

# Charles Murray Wields Statistics to Question Race and Identity Politics

Charles Murray guaranteed he won't be invited to speak on "woke" university campuses anytime in the near future with the release of his latest book, [\*Facing Reality: Two Truths About Race in America\*](#). Which is too bad.

The 78-year-old political scientist was already unpopular due to his controversial findings in [\*The Bell Curve\*](#) and [\*Coming Apart\*](#). Murray's latest book will enrage some people, enlighten others, and with any luck will encourage a few politicians, academics, and commentators to rethink the current ideas about race that are tearing our country apart.

The two truths Murray addresses in detail in *Facing Reality* are cognitive differences among races and differences in rates of crime, again by race. Some readers may find themselves shifting uneasily in their chairs as they read those words, just as I did when I began the book, but Murray's goal in addressing these topics is twofold. He wishes first to demonstrate that our problems in education and law enforcement are not caused by systemic racism, an ideology of identity politics Marxist in its origins and false in its presumptions. He further argues we must return to the practice of judging people as individuals and not by the color of their skin.

As in some of his other books, Murray makes his arguments in *Facing Reality* through statistical analysis. In his examination of cognitive ability, for example, he explains to readers the meaning and nature of IQ and achievement tests, and then discusses such topics as the academic superiority of Asians compared to other ethnic groups in America. He also expounds on the ways in which a high IQ wins jobs for anyone

of any race entering certain professions, and the detrimental effects of admitting students into universities or professional schools based on their race rather than on their individual abilities.

Murray employs this same analytic approach to the anomalies of race and crime. Here's just one example: He looks at the database for New York City murders and finds that of the 1,906 blacks killed from 2006-2017, 89 percent were killed by African Americans. Latinos committed 10 percent of these murders, and just 0.6 percent of black homicide victims died at the hands of whites. These figures, Murray writes, are "useful as a counterweight to much of the rhetoric from the Black Lives Matter movement."

In his last chapter, "If We Don't Face Reality," Murray directly confronts identity politics and the dangers it poses to our republic. He discusses the ways in which this ideology, with its manifold prejudices, squashes honest scientific and medical research, misleads our lawmakers, misdirects our policies, and creates division by separating people into groups rather than looking at them as individuals.

He then raises some valid questions about the future. What if, for example, working-class and middle-class whites adopt identity politics, as some will surely do? What if our universities, corporations, and governments continue to place more emphasis on racial preferences than on talent and skill? Fighting white privilege may appeal to some faculty members in an Ivy League university or to the Disney board of directors, but as Murray tells us, most white citizens:

believe that everyone has a God-given right to be treated equally. Now all of them are being told that they are privileged and racist, and they are asking on what grounds. They are living ordinary lives, with average incomes, working hard to make ends meet. They can't see what 'White privilege' they have ever enjoyed.

An aside: Until she broke her femur bone a few months back, an 86-year-old white woman, Julia, worked in the laundromat where I take my clothes. Had I lauded her white privilege, I hope she might have whacked me upside the head with a bottle of laundry detergent. There are untold millions like her all across the country.

Near the end of *Facing Reality*, Murray offers a healthy remedy to the virus of systemic race theory currently infecting our country. It's worth quoting here in full:

The return to an embrace of the American creed must be a celebration of America's original ideal of equality under the law. The good news is that there is indeed much for us to celebrate in common. When we turn away from the television news and social media feeds on our glowing digital rectangles and focus instead on our actual day-to-day interactions with Americans who don't look like us, we see abundant evidence that the optimism and good will that have been hallmarks of Americanism remain essentially intact at the micro level, though perhaps a bit frazzled.

In his [First Inaugural Address](#), Abraham Lincoln said of Southerners and Northerners, "We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature."

Charles Murray delivers this same message in *Facing Reality*.

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