

Racism overblown – or provoked?

 cnav.news/2023/05/07/editorial/talk/racism-overblown-provoked/

By Terry A. Hurlbut

May 7, 2023



Why do we hear so much about racism these days? True enough, this country saw a lot of it in the 1950s. But by the end of the century, the perception of it had declined, so that people didn't tend to think about it. That is, until the Presidency of Barack Obama. Yesterday evening, a now-prominent Twitter influencer shared the likely reason: liberal newspapers blowing it out of proportion. Or do they have another, more ominous motive?

Newspapers mentioning racism more often

Once again, meet Kanekoa the Great, who [gave Google the Twitter treatment](#) back in February. Now he turns his attention to America's largest daily newspapers. He charges that they have sharply increased their use of the word *racism* and phrases containing it. They also are selectively mentioning the race of those accused of murder, depending on the race of suspect and victim.

Beginning at 4:07 p.m. EDT yesterday, Kanekoa dropped a three-tweet thread:

#1 Based on a study of 1,100 articles from six major newspapers between 2019 and 2021, the media is four times more likely to mention the race of white murderers as compared to black murderers <https://t.co/cilg5QdFgz> pic.twitter.com/TmWX4MIO4i

— KanekoaTheGreat (@KanekoaTheGreat) [May 6, 2023](#)

#3 After George Floyd's murder, the media disparity between mentioning the race of white and black murderers widened.

The six papers included the Chicago Tribune, Los Angeles Times, New York Times, Philadelphia Inquirer, San Francisco Chronicle, and Minneapolis's Star-Tribune.
pic.twitter.com/nS86HAOmM7

— KanekoaTheGreat (@KanekoaTheGreat) [May 6, 2023](#)

Then at 6:51 p.m. EDT he dropped another:

#1 Between 2011 and 2019, the New York Times and the Washington Post increased their usage of the words "racist," "racists," and "racism" by over 700% and nearly 1,000%, respectively.
<https://t.co/pJ3C72Z4qZ> pic.twitter.com/DacAFHuwO5

— KanekoaTheGreat (@KanekoaTheGreat) [May 6, 2023](#)

#3 In 2006, 45% of white Democrats and 41% of white Republicans knew someone they considered racist.

By 2015, this increased to 64% for white Democrats but remained 41% for white Republicans.

Notably, the % decreased among black & hispanic Democrats during the same period.
pic.twitter.com/xxOLOANM1b

— KanekoaTheGreat (@KanekoaTheGreat) [May 6, 2023](#)

#5 Between 2013 and 2019, the New York Times and the Washington Post increased their usage of "white privilege" and "racial privilege" by 1,200% and nearly 1,500%, respectively.
pic.twitter.com/knm1Sgf6pc

— KanekoaTheGreat (@KanekoaTheGreat) [May 6, 2023](#)

#6 "What the data presented here suggests is that editorial decisions made over the past decade at some of the most powerful media outlets in the world about what kind of language to use and what kind of stories merited coverage when it came to race—whatever the intention and...

— KanekoaTheGreat (@KanekoaTheGreat) [May 6, 2023](#)

This actually is a series of quotes and graphics from an article that appeared in *The Tablet*, shortly before the Election of 2020. Zach Goldberg, then a graduate student at Georgia State University, wrote the [article](#) and in fact cited more examples.

Reaction has been mostly positive, with replies scattered throughout these threads. This user brought up an appearance by Morgan Freeman on CBS' *Sixty Minutes*, in which he decried "Black History Month." In fact, Freeman asks Correspondent Mike Wallace, "Are you going to relegate my history to a month? What about yours?"

<https://t.co/Lq4G7Lcn3J>

— TAM (@tm4csons) [May 6, 2023](#)

Likewise, this user shared this picture of Freeman:

<pic.twitter.com/LGdF4HXpBF>

— TAM (@tm4csons) [May 6, 2023](#)

saying,

| How are we going to get rid of racism? Stop talking about it!

The text on the portrait refers to AZ Quotes – and in fact the quote shows up at [this link](#).

When another user thanked Kanekoa for putting the issue into perspective, Kanekoa answered this way:

| It's no coincidence that the perception of racial division increased after the Occupy Wall Street movement alongside the rise of populism <pic.twitter.com/sxxJ5FwqDj>

— KanekoaTheGreat (@KanekoaTheGreat) [May 6, 2023](#)

Still another user produced this segment, again featuring Morgan Freeman.

| 700% to 1000% Racism:

"If you talk about it, it exists." -Morgan Freeman <pic.twitter.com/C7CFVspUN8>

— ES 🇺🇸 (@Simply4Truth_) [May 6, 2023](#)

Here he tells Don Lemon exactly what he told Mike Wallace. Keep talking about racism, and it will continue.

Analysis

So why *are* so many in the legacy media talking about racism so often? (And why *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* more than any others?) Kanekoa might not want to accuse them outright of intentionally increasing racial tensions. But in recent years, editors seem to be letting ideology, not profit (long-term or short), drive their decisions.

Understand: the source material of the second thread came out before the Election. So does this constitute election interference by the *Times* and the *Post*?

The first thread is more concerning because it describes things happening now. Kanekoa's anchor tweet quotes this [year-old article](#) from *The Washington Free Beacon*. Notice: everything you can read in the *Beacon* and *The Tablet* is still happening. Worse, crime has significantly worsened, especially in America's largest cities. This is partly due to prosecutors who won't prosecute. But have these organs decided deliberately to provoke the attitudes that are leading to some of this crime? That's something every one of those editors will have to answer for himself.

About the image

The featured image includes a portrait of Morgan Freeman by Volkmar Becher, who has released it into the public domain.