
Equal Opportunity in America

Segment Length: 3:55 minutes; 4:33 minutes

Videos:

“Racism in the United States: By the Numbers”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GQdMgtncpoE>

“Is the American Dream Alive for Minorities?”

See website: https://stosselintheclassroom.org/both_sides/

Guide:

The questions below will help students achieve a better understanding of the arguments made on either side of a contentious topic. Because these questions often touch upon statements made briefly in the videos, we recommend reading the questions before watching each video.

Students are encouraged to take notes during the videos, and it may be helpful for students to break into groups, each taking responsibility for only a few questions, before coming together for discussion.

Analysis Questions:

1. John Green tells us in the first video that whites generally don't think racism is alive in America today. John Stossel's audience survey showed the same result. If John Green is correct about the existence of systemic racism in America, why might most white Americans fail to see racism around them?
2. Racial disparities in prison sentences and healthcare outcomes have been widening, John Green reports. Given ostensible decreases in American racism in the last 60 years, how might someone like Star Parker or John Stossel use this fact to argue that factors other than racism must be driving these disparities?
3. Convicted prisoners who are later exonerated by DNA evidence are disproportionately black, according to John Green. How might this be evidence of systemic racism against African-Americans in the criminal justice system?
4. John Green says that identifying racism is difficult given the other factors that play a role in creating disparities between racial groups. How could something like wealth obscure the cause of racial disparities in arrest rates?
5. A University of Chicago study found that job applicants with identical resumés are less likely to receive a callback if they have a traditionally black name, John Green reports. How would Star Parker respond?

6. Star Parker says she used to believe her problems were the fault of others and that government would take care of her. According to her argument, how could this mentality be harmful?
7. John Green seems to think disparities between blacks and whites can be traced to racism. How do Star Parker and John Stossel explain marriage and birth rates in the black community?
8. Correlation is not causation, John Green cautions, and economic inequality is surely a factor in racial disparities. But Green says race is also connected to economic status. How so?