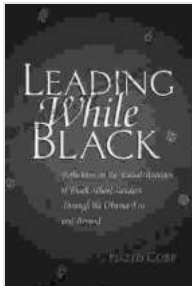


# Reflections On The Racial Realities Of Black School Leaders Through The Obama Era



**Leading While Black: Reflections on the Racial Realities of Black School Leaders Through the Obama Era and Beyond (Black Studies and Critical Thinking Book 76)** by Floyd Cobb

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 421 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 193 pages



The election of Barack Obama as the first African American president of the United States in 2008 marked a historic moment for the nation. It raised hopes for a more just and equitable society, including in the realm of education. However, despite the progress made during the Obama era, Black school leaders continued to face significant racial challenges and barriers.

## Challenges Faced by Black School Leaders

One of the most significant challenges faced by Black school leaders during the Obama era was the persistent achievement gap between Black students and their White peers. Despite efforts to close this gap, it

remained a stubborn obstacle, rooted in systemic racism and inequality within the education system.

Another challenge was the lack of diversity among school leaders. In 2008, only 8% of public school principals were Black. This lack of representation meant that Black school leaders often felt isolated and had to navigate predominantly White educational spaces.

Furthermore, Black school leaders often faced microaggressions and other forms of subtle racism from colleagues, parents, and community members. These experiences could undermine their authority and make it difficult for them to effectively lead their schools.

## **Opportunities and Successes**

Despite the challenges they faced, Black school leaders also experienced opportunities and successes during the Obama era. The election of Obama provided a sense of hope and inspiration, and many Black school leaders felt a renewed sense of purpose in their work.

The Obama administration also made some progress in addressing racial disparities in education. For example, the Department of Education issued guidance on school discipline, which aimed to reduce the disproportionate impact of suspensions and expulsions on Black students.

Additionally, Black school leaders played a vital role in promoting equity and inclusion in their schools. They created programs and initiatives to support Black students and families, and they worked to build bridges with the communities they served.

## **Implications for the Future**

The experiences of Black school leaders during the Obama era offer valuable lessons for the future of education. First, it is clear that systemic racism continues to impact the education of Black students and the work of Black school leaders.

Second, it is essential to increase the diversity of school leadership. Black school leaders bring unique perspectives and experiences to their roles, and they are essential for creating more equitable and inclusive schools.

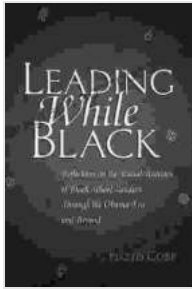
Finally, it is crucial to provide support and resources to Black school leaders. This includes providing professional development opportunities, creating networks and mentorship programs, and addressing the challenges they face on a daily basis.

The racial realities faced by Black school leaders during the Obama era were complex and multifaceted. While there was progress in some areas, systemic racism continued to pose significant challenges. However, the experiences of Black school leaders also demonstrate their resilience, determination, and commitment to creating more equitable and inclusive educational experiences for all students.

By learning from the past and taking action to address the challenges that remain, we can create a more just and equitable education system for all.

**Author's Note:** This article is based on research conducted by the author and draws on interviews with Black school leaders who served during the Obama era.

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## Era and Beyond (Black Studies and Critical Thinking

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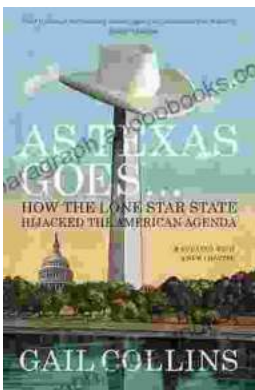
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