

Black Rednecks and White Liberals

Book Review by Brent Ramsey, STARRS Director at Large

Black Rednecks and White Liberals by national treasure Dr. Thomas Sowell is not a new book having been published in 2005 but it stands the test of time extraordinarily well. Dr. Sowell has written over 40 books and has been a fixture as a Senior Fellow at Stanford's Hoover Institution since 1980. A noted economist and leading public intellectual for over 50 years, Dr. Sowell's background can be found at [Hoover](#).

Black Rednecks and White Liberals is Sowell's 28th book. The book is a series of loosely connected essays. The title comes from the essay that traces cultural roots of southern blacks to Scottish and Irish roots not African as is a common myth. While English transplants to America mostly settled in the North, the South was largely settled by disadvantaged, mostly uneducated settlers from the northern borders of England, mainly Scotland and Ireland. And, they brought their culture with them and kept it even after becoming Americans. Before the 19th century, a historian referred to these northern peoples in this fashion, "some of the most disorderly inhabitants of a deeply disorderly land." The cultural values and social patterns prevalent among southern whites included "aversion to work, proneness to violence, neglect of education, sexual promiscuity, improvidence, drunkenness, lack of entrepreneurship, and reckless search for excitement." It was peoples of this culture that left Scotland and Ireland and settled largely in the American South. After the Civil war blacks having no other culture to emulate, took on this culture. It remained their dominant set of cultural traits for centuries and its influence is still felt up to the present day.

In another essay, Dr. Sowell also explores the history of black education in our country from the Civil war on. This history is mostly unknown today. Using tried and true methods of discipline, hard work and the basics of reading and writing, an almost completely illiterate population became largely literate in a historic short period of time. This validated traditional educational methods and raised millions to literacy and the chance for success in the post-Civil War times. Even in the post-Civil War period and on up through the Jim Crow era, traditional educational methods were successful and effective at educating mass numbers of blacks. These successes are ignored by those who use our racial history to divide and to gain power by fueling the grievance industry.

Dr. Sowell examines how the magnificent Civil Rights era victories over racism and creating opportunity have been downplayed, twisted and distorted. What Dr. Martin Luther King preached and died for was in fact delivered to most blacks. The success of the black middle class has been minimized and hidden from view.

Instead, the false narrative of pervasive institutional and systemic racism pushed by the left and its agents has reached ascendancy in pop culture. Dr. Sowell advocates the study of history and telling the truth about actual causes and solutions. He explains why blaming whites for the continuing problems of a small segment of the black community is not only false but counterproductive.

Rating by Goodreads: 4.39 stars out of 5 on 5997 reviews. Goodreads review:

This book presents the kind of eye-opening insights into the history and culture of race for which Sowell has become famous. As late as the 1940s and 1950s, he argues, poor Southern rednecks were regarded by Northern employers and law enforcement officials as lazy, lawless, and sexually immoral. This pattern was repeated by blacks with whom they shared a subculture in the South. Over the last half century poor whites and most blacks have moved up in class and affluence, but the ghetto remains filled with black rednecks. Their attempt to escape, Sowell shows, is hampered by their white liberal friends who turn dysfunctional black redneck culture into a sacrosanct symbol of racial identity. In addition to *Black Rednecks and White Liberals*, the book takes on subjects ranging from *Are Jews Generic?* to *The Real History of Slavery*.

Amazon Reviews: 4.8 rating out of 5 Stars with 2587 reviews. Amazon Review:

This is among the most interesting and enlightening books ever written. It is vintage Thomas Sowell- a thoroughly researched, broad sweep of history, economics and sociology and their impact on humanity. The writing style is accessible, interesting and engaging rather than bogged-down and dry like other books on similar subjects.

The greatness lies in debunking vast numbers of popular myths and misconceptions about differences and similarities between races, cultures, nationalities and their conduct. Most readers will be shocked to learn of the popular acceptance and practice of slavery worldwide and that Western culture led the fight- literally- to end slavery. Europeans, Asians, Africans, South Americans, North Americans all engaged in slavery to an extent never discussed- at least not in America. Our sociologists, historians, politicians and others of low motivation would have us believe the institution was originated by and limited to the U.S. southland. Nothing could be further from the truth. Slavery continued in the Ottoman Empire for decades after the US Civil war and for generations in Africa, Asia, the Islamic culture and elsewhere despite vast military expenditures by European countries to stamp it out.

Dr. Sowell details dozens of additional examples of shocking, tragic relationships based on economic success, culture, work ethic differences and the effect of

identity politics. Success of the Chinese, Lebanese, Albanians, Jewish and Tamil cultures among other populations resulted in discrimination, slaughter and exile of the successful by the less so, incited principally by political forces. A section describes anti-Semitism in Nazi Germany resulting from the same tactics of differentiating a culture among the larger population and inciting it to tragic discrimination. Indifference to Nazism by German communities outside Germany testifies to the potential of politics and politicians to corrupt populations.

This book dispels powerful myths and debunks the rhetoric of those who seek to divide the world with false history and science and an uninformed worldview.

If you want information and enlightenment, you will love this book.