



Written by [Thomas Sowell](#) on May 1, 2012

Another, Politically Incorrect, View on Race

Around this time of year, I sometimes hear from parents who have been appalled to learn that the child they sent away to college to become educated has instead been indoctrinated with the creed of the left. They often ask if I can suggest something to have their offspring read over the summer, in order to counteract this indoctrination.

This year the answer is a no-brainer. It is a book with the unwieldy title, *No matter what ... they'll call this book Racist* by Harry Stein, a writer for what is arguably America's best magazine, *City Journal*. In a little over 200 very readable pages, the author deftly devastates with facts the nonsense about race that dominates much of what is said in the media and in academia.



There is no subject on which lies and half-truths have become so much the norm on ivy-covered campuses than is the subject of race. Moreover, anyone who even questions these lies and half-truths is almost certain to be called a “racist,” especially in academic institutions which loudly proclaim a “diversity” that is confined to demographics, and all but forbidden when it comes to a diversity of ideas.

The ultimate irony is that many of those who publicly promote or accept the prevailing party line on race do not themselves accept it privately. A few years ago, when a faculty vote on affirmative action was proposed at the University of California at Berkeley, there was a fierce disagreement as to whether that vote should be taken by secret ballot or at an open faculty meeting.

Both sides understood that many professors would vote one way in secret and the opposite way in public. In short, hypocrisy is the norm in discussions of race — and not just at Berkeley. Moreover, it is the norm among blacks as well as whites.

Black civil rights attorneys and activists who denounce whites for objecting to the bussing of kids from the ghetto into their neighborhood schools have not hesitated to send their own children to private schools, instead of subjecting them to this kind of “diversity” in the public schools.

As for whites, author Harry Stein says that many white liberals “give blacks a pass on behaviors and attitudes they would regard as unacceptable and even abhorrent in their own kind.” This, of course, is no favor to those particular blacks — especially those among young ghetto blacks whose counterproductive behavior puts them on a path that leads nowhere but to welfare, at best, and behind bars or death in gangland street warfare at worst.

In the introduction to his book, Stein says that his purpose is “to talk honestly about race.” He accomplishes that purpose in a fact-filled book that should be a revelation, especially to young people of any race, who have been fed a party line in schools and colleges across America.

He looks behind the highly sanitized picture of Al Sharpton, as a civil rights statesman with his own



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MSNBC program and his designation as a White House adviser, to the factual reality of a man with a trail of slime that has included inciting mobs, in some cases costing innocent lives.

Positive news also receives its due. Some readers of this book may be surprised to learn that the ban on racial preferences in the University of California system did not lead to a disappearance of blacks from the system, as the supporters of affirmative action claimed would happen.

On the contrary, more blacks graduated from the system after the ban — for the very common sense reason that they were now admitted to University of California campuses where they qualified, rather than to places like UCLA and Berkeley, where they had often been admitted to fill a quota, and often failed.

Stein's book is also one of the few places where many young people will see the actual words of people like Bill Cosby, Shelby Steele, Pat Moynihan and others who have opposed the fashionable platitudes that confuse racial issues.

Whether those words convince all readers is not the point. The point, especially for young readers in our schools and colleges, is that this may be one of the few times they will ever encounter a fundamentally different set of views on race — views that they have only heard referred to as coming from "Uncle Toms" or "racists."

Thomas Sowell is a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University, Stanford, CA 94305. His website is www.tsowell.com. To find out more about Thomas Sowell and read features by other Creators Syndicate columnists and cartoonists, visit the Creators Syndicate Web page at www.creators.com.

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