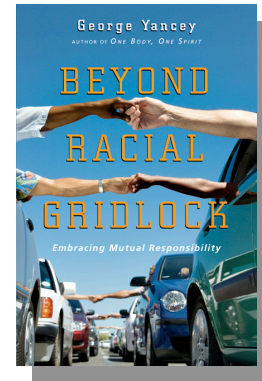


“The best part about [Yancey’s] work is that he gives us the ultimate solution that attacks the race problem at its core. Anyone who wants to have a serious discussion about racial issues in American culture must crack open this book!”

—David Anderson, President of BridgeLeader Network



Q: WHAT ARE THE TWO PREVALENT VIEWS OF RACISM AMONG AMERICANS?

GEORGE YANCEY: One view is that racism only happens between individuals, so overt racism is all that matters. This is the perspective of most white Christians.

The other view is that racism is structural and a part of our society. In other words, we do not need racist intentions for people of color to suffer from racism. This is the perspective of most Christians of color.

Q: BRIEFLY DESCRIBE THE FOUR MODELS FOR SOLVING RACISM.

YANCEY: 1) Colorblindness insists that racism can be solved if we just start ignoring racial differences. Colorblindness is useful for dealing with some types of overt racism and helps to deal with the tendency of some people of color to look for racism where it does not exist. However, it also does not take seriously the fact that whites still benefit from oppressive racial structures and ignores the pain and suffering of people of color.

2) Anglo-conformity encourages people of color to adopt the cultural tools that whites have used to succeed in society and endeavors to rid our society of racism by

encouraging economic empowerment by people of color. Anglo-conformity helps

racial minorities to get the tools they need to succeed and allows them to take responsibility for themselves. However, it also tends to place unwarranted blame on people of color and reinforces the idea that Christianity can only or best be expressed within a European American context.

3) Multiculturalism emphasizes the value and worth of cultures of color. It helps to correct some of the overemphasis on majority group culture and can help minorities to celebrate positive aspects of their culture. However, multiculturalism sometimes ignores the accomplishments of majority group members and makes it hard to make real critiques of cultures of color.

4) White responsibility contends that the responsibility of dealing with racism lies at the feet of European Americans and European American culture. It is useful for helping us to recognize the ways racism continues to plague society, such as through white privilege, and does not allow racial problems to be easily ignored. However, it also tends to totally ignore the responsibility of people of color and tends to alienate whites who do not already feel a certain amount of guilt.

Q: YOU SUGGEST THE MODEL OF MUTUAL RESPONSIBILITY IN SOLVING RACISM IN AMERICA. WHAT IS THE MUTUAL RESPONSIBILITY MODEL?

YANCEY: The mutual responsibility model is based on the notion of human depravity. Because of human depravity both whites and people of color have sins that make our racial situation worse in this society, so all Christians have responsibilities in helping to bring about racial healing. The responsibilities of whites differ from those of people of color, but if Christians do not engage in solving this problem then it will not be solved. This model allows us to apply Christian truths to the problems of racism, whereas the other models are secular models that are sometimes adopted by Christians, that all fall short of providing total solutions in their failure to recognize human depravity.

Q: WHY IS IT SO IMPORTANT FOR CHRISTIANS IN PARTICULAR TO BE A PART OF THE SOLUTION IN SOLVING RACISM?

YANCEY: If our faith has something to say about the social reality that we live in, and I believe that it does, then our faith should offer solutions to the

problem of race that differ from those of the world. I believe that if we are going to find a lasting solution to racism then we are going to look at our faith. In doing so we will offer unique solutions that will help to heal our society. This healing will be a powerful witness to a society that is still plagued by racial pain.

Q: WHAT DOES THE MUTUAL RESPONSIBILITY MODEL MEAN FOR CHRISTIANS TODAY?

YANCEY: It means that we will have to be proactive in healing our damaged race relations. It is vital that both white and nonwhite Christians work at developing meaningful relationships with each other. By demonstrating the type of unity that Christ asks of us we will show members of the United States how powerful our God really is and provide an awesome witness to this society. We will then also be able to speak to the rest of our society about racial issues, and I believe will find new avenues by which we can share our faith.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

George Yancey (Ph.D., University of Texas) is associate professor of sociology at the University of North Texas, specializing in race/ethnicity and biracial families. He is the coauthor of *United by Faith*, coeditor of *Just Don't Marry One*, and the author of *Beyond Black and White* and *One Body, One Spirit*. He is the founder of Reconciliation Consulting, helping churches and ministries develop and sustain a multiracial emphasis.



TO SCHEDULE AN INTERVIEW WITH GEORGE YANCEY, CONTACT KRISTA CARNET, 630-734-4013, KKCARNET@IVPRESS.COM. FOR MORE TITLES ON RACIAL RECONCILIATION VISIT WWW.IVPRESS.COM.