

Five Books by Black Conservatives to Read After George Floyd's Death

George Floyd's death at the hands of Minneapolis police officers has spawned wide-ranging rhetoric about racism in America. There seems to be no end to the lists of movies, books, podcasts, and other alleged educational materials promising to change our outlook on racial relations... if only we invest our time and/or money in them.

Yet these lists display a clear confirmation bias toward liberal orthodoxy. Furthermore, many of these lists are far too long for their sharers to possibly have consumed every bit of content they are suddenly recommending.

This list is presented in stark contrast to these others. I fully admit that I have not had the time to read as widely or as deeply as I might wish on this (or for that matter any) issue. Yet there's no time like the present, so I'm adding these works on racial issues – all written entirely or in large part by black authors – to the top of my “to read” list in the aftermath of George Floyd's tragic death.

1. *Please Stop Helping Us: How Liberals Make It Harder for Blacks to Succeed* by Jason L. Riley

Jason L. Riley is a member of *The Wall Street Journal* editorial board and a senior fellow at the Manhattan Institute for Policy Research. In his 2016 book, *Please Stop Helping Us*, he examines America's welfare programs, finding that they actually prevent black Americans from getting ahead. Some of these policies include minimum wage laws, affirmative

action, and soft-on-crime laws, which all help make black neighborhoods in America more dangerous.

“Upward mobility depends on work and family. Social programs that undermine the work ethic and displace fathers keep poor people poor, and perverse incentives put in place by people trying to help are manifested in black attitudes, habits and skills. Why study hard in school if you will be held to a lower academic standards?”

2. **Black Rednecks and White Liberals** by Thomas Sowell

Dr. Thomas Sowell is a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University, where he has worked since 1980. Sowell received his doctorate in economics from the University of Chicago in 1968 and was a National Humanities Medal recipient in 2002. His writings primarily focus on economics or race, with *Black Rednecks and White Liberals* focusing on the latter.

Essays in this book include *The Real History of Slavery* and *Black Education – Achievements, Myths and Tragedies*.

“Race and rhetoric have gone together for so long that it is easy to forget that facts also matter—and these facts often contradict many widely held beliefs. Fantasies and fallacies about racial and ethnic issues have had a particularly painful and deadly history, so exposing some of them is more than an academic exercise. The history of intergroup strife has been written in blood in many countries around the world and across centuries of human history.”

3. **Discrimination** **and**

Disparities by Thomas Sowell

Discrimination and Disparities focuses more on economics, but race and politics are present as well. Sowell examines where disparities in outcomes come from, and what, if anything, politicians ought to do about those unfair outcomes.

“Most notable achievements involve multiple factors—beginning with a desire to succeed in the particular endeavor, and a willingness to do what it takes, without which all the native ability in an individual and all the opportunity in a society mean nothing, just as the desire and the opportunity mean nothing without the ability.”

4. **A Dream Deferred: The Second Betrayal of Black Freedom in America** by Shelby Steele

Dr. Shelby Steele is also a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution. He earned his Ph.D. in English from the University of Utah. *A Dream Deferred*, published in 1998, argues that the polarized racial politics of contemporary America constitutes a “second betrayal of black freedom,” the first being the segregation that emerged from the ashes of the Civil War.

“America’s collision with its own racial shame in the civil rights era is the untold story behind today’s polarized racial politics. A society is very dangerous to itself when it has to bear an undeniable shame. There will be a powerful impulse to redeem itself by betraying its best principles, to bend and suspend those principles in order to show that its remorse over its shame is deeper than any priggish commitment to great principles. In other words, self-betrayal can become the road to redemption for the shamed society.”

5. [1776](#)

1776 is a project of the Woodson Center, and serves as a direct counter to *The New York Times'* 1619 Project. A collection of essays – the majority of which have been written by African American historians, journalists, and other leaders – 1776 seeks to “offer alternative perspectives that celebrate the progress America has made on delivering its promise of equality and opportunity and highlight the resilience of its people.”

Containing essays from luminaries such as [Dr. Carol M. Swain](#), Dr. Jason D. Hill, Pulitzer Prize winner [Clarence Page](#), and [the aforementioned Shelby Steele](#), 1776 offers bite-sized insights as part of a larger project dedicated to combatting the racial grievance narrative and standing up for what makes America great.

“We are a reformed society. No other country has ever included within the domain of the ethical such units of moral concern during so short a time in its nascent existence as the many persons and groups have in America.” – [Dr. Jason D. Hill](#)

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