

Black Adversity

“The Opposite of White Privilege”

Blaque Ink Archives: Black Adversity (Updated Version)

The original post was called ‘Black Adversity: The Opposite of White Privilege’. The post has been updated to include other problems blacks in a white racist nation have to deal with. This topic is subject to possible updates.

The following was posted April 26, 2010

White privilege is the subject where whites are given certain advantages simply because they are white. In a white-dominated society, privileges are not only plentiful, but are also normal. Of course, it's not surprising that many whites are either unaware of their privileges, or go so far as to deny that they even have privileges by playing the victim role.

However, yesterday, I wondered about the opposite of white privilege and what that's called. Today, I've given it a name. I call it black adversity. They are the challenges and

disadvantages that blacks have to struggle with living in a white world. I wanted to focus on the realities of black life in a white-dominated society. So, I made a list of black adversities.



*I know during my lifetime,
I will be taught that my
race is inferior in some
way, shape or form...*

I want to go on record that the lists of adversities are not excuses, nor should it be held as reasons for not trying to understand or advance. They do not describe black life in its entirety, and a few, if not

some, are not restricted to just blacks. However, the list shows the harsh realities that blacks face no matter the socioeconomic, political, or religious/spiritual sense or status in a white society that still holds dominion over people of color in some way, shape, or form. Some of these vary depending on the individual, but overall, here's a list of adversities blacks have to struggle with, overcome or deal with as they describe reality of blacks that have, for hundreds of years to today, been oppressed by whites.

1. Alone, I appear threatening. If I'm in a group of others who look like me, that is a cause for some kind of suspicion or even panic.
2. In order to not cause suspicion, I must be in the company of (mostly) whites.
3. If I move, I can be sure I will likely end up in poor neighborhood whether I want to or not.
4. If I move into a white neighborhood, it will be enough to arouse suspicion with my neighbors.
5. When I go shopping, I can be sure I will arouse suspicion and be followed around.
6. I will be sure that when I turn on the TV, I will most likely see others who look like me as ball players, criminals, clowns or overall failures of society.
7. When I turn to the local news on TV or in a newspaper, I can be sure most of the crime reported will have faces of suspects who look like me.
8. I know that my history is celebrated during the shortest month of the year and will likely not be celebrated any other time.
9. I know that most of the history taught is of history of mainly white people.
10. I can be sure that most of the stories I have to read for class are stories written by whites featuring white characters.
11. I can be sure that in order to pass in school I have to learn history and literature of whites by whites.
12. In order for whites to listen to me, I must agree with what they think about me and my people.
13. I can be sure that whites will not listen to me when it comes to race and racism, and anytime I bring up the subject, it will likely meet with denial or opposition.
14. I can be sure that in order to "make it" in the music industry, I must sing or rap about sex, drugs, violence and killing my own people.
15. I can be sure that in order to "make it" in the music industry, I must be an R&B, Jazz, rap or hip-hop artist.
16. When I use cash, checks, or credit cards, my skin is enough for suspicion.
17. When children of my race are missing, I know the media will likely not pay too much, if any, attention to them.
18. I know during my lifetime, I will be taught that my race is inferior in some way, shape or form.

19. I can be pretty sure that teachers will likely and severely punish children of my race for small infractions.
20. I can be pretty sure that children of my race will be put down or judged because of their race.
21. I know that the dropout rate for male children of my race is the highest among other races.
22. The way I look contributes to the way I should talk in order to be considered black.
23. I know that making good grades and good manners are signs that I'm "acting white."
24. I can be pretty sure that I'm automatically a representative for my group in the entertainment, political, religious or social area.
25. I know that any bad manners I have is associated with my color.
26. As a male, I can be sure that living beyond 30 is a blessing.
27. I know that growing up, I will likely see poverty, drugs, violence and/or murder at least once.
28. If I grew up middle-class or upper-class, I may be looked upon with negativity by some of my own peers. If I grew up lower-class, I may still be looked upon with negativity by some of my own peers.
29. As a female, I can be sure that the standard for beauty in this society is white or light skin.
30. I have a good chance of growing up in a single parent home.
31. I have at least one family member or relative who is either in prison or has been in prison, or I've known someone who is black that is or has been to prison.
32. As a child, there's a chance that I will likely be considered "bad" by adults who know me faster than being acknowledged of any positives.
33. If I murder a white person, I can be pretty sure that I will get the death penalty.
34. If I murder a black person, I can be pretty sure that my sentence will be lighter compared to white victims.
35. I can be sure that I will be pulled over by police because of my race.
36. I can be sure that I will be harassed, abused or even killed by police because of my race.
37. In court, I will likely not get a fair trial.
38. I know that as a male, there's a 1 in 3 chance that I will end up in prison, and losing my right to vote.
39. As a male I must marry within my race or be considered a sellout by my own people or someone going after "their" women by other races.

40. As a male, I know my number one cause of death is homicide most likely by another male who looks like me.
41. I know a new television series will have main characters that will not look like me.
42. I know that negative stereotypes about my people will continue despite a high number of those who do not fit those stereotypes. In other words, I will be judged by the actions of a few.
43. I know that my experiences with racism mean little or nothing.
44. I know that I will be a scapegoat for almost anything and everything wrong with this society.
45. I know that there will be movies featuring white people saving my people.
46. I know that my history prior to slavery is hardly discussed or brought up in classrooms. We were taught that we came from slaves and nothing else.
47. I can be sure I will likely not get the job or career I want based upon my race.
48. I know that all of my people are judged for the actions of one or a few of my people.
49. I have to live with the fact that my true culture, language, history are stripped away, and the proof I have to live with is in my name.
50. I am often told that something is wrong with me and not with the society, I live in.
51. As a female, the shade of my skin defines beauty. If my skin is dark or hair is nappy, then there's a chance that I will be considered ugly by my peers.
52. As a female and mother I will be judged negatively by the number of children I have. If I do have children, I will be assumed that I am unmarried, that I'm on welfare, or that I'm simply an unfit mother.
53. As a child, I can be sure that the newest cartoon series will not feature characters that look like me. If they do, they will likely be some form of negative stereotype.
54. As a male, I will be judged by my male peers on how bad, tough or "street" I am. At school, I will likely be judged for my bad behavior and athletic abilities. At times, I will just be suspected because I'm a young black male.
55. In religion, I am taught that God is white and that whiteness is purity and cleanliness and that my skin color is the exact opposite.
56. As a female, I am assumed to have a bad attitude, that I'm a gold-digger or that I like to show off my body.
57. I have to live with the notion that any organizations for blacks are considered inferior or racist by whites.
58. I am encouraged to be the best black *anything* in society and not simply the best.

59. I am assumed that any position I'm in is because of affirmative action and not on my own merits.
60. I have to live with the fact that I am not considered a "regular" person, or simply a person, that I am considered a **black** person.
61. As a child, I know the most famous fictional characters from books, television, and movies are mostly white.
62. As a homosexual, I am loathed by society more so than my white counterparts.
63. I know I am paid less than my white counterparts in almost any career or job.
64. I know negative images about people who look like me are seen around the world.
65. In a white dominated society, my life is either worth less than that of whites, or just plain worthless.
66. As a female, if I'm abused, I will likely get blamed for it.
67. As a female, if I'm wrongly accused of *anything*, there will not likely be a movement for me.
68. As a youth, I know my welfare is valued less than my white peers.
69. As a youth, I will likely be told how bad I am.
70. I know any drastic change that will grant me the humanity I deserve will not come anytime soon.

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