repeat that... MELANIN! Literally, skin pigment. Yeah, let that sink in. The only real difference between my lily-white backside and an African American is how much skin pigment they have.

“ *...every American ought to have the right to be treated as he would wish to be treated...*

Let's face it, the rabid racism that exists in this country boils down to more than skin color. When this country was forming, around the 17th and 18th centuries, blacks were taken from their homeland only to be forced into slavery. They were seen as property, as less than human, as cattle. The birth of race inequality began on the backs of slaves who built this country. Let that sink in. The US wouldn't be the US without the suffering of African Americans.

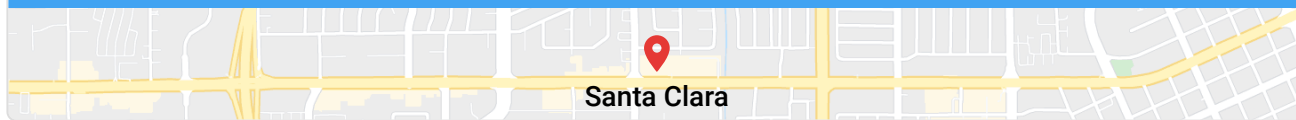
Yet, rather than thank them, show appreciation, show some humility for what sacrifices their race made, they are still treated with disdain, at best. And we've all seen what happens in the worst-case scenario. George Floyd, like many blacks, was murdered. Not for anything he did, but for his skin color.

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While I know this sounds like a rant, there is a reason behind this raving. About 57 years ago, on June 11, 1963, to be exact, President John F. Kennedy addressed the nation about the civil rights struggle the US was dealing with. The governor of Alabama, George Wallace, vowed to keep the state segregated in his 1963 inaugural address. President Kennedy had to send the National Guard (<https://www.jfklibrary.org/learn/about-jfk/jfk-in-history/civil-rights-movement>) to accompany two African American students to the University of Alabama just so they could attend college.

In his address, Kennedy spoke (<https://www.jfklibrary.org/learn/about-jfk/historic-speeches/televised-address-to-the-nation-on-civil-rights>) of the disenfranchisement of blacks in our nation. In it, he stated, "It ought to be possible, in short, for every American to enjoy the privileges of being American without regard to his race or his color. In short, every American ought to have the right to be treated as he would wish to be treated, as one would wish his children to be treated." ²

“*We need to open up honest and raw dialog about race inequality.*”

Let this soak in. 57 years ago, we were dealing with the very thing that still plagues our nation today. Perhaps, even worse now, as so many turn a blind eye or remain complicit to the situation. If we keep quiet, maybe all the racism will just “go away.”

George Floyd and the hundreds of other African Americans would attest (if they were still alive) that racism and inequality are thriving in America. But there is a glimmer of hope. After the murder of George Floyd, thousands of voices across the world began protesting. Demanding justice for Mr. Floyd’s life. Demanding police reform and defunding. Demanding equality for all men and women.



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What makes this time different? Maybe I'm an optimist, but it feels different. I'm hoping that the sheer number of people in this new movement is affecting genuine change. But to get real momentum, we all need to take part. We need to open up honest and raw dialog about race inequality. Those of us that have led privileged lives need to be willing to help change the minds and hearts of the world.

While I may not know the answers, I am willing to do what it takes to help demolish racism. I'm ready for the uncomfortable talks. I will no longer remain silent to avoid confrontation. I'm willing to use my voice, my writing, to lift up those that have been treated so unfairly. I'm ready to listen to those who've been oppressed and learn what their needs are. I'm ready to shout to the world that black lives matter.

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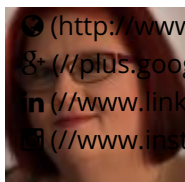
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Lisa is an offbeat geeky girl who is a weaver of words and killer story creator. She has extensive editing\writing experience in non-fiction, fiction, poetry, and technical writing. In 2018, she graduated Summa Cum Laude at SNHU in Creative Writing and English. Lisa loves PC gaming, science fiction, and is obsessed with traveling. A self-professed Whovian, she aspires to write for the TV series. With her husband, they have 3 rescues, 2 adorable Rat Terriers, and 1 fat cat.

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15 JUNE, 2020 AT 16:01 (<https://coffeehousewriters.com/what-happened-america/#comment-3977>)

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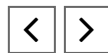


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