

The new racialization of America

Make no mistake, America is in the throes of a radical racial transformation. It's difficult to know with absolute certainty when the momentum actually kicked it into high gear, but there's no doubt that that's where we find ourselves at present. I noticed the change during Barack Obama's first campaign for President when the focus was squarely on his bi-racial background. Much was made of Obama's relationship with his father who was Black from Africa, but little attention was paid to his mother who was White.

Obama successfully used his racial background to not only win the nomination for President but to ultimately claim the office, itself. From that point on, the media's focus was on the "historic nature" of a Black man (half-Black, actually, though Obama self-identifies as Black) climb the racial ladder to snatch the Presidency from all comers, especially from Whites.

From that point on, Obama used his racial identity to remind America that it was a racist nation. One of the first instances was in July of 2009 only five months after taking office when he made sharp very public remarks about the Cambridge, MA police for "acting stupidly" for arresting Henry Gates, a Black Harvard University Professor. Police were called to Gates' home near Harvard University after a woman reported seeing two "Black men with backpacks" trying to force open the front door to Gates' house. The police report said Gates, who was returning from a trip to China found his front door jammed. At first, he refused to provide an ID to the police and then became unruly. He was charged with disorderly conduct but the charges were later dropped. Law enforcement sources said that the conversation between Gates and the arresting officer was transmitted over the officer's open police radio and Gates could be heard yelling.

Many criticized Obama for bringing what was a local incident to the national fore instead of letting it play out in Cambridge. In short, Obama assumed that racism was to blame and made sure that the Black professor was portrayed as the victim. The media was compliant and gave both Obama and Gates a pass.

The next major racial milestone occurred a few years later on February 26, 2012 when a young Black youth, Trayvon Martin, was shot and killed by who the New York Times reported was a "White Hispanic" man. Many questioned why it was necessary to call the assailant a 'White Hispanic', but it was suspected that the mood of the nation (and the paper) was ready for a racial confrontation.

Indeed, on July 19th in the White House briefing, Obama said, "When Trayvon Martin was first shot, I said that this could have been my son. Another way of saying that is, Trayvon Martin could have been me 35 years ago." He went on, ""When you think about why, in the African-American community at least, there's a lot of pain. It's important to recognize that the African-American community is looking at this issue through a set of experiences and history that doesn't go away. There are very few African-American men in this country who haven't had the experience of being followed when they go shopping. That includes me." Obama said he wasn't fanning any flames of racism; he just wanted to add "context" to the story and his comments about something that had become a national discussion about race. (George Zimmerman - the 'White Hispanic' who fatally shot Martin was later acquitted of the murder charges against him.)

Obama's statements, however, opened the floodgates for more intense racial rhetoric. None of us can forget the caustic accusatory and defamatory remarks by cowboy-hat wearing Florida Congressional lawmaker, Frederica Wilson, who was quoted in a Congressional Hearing as saying, "Trayvon was hunted down like a rabid dog. He was shot in the street. He was racially profiled."

Truth is, he wasn't, but America was off to the racial 'races.'

The year 2012 was an election year, and race became an issue among both Democrats and Republicans, but Obama was re-elected, so many thought the issue of race might simmer down. It only heated up. In 2014, the group 'Black Lives Matters' (BLM) entered the scene and capitalized on racial animus after the killing of Eric Garner in New York. BLM, which was in its infancy was supported by race *hustlers* like the Reverend Al Sharpton who were quick to capitalize on Black grief and anger after another Black man, Michael Brown, was killed by police in the St. Louis suburb of Ferguson, Missouri. This accelerated the 'defund the police' cries that were heard from coast to coast as crisis gripped Ferguson and rapidly spread to other communities.

Police racism quickly metastasized and became everybody's (every White person's) racism. The next few years saw the rapid escalation of the demand for 'defunding the police,' and the calls were heeded by many communities who felt they were under siege to do something, anything, to show their solidarity with a movement that was built on a false premise - *excessive, Black-targeted violence perpetrated by the police*. Then, in 2016, Donald Trump was elected and the pendulum swung towards law and order. However, the nation's governors were still caving in to pressure from mobs of young, organized rioters who intermingled with the peaceful protesters and created mayhem in cities like Portland and Seattle and elsewhere under the banner of reversing what they called, "America's systemic racism."

Here are two opinions on what 'systemic racism' means: Harvard professor Harvey Mansfield wrote in The Wall Street Journal that the phrase incoherently "describes a society that is so little racist that no one can respectably advocate racism, yet (is) so much racist that every part of it is soaked with racism," leaving us with "the paradox of a racist society without racists." Matthew Franck similarly argues at Public Discourse that the term connotes "a conspiracy theory with no conspirators, an unfalsifiable, undeniable thesis." Attributing racism to an entire economic and social system ends up blaming everyone and no one and provides cover for the few actual racists: "If everyone in general, but no one in particular, is to blame, the few remaining actual racists among us are let off the hook."

In 2020, the Democrats seized on the idea of America as an inherently systemic racist country as one of their principal hobby horses. Some believe that one of the reasons was to increase the Black vote for their candidate, Joe Biden, who had chosen a half-Black woman as his running mate. What they hadn't counted on was the Republicans' efforts to win over a sizable portion of Black voters by speaking of Donald Trump's successes in lowering Black unemployment to the lowest level in history and the establishment of opportunity zones in heavily Black neighborhoods.

Important though those successes were, they were not enough to counteract the phony meme of 'systemic racism' promoted by the Left and which was supported by millions of dollars in donations by corporate America to BLM and other Black organizations, fearful of a Black backlash - a backlash that was based on what they thought might be a perception of their unwillingness to acknowledge Black Americans' *victimhood*.

America's corporate chieftains are not stupid, just cowardly and weak. Many had been giving millions to Al Sharpton and Jesse Jackson for decades in the hopes of buying them protection from criticism, but in 2020 they shifted their focus to their advertising. All of a sudden, the airwaves were full of Black actors who were now taking commercial roles from White actors. A population that accounted for 13% of Americans had now become the dominant force in commercials, proving that crying racism was good business. But that was not enough. There was still more to come.

After the election of Joe Biden, television commercials have been undergoing an intense racial metamorphosis. In an effort, I believe, to placate the new Administration's 'racial equity' push, commercials are now featuring not only Black (or other minority group representatives) but are presenting a utopian picture of American society on the tube that shows interracial couples. Now they, too, are joining the list of actors displacing White commercial actors.

Let me be clear about this. I frankly don't care who the advertisers choose to appear in their commercials as I'm in the habit of turning down the sound and ignoring them anyway, but I do think it's quite curious from a sociological point of view to see how Americans on television are being portrayed as either cultural role models or as typical consumers to other Americans.

Have a look at these statistics from the 2010 Pew Research Center Report that was done on the basis of the 2010 U.S. Census...

"A record 15.1% of all new marriages in the United States were between spouses of a different race or ethnicity from one another. This compares to 8.4% of all current marriages regardless of when they occurred. This includes marriages between a Hispanic and non-Hispanic (Hispanics are an ethnic group, not a race) as well as marriages between spouses of different races – be they white, black, Asian, American Indian or those who identify as being of multiple races or some other race.

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Among all newlyweds, 9.4% of whites, 17.1% of blacks, 25.7% of Hispanics and 27.7% of Asians married someone whose race or ethnicity was different from their own.

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Among all newlyweds, intermarried pairings were primarily White-Hispanic (43.3%) as compared to White-Asian (14.4%), White-Black (11.9%), and Other Combinations (30.4%). Other combinations consists of pairings between different minority groups, multi-racial people, and American Indians.

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Among all newlyweds, native-born Hispanics and Asians were far more likely to intermarry than foreign-born Hispanics and Asians: 36.2% of native-born Hispanics (both men and women) out-married compared to 14.2% of foreign-born Hispanics; 32% of native-born Asian men out-married compared to 11% of foreign-born Asian men; 43% of native-born Asian women out-married compared to 34% of foreign-born Asian women. Foreign-born excludes immigrants who arrived married.

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Gender patterns in intermarriage vary widely. Some 24% of all black male newlyweds in 2010 married outside their race, compared with just 9% of black female newlyweds. Among Asians, the gender pattern runs the other way. Some 36% of Asian female newlyweds married outside their race in 2010, compared with just 17% of Asian male newlyweds. Among whites and Hispanics, by contrast, there are no gender differences in intermarriage rates.

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Rates of intermarriages among newlyweds in the U.S. have nearly tripled since 1980 (6.7%) increasing to 14.6% in 2008 and 15.1% in 2010.

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There is a strong regional pattern to intermarriage. Among all new marriages in 2010, 22% in the West were interracial or interethnic, compared with 14% in the South, 13% in the Northeast and 11% in the Midwest."

Admittedly, this data is ten years old, but given the trend lines, I cannot see that our social makeup and/or cohabitation/marriage preferences would be vastly different, today, in 2020. Given that, I pose the question: "When it comes to our media, is art imitating life, or is life imitating art"? OR, is there a third explanation? Could it be that the Left, Black Lives Matter and the Biden people are actually winning the battle to convince us that America is an evil, inherently racist country and that our collective White guilt should be governing our lives now?" It's a question worth pondering.

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