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# More Beautiful And More Terrible: The Embrace And Transcendence Of Racial Inequality In The United States



## Synopsis

For a nation that often optimistically claims to be post-racial, we are still mired in the practices of racial inequality that plays out in law, policy, and in our local communities. One of two explanations is often given for this persistent phenomenon: On the one hand, we might be hypocritical—saying one thing, and doing or believing another; on the other, it might have little to do with us individually but rather be inherent to the structure of American society. *More Beautiful and More Terrible* compels us to think beyond this insufficient dichotomy in order to see how racial inequality is perpetuated. Imani Perry asserts that the U.S. is in a new and distinct phase of racism that is “post-intentional”: neither based on the intentional discrimination of the past, nor drawing upon biological concepts of race. Drawing upon the insights and tools of critical race theory, social policy, law, sociology and cultural studies, she demonstrates how post-intentional racism works and maintains that it cannot be addressed solely through the kinds of structural solutions of the Left or the values arguments of the Right. Rather, the author identifies a place in the middle—a “space of righteous hope”—and articulates a notion of ethics and human agency that will allow us to expand and amplify that hope. To paraphrase James Baldwin, when talking about race, it is both more terrible than most think, but also more beautiful than most can imagine, with limitless and open-ended possibility. Perry leads readers down the path of imagining the possible and points to the way forward.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

In these days when 4 seconds is about all the time one gets to establish a position, this remarkable book by Princeton Professor Imani Perry asks us, no requires us, to think long and hard about the driving force in building and reproducing US society -- racism. Dr. Perry does not provide any easy answers for what must be done but provides many crucial questions about what we must think about in order to rid the US of this plague. In the end Perry suggests several strategies for proceeding towards a civilized society free of discrimination. All serious anti-racists should read this book and discuss it wherever possible. As Lorraine Hansberry wrote: "The matter of admitting the true nature of a problem before setting about rectifying it, or even pretending to, is of the utmost importance." Steve Whitman

This remarkable book by Princeton Professor Imani Perry speaks to the enormous impact that racism has on American society both overt and covert. Weaving literature, epidemiology, critical race theory, law and history into a compelling and accessible narrative Perry urges us to embrace the truth about the enduring legacy of racism in America. No, we have not achieved a post racial society... not even close. Dr. Perry presents a compelling case for the persistence of the "color line" in American society to disastrous effect. Perry's writing is both engaging and lyrical, poetic, pointed and pertinent. She makes the case that most Americans fail to appreciate the constraints that racial inequality (often maintained by force) places on individuals, families and whole communities to the detriment of all of us. Her examples are illuminating and instructive (for example the leadership "glass ceiling" Asian Americans face or the role of police brutality on African-American community life.) Perry's solutions are more elusive than her powerful explication of race in American society. But "More Beautiful and More Terrible" does us all a service by stating the case for the lasting and deadly consequences of racial inequality and urging rectification at the individual and community levels. This should become a must read for all those interested in the "why" of American life.

Perry's style is beautiful, insightful and deeply honest. Aptly titled, "More Beautiful. . ." follows in Baldwin's footsteps by depicting ugly patterns with poetic, illuminating and incisive analyses. This book is a must read for everyone who endeavors to leave the twenty-first century a better place for the next generation. If you follow Perry's scholarship, read her op-eds, read "More Beautiful..." and her many other publications, you will soon realize that she is one of this century's premier intellectuals.

This book truly brought me on an exploration journey. Dr. Perry is so wise, and her ideas on race

are piercing and memorable. In her book, I was confronted with the "why" behind the persistence of inequality and the undying effect of discrimination in our daily lives. Ignoring racism, deciding to avoid discussing it, or claiming to be "post-racial" in the foolish hope that racism will go away will get us nowhere. I want to buy a copy for every person I've ever discussed race with. I now want to find them all & resume our conversation with the use of this book to guide us. This is an ABSOLUTE must read!

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