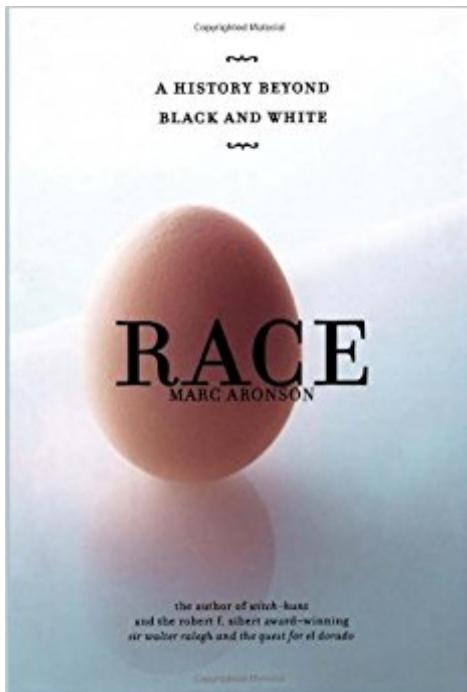


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# Race: A History Beyond Black And White



## Synopsis

Race. You know it at a glance: he's black; she's white. They're Asian; we're Latino. Racism. I'm better; she's worse. Those people do those kinds of things. We all know it's wrong to make these judgments, but they come faster than thought. Why? Where did those feelings come from? Why are they so powerful? Why have millions been enslaved, murdered, denied their rights because of the color of their skin, the shape of their eyes? Acclaimed young-adult historian Marc Aronson tackles these and other questions in this astounding book, which traces the history of racial prejudice in Western culture back to ancient Sumer and beyond. He shows us Greeks dividing the world into civilized and barbarian, medieval men writing about the traits of monstrous men, until, finally, Enlightenment scientists scrap all those mythologies and come up with a new one: charts spelling out the traits of human races. Aronson's journey of discovery yields many surprising discoveries. For instance, throughout most of human history, slavery had nothing to do with race. In fact, the idea of race itself did not exist in the West before the 1600s. But once the idea was established and backed up by "scientific" theory, its influence grew with devastating consequences, from the appalling lynchings in the American South to the catastrophe known as the Holocaust in Europe. With one hundred images, this is a dynamic, thought-provoking work-history as quest, written as only Marc Aronson could do it.

## Book Information

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Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 6 and up

## Customer Reviews

Race: a noun or a verb? To race...To compete. White Black Yellow Red Brown: A race. Human beings: the race made from all races no matter how we compete for prestige...power...raw materials...resources. Marc Aronson in his intelligent easy to ready exploration of Race is asking questions that we all need to ponder for in reality there is only one race: against time to save ourselves from the foolishness of race hatred...race baiting...race pride. This is a book to read with your whole family to discover which side of the race you are on. -- Nikki Giovanni

Marc Aronson is the author of the critically acclaimed *>*, winner of the ALA's first Robert L. Sibert Information Book Award for nonfiction and the Boston Globe-Horn Book Award. He has won the LMP Award for editing and has a Ph.D. in American history from NYU. He lives with his wife and son in Maplewood, New Jersey.

Great resource for teachers and parents who want text for discussions of race and racism.

This a great book, recommend for everyone.

This book introduces the reader to the problem of race and racism throughout History. It's very well documented and underlines basic facts often neglected by more authoritative authors. The pictures are somewhat crude but they really help to fix in the reader's mind the extent of some hideous but forgotten episodes. I recommend this book to everyone, not just young readers.

When the Declaration of Independence was signed on July 4, 1776, the members of the General Congress of the then thirteen United States of America declared: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal..." Did they mean it? Does anyone who says it now, that "all men are created equal," really mean it? Exactly what importance does race play in how we are treated, in how we are perceived, and in how we treat and perceive others? What, exactly, is race to begin with? Is race defined by the color of our skin? Are we White or Black, Hispanic or Asian, Indian or Arabic? Or is race based on where our ancestors originated from? Are we Greek or Roman, Polish or European? Or, in fact, is race based on our religious beliefs? Are we Christian, Muslim, Jewish? Marc Aronson has no clear-cut answers, and neither does science or history. The true fact

of the matter is that race is a belief, and everyone believes differently. Just as racial prejudice is a learned mindset, so is how we view race. There have always been, and probably always will be, those human beings who see other humans as inferior. Although we can hope that one day prejudice will be a thing of the past, I don't think that anyone, when being completely honest with themselves, hasn't fallen victim at least once to being prejudicial to another person based on some idea of race. RACE is a fascinating look into the history of the human belief system as regards to the teachings of race in all of its disguises, whether the color of our skin, our ethnic background, or our religion. It's a great learning tool that would be well used in classrooms or as independent study for anyone who wishes to study the matter further. Reviewed by: Jennifer Wardrip, aka "The Genius"

As I read through the first and second chapter I was interested in the storyline. Reading further I grew bored and put the book down. Thank God I rented it from the library as opposed to buy it.

The author, a well-known writer and editor whose audience is primarily teens, has written a history of race and racism from the ancient world down to the present. He confines this study to race and racism in the western world. Much territory is covered, describing and analyzing what racial prejudice is, how it begins, the socio-economic factors influencing it, and its terrible consequences throughout the centuries. Despite a wealth of informative data on such topics as race and slavery, so-called racial "differences," and doctrines such as survival of the fittest, the book contains several egregious errors of interpretation. For example, Aronson attributes the ancient Israelites' belief in one God to paving the way for thousands of years of prejudice, war, and intolerance in the West. In addition, basing his argument on the tendentious New Testament gospels, he proclaims that Jesus was the first to preach the doctrine of universal love for humankind. This, of course, is contrasted with what Aronson sees as narrow Jewish particularism. His interpretation of the belief in the chosen people as exclusivity is similarly skewed. With regard to Jews, instead of revealing truths about the pernicious effects of racism, Aronson helps to perpetuate it. Very disappointing.

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