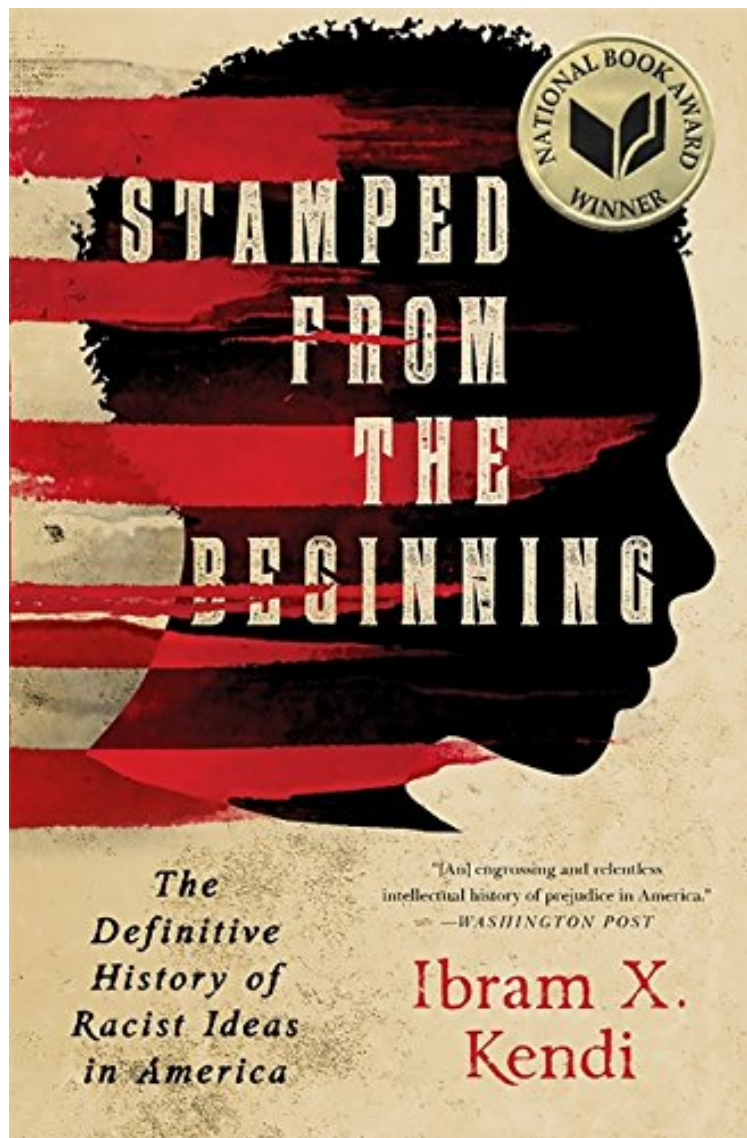


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## Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America (National Book Award Winner)

*Ibram X. Kendi*

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**Ibram X. Kendi : Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America (National Book Award Winner)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America (National Book Award Winner):

175 of 183 people found the following review helpful. Stamped, from the beginning and ForeverBy Read-A-LotThe

author posits that there are really 3 sides to the debate of racial disparities existing and persisting. The three sides are segregationists, assimilationists and antiracists. His definition of racism, i.e., the adoption of racist ideas is a simple one, and as such you will see some famous people that will surprise you to be labeled as racist at points in their career. W.E.B. DuBois is certainly a name most readers would never associate with being a "racist" during his long illustrious career. One thing that is most important in these kinds of arguments, is for everyone to be operating from the same definition. So to the author's credit he states his explanation of racist ideas early. Keep in mind, we are not talking about racism, but racist ideas and how these ideas have affected and infected not only Americans but world citizens. "My definition of a racist idea is a simple one: it is any concept that regards one racial group as inferior or superior to another racial group in any way. I define anti-Black racist ideas—the subject of this book—as any idea suggesting that Black people, or any group of Black people, are inferior in any way to another racial group." With that in mind, author Ibram Kendi compiles a comprehensive history of racist ideas, using historical "tour guides" to traffic readers through a landscape beginning in mid 1600 to present day. Kendi here makes a powerful statement with this book about how these racist ideas have led to continuing racist discrimination. "I held racist notions of Black inferiority before researching and writing this book. Racist ideas are ideas. Anyone can produce them or consume them, as Stamped from the Beginning's interracial cast of producers and consumers show... Fooled by racist ideas, I did not fully realize that the only thing wrong with Black people is that we think something is wrong with Black people. I did not fully realize that the only thing extraordinary about White people is that they think something is extraordinary about White people." That's a potent admission for someone writing the "definitive" history of racist ideas. But I think it is important to this wonderful work by Kendi. As he goes about exposing these ideas, readers may be surprised to find themselves subscribing to ideas that, by Kendi's definition are clearly racist. As we move through the five eras, with our guides, you will be fascinated as these ideas and the consequences of them are brought to light. Thoughts that you have given little attention to, and have become part of your consciousness will hopefully be liberated. Something that Black people generally do when they hear some terrible news item, one of the initial thoughts is hoping the perpetrators are not Black. Does that hope spring from our buying into the racist idea that Black people are pathological? And we will be judged by the actions of the perpetrators and therefore be seen as defective? Is this a racist idea? "Already, the American mind was accomplishing that indispensable intellectual activity of someone consumed with racist ideas: individualizing White negativity and generalizing Black negativity. Negative behavior by any Black person became proof of what was wrong with Black people, while negative behavior by any White person only proved what was wrong with that person." All the ways that racist ideas have worked hand in hand with discrimination are unearthed here. And it may come as a surprise to some that prominent Black leaders of their day held tightly to racist ideas, like uplift suasion. The concept that "was based on the idea that White people could be persuaded away from their racist ideas if they saw Black people improving their behavior, uplifting themselves from their low station in American society. The burden of race relations was placed squarely on the shoulders of Black Americans. Positive Black behavior, abolitionist strategists held, undermined racist ideas, and negative Black behavior confirmed them." Sounds a lot like today's concept of respectability politics, if we would just pull our pants up, stop listening to that damn music, not be so loud, etc. etc. If we would just present ourselves in a more respectable manner, we could then usher in that post-racial epoch that some say is already here. The journey through the racist idea history has to include the players and events of the time periods covered and Kendi does a good job of incorporating that history and integrating the ideas that girded those times. The book clocks in at 500 pages, but it is well worth your time and investment. 115 of 126 people found the following review helpful. A consummate history of anti black racism for everyone. By Joseph Psojka This wonderful book provide a clear and readable history of racism that everyone and especially Americans should read. As a white immigrant Christian of moderate means, I am among those who conveniently succumbed to the implicit racism of America, and was repeatedly shocked by the rapier insights Kendi offers in this critical review of racism in America from early slavers to the Constitution, segregationists, abolitionists, assimilationists, and modern white supremacists. No one is safe from his bright light on the blatant and subtle forms of racism, from Jefferson, to Du Bois, to MLK, and Angela Davis, and now to the racism of Trump, who hides his otherwise ebullient racism by calling blacks "Thugs". What shocks me most is how naïve I am in believing I hold antiracist positions, only to discover that Kendi's critique blows holes into some of my beliefs. If I can be so naïve, perhaps so can you. This is a thoughtful and detailed historical summary that helps explain so many of America's current trends and ideologies. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Must Read - Excellent insight. By Kim N. Kershaw Excellent book on untold history of racism in the United States of America. A must read for all African Americans, beautiful insight into the past. I commend the author on a job well done. We need to know our history, not just what we been told; thank you and please write more.

WINNER OF THE 2016 NATIONAL BOOK AWARD FOR NONFICTION A NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER IN RACE AND CIVIL RIGHTS FINALIST FOR THE 2016 NATIONAL BOOK CRITICS CIRCLE AWARD FOR NONFICTION THE MOST AMBITIOUS BOOK OF 2016 — The Washington Post A BOSTON GLOBE BEST BOOK OF 2016 A WASHINGTON POST NOTABLE BOOK OF 2016 A CHICAGO REVIEW OF BOOKS BEST

NONFICTION BOOK OF 2016A ROOT BEST BOOK OF 2016A BUZZFEED BEST NONFICTION BOOK OF 2016A BUSTLE BEST BOOK OF 2016NOMINATED FOR 2016 NAACP IMAGE AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING LITERARY WORK OF NONFICTIONFINALIST FOR THE 2017 HURSTON/WRIGHT LEGACY AWARD IN NONFICTIONA KIRKUS BEST HISTORY BOOK OF 2016A KIRKUS BEST BOOK OF 2016 TO EXPLAIN CURRENT POLITICSA KIRKUS BEST HEARTRENDING NONFICTION BOOK of 2016AN ENTROPY BEST NONFICTION BOOK OF 2016THE WASHINGTON POST 2016 SUMMER READING LIST"ENGROSSING AND RELENTLESS" —The Washington Post"THIS DEFINITIVE HISTORY OF RACIST IDEAS SHOULD BE REQUIRED READING" —The Root"NOVELISTIC FLAIR" —The Stranger"AMBITIOUS, MAGISTERIAL" —Starred Kirkus Review"MUST FOR SERIOUS READERS" —Library Journal"HEAVILY RESEARCHED YET READABLE" —Booklist"WORTH THE TIME OF ANYONE WHO WANTS TO UNDERSTAND RACISM" —The Seattle Times"EVER-RELEVANT CONTEXT FOR THE WHITE SUPREMACIST MOMENT" —The Dallas Morning News"A COMPELLING, THOROUGHLY ENLIGHTENING, UNSETTLING, AND NECESSARY READ" —Vox"GRACEFUL, ENGAGING PROSE" —Tampa Bay TimesSome Americans cling desperately to the myth that we are living in a post-racial society, that the election of the first Black president spelled the doom of racism. In fact, racist thought is alive and well in America--more sophisticated and more insidious than ever. And as award-winning historian Ibram X. Kendi argues in *Stamped from the Beginning*, if we have any hope of grappling with this stark reality, we must first understand how racist ideas were developed, disseminated, and enshrined in American society. In this deeply researched and fast-moving narrative, Kendi chronicles the entire story of anti-Black racist ideas and their staggering power over the course of American history. *Stamped from the Beginning* uses the life stories of five major American intellectuals to offer a window into the contentious debates between assimilationists and segregationists and between racists and antiracists. From Puritan minister Cotton Mather to Thomas Jefferson, from fiery abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison to brilliant scholar W.E.B. Du Bois to legendary anti-prison activist Angela Davis, Kendi shows how and why some of our leading proslavery and pro-civil rights thinkers have challenged or helped cement racist ideas in America. Contrary to popular conceptions, racist ideas did not arise from ignorance or hatred. Instead, they were devised and honed by some of the most brilliant minds of each era. These intellectuals used their brilliance to justify and rationalize deeply entrenched discriminatory policies and the nation's racial disparities in everything from wealth to health. And while racist ideas are easily produced and easily consumed, they can also be discredited. In shedding much-needed light on the murky history of racist ideas, *Stamped from the Beginning* offers us the tools we need to expose them--and in the process, gives us reason to hope.

An "engrossing and relentless intellectual history of prejudice in America...The greatest service Kendi [provides] is the ruthless prosecution of American ideas about race for their tensions, contradictions and unintended consequences."—The Washington Post"Kendi has done something that's damn near impossible: write a book about racism that breaks new ground, while being written in a way that's accessible to the nonacademic. If you've ever been interested in how racist ideas spread throughout the United States, this is the book to read."—The Root*Stamped from the Beginning* is "ambitious, well-researched and worth the time of anyone who wants to understand racism."—The Seattle Times"Kendi admits that he is not writing to change the minds of those who produce and espouse racist ideas. Rather, in his honesty about how deeply he himself had held multiple racist ideas before embarking on the historical odyssey of this book, he gives the reader permission to accompany him on that eye-opening journey...Kendi leaves plenty of room for self-questioning, and for drawing connections between the racist apologetics of the past and those of the present. The process makes for a compelling, thoroughly enlightening, unsettling, and necessary read."—Vox"An altogether remarkable thesis on history, but, in ways that are both moving and immediately painful, it also reverberates with the post-election autopsy we're all conducting right now... *Stamped from the Beginning* is a riveting (and often rivetingly written) work, well deserving of the National Book Award."—The Stranger"To structure his book, which he spent three years writing, Kendi built it around five major American intellectual figures: Puritan leader Cotton Mather, founding father Thomas Jefferson, abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison, African-American scholar W.E.B. Du Bois and activist Angela Davis. While showing the reader each of them grappling with questions of race, Kendi places them in the wider context of history with graceful, engaging prose and deeply researched details. *Stamped* is a book that connects everything from Mather's 17th century theological theories about the souls of Africans to Bo Derek's cornrows in the movie *10*, and much more."—Tampa Bay Times*Stamped from the Beginning* provides "ever-relevant context for the white supremacist moment."—The Dallas Morning News"Ibram Kendi is an important new voice in African American intellectual and social history. This book, an intellectual history of racist ideas, promises to break important new ground for scholarly and general audiences interested in the construction of racism in America."—Peniel E. Joseph, author of *Stokely: A Life and Waiting 'Til the Midnight Hour*"Both a penetrating treatise and a wonderfully accessible work of intellectual history, *Stamped from the Beginning* reveals the heritage of ideas behind the modern dialectic of race-denial and race-obsession. By historicizing our entrenched logic of racial difference, Kendi shows why "I don't see color" and other professions of post-racialism remain inexorable alibis for white supremacy. *Stamped from the Beginning* has done the cause of anti-racism a great service."—Russell

Rickford, Associate Professor, Cornell University, and author of *We Are an African People: Independent Education, Black Power, and the Radical Imagination*"Richly sourced and engaging, Ibram X. Kendi's *Stamped from the Beginning* is a highly accessible yet provocative study that seeks to complicate our understanding of racist ideas and the forces that produce them."—Yohuru Williams, Professor of History and Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, Fairfield University"In this tour de force, Kendi explores the history of racist ideas—and their connection with racist practices—across American history. Racism is the enduring scar on the American consciousness. In this ambitious, magisterial book, Kendi reveals just how deep that scar cuts and why it endures, its barely subcutaneous pain still able to flare."—Kirkus (starred review)"In his ambitious, illuminating, and engaging book, Ibram X. Kendi seamlessly assembles sources from Cotton Mather to Angela Davis; the Great Awakening to Black Lives Matter; the Birth of a Nation to Hip Hop culture, to show how not only race but racist ideas are at the center of American thought."—Paula J. Giddings, EA Woodson Professor, Smith College, and author of *Ida: A Sword Among Lions: Ida B. Wells and the Campaign Against Lynching*"This heavily researched yet easily readable volume explores the roots and the effects of racism in America. The narrative smoothly weaves throughout history, culminating in the declaration that as much as we'd like it to be, America today is nowhere near the "postracial" country that the media declared following the election of Barack Obama in 2008. The hope here is that by studying and remembering the lessons of history, we may be able to move forward to an equitable society."—Booklist"Stamped from the Beginning is a history of how racist ideas are built, and how they are built to last. Understanding this history is essential if we want to have any hope of progress. This book will forever change the way we think about race."—Touré, MSNBC contributor and author of *Who's Afraid of Post-Blackness*"Kendi's provocative egalitarian argument combines prodigious reading and research with keen insights into the manipulative power of racist ideologies that suppress the recognition of diversity. This is a must for serious readers of American history, politics, or social thought."—Library Journal"Stamped from the Beginning delivers a timely and bold corrective to the history of racist and anti-racist ideas that explodes our understanding of the root of anti-black violence as we know it today. Kendi's deft analysis of key thinkers from Cotton Mather to Angela Davis illustrates how racial thought, specifically debates about racial difference, take shape across space and time and influence racial policies and the persistence of racial discrimination. This book is a must read for those interested in working to unearth the foundational ideas and practices that hinder true racial progress."—Keisha-Khan Y. Perry, Associate Professor, Brown University, and author of *Black Women against the Land Grab: The Fight for Racial Justice in Brazil*"Kendi upends many commonly held beliefs about how racism works, exploring the ideas and thinkers behind our most intractable social and cultural problem."—The Boston Globe"A deep (and often disturbing) chronicling of how anti-black thinking has entrenched itself in the fabric of American society."—The Atlantic"A staggering intellectual history of racism in America that is both rigorous and ...readable."—New Republic"An intricate look at the history of race in the U.S., arguing that many well-meaning American progressives inadvertently operate on belief systems tinged with a racist heritage."—Time"Self-proclaimed as a definitive history of racist ideas in the US, this exhaustive, encyclopedic opus lives up to that claim. Kendi's mighty tome is breathtaking in its scope.... Both worthwhile and extraordinary.... Essential."—Choice"Racial tensions have seemingly increased over the past year, making Kendi's *Stamped from the Beginning* essential reading. The book points to the roots of the problem, offering lessons on digging them up."—Bustle"By showing how deeply entrenched racist ideas have been — and still are — in America, and thus exposing clearly and discrediting these ideas, Kendi has created not only a great work of scholarship but a much-needed tool."—Buzzfeed"I honestly wish every American would read this book, especially people who haven't been exposed to the history of blatant, transparent racism in our public policy."—Chicago of Books"A work as prodigious as the subtitle implies.... Had Kendi only provided history, *Stamped from the Beginning* would be a meaningful contribution to the literature, but it is so much more. It a call for all Americans to look inward."—Albany Times Union"Given our political moment and the work we need to do as individuals and as a country, this book should be on every young leader's bookshelf. It's not pretty, but the truth often isn't."—Forbes

About the Author Ibram X. Kendi is a New York Times best-selling author and award-winning historian. He is Professor of History and International Relations and the Founding Director of the Antiracist Research and Policy Center at American University. A frequent public speaker, Kendi specializes in the history of racism and antiracism. He is the author of *Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America* (Nation, 2016), which won the 2016 National Book Award for Nonfiction. He is also the author of the award-winning book, *The Black Campus Movement* (Palgrave, 2012). Kendi's writings have appeared in *Black Perspectives*, *Salon*, *The New York Times*, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, *New York Daily News*, *Time*, *The Huffington Post*, and *The Root*. Kendi has received research fellowships, grants, and visiting appointments from a variety of universities, foundations, professional associations, and libraries, including the American Historical Association, Library of Congress, National Academy of Education, Spencer Foundation, Lyndon B. Johnson Library Museum, Rutgers Center for Historical Analysis, Brown University, Princeton University, Duke University, University of Chicago, and UCLA. Before entering academia, he worked as a journalist. Kendi earned his undergraduate degrees from Florida AM University, and his graduate degrees from Temple University. Kendi lives in Washington, DC.