

Light Skin Privilege? Colorism in America

Intro: Polaris, or the North Star, marks the northern direction and was used by slaves to reach freedom. To this day, the North Star is a symbol of hope, passion, drive, and purpose. But the question is, where on Earth am I, and where is the North Star?

(music plays)

To everyone tuning in from all around the world, this is of Finding the North Star, a podcast created in hopes of becoming content with my African American identity. I'm your host, Krista Savage-White, here to educate myself and others. This series will cover topics involving culture, contemporary issues, and history about Black people in America. Stay tuned to find out today's topic!

(music continues)

Main Objectives:

Today's episode is titled "Light Skin Privilege? Colorism in America." This episode covers the following topics:

- The definition of colorism and the one-drop rule
- The history of colorism in the U.S. and how it affects Black people
- Examples of colorism in the Black community and how its perpetrated by the media
- How colorism has skewed history and allowed White people to dictate who is worthy of recognition.
- The effects of colorism and how one can help fight colorism in society.

Questions to answer during this episode and after:

- Have you ever practiced or been a victim of colorism?
- How have you seen individuals or institutions practice or combat colorism in real life?
- What prior knowledge do you have about colorism? What is something new you learned in this episode?
- If you have a brown paper bag, conduct the brown paper bag test for yourself by placing it on your skin. Did you pass it? From that result, how do you benefit/suffer from the concept of light skin privilege?
- From here, how will you educate yourself on colorism and fight it? You don't have to have an answer right now. Think about it.

Even after listening to this episode, I encourage everyone to do further reading by viewing the cited sources of this podcast and other credible sources on this matter via Google or another search engine.

Colorism is a term that describes discrimination based on skin tone. It affects people from all races and ethnicities throughout the world. The difference between colorism and racism is that colorism has a greater focus on skin color than racism and is more intraracially focused, though both -isms tie into each other. You can say that colorism is a subunit of racism. It was first

termed by Alice Walker, author of *The Color Purple*, to highlight internalized biases towards Eurocentric features among African-Americans.

Since the early days of colonialism, the narrative of light skin being best has been present. Light skinned slaves were viewed more favorably than dark-skinned slaves: smarter, nicer, prettier, and delicate. Some of them served as cooks or artisans, while dark-skinned slaves did the hardest work (“the blacker the stronger” belief, did physically demanding tasks). Light skinned slaves with Eurocentric features were seen as a prize to slaveowners: they would be educated and some of those slaves eventually became free people and owned property.

The one-drop rule played a role in these effects. As we know it, the general interpretation of the one-drop rule is that anyone with even a very small amount of Black blood is considered Black. Though during slavery, anyone who had less than 1/8-1/4 African ancestry qualified to identify as White, including the light-skinned slaves. This varied from state to state, but it allowed the light-skinned slaves to assimilate into White society and earn the privileges that come with being White (i.e., more opportunities to make money, own property, become educated). They could have still been considered Black based on their ancestry, but it was possible for that to be overlooked if the person had enough White blood in them.

The one-drop rule became stricter during the 20th century, when state governments enacted one-drop policies. Some of the states that had already done so trimmed fractions to make only those with less than 1/32-1/16 Black blood allowed to legally identify as White. It is important to note that this rule specifically targets the mix of Black/White blood, not the blood of people from other ethnicities and races. The goal of one-drop policies were to discourage interracial relationships and promote purity among White people. Though sometimes, predominately White people spoke about having a small amount of Black blood for their own personal gain and occasionally are even considered Black figures in history at the expense of predominately Black figures. Thomas Jefferson’s slave Sally Hemings, former Miss America Vanessa Williams, and politician and former general Colin Powell are good examples of how society hails certain light-skinned and predominately White figures as Black.

Unfortunately, the colorist beliefs and practices of that time have carried onto this present day in 2021. For example, it was common behavior for light-skinned African Americans to separate themselves from dark-skinned African Americans, most notably in Greek life, church, and other social extracurriculars. It was easier for them to assimilate with White people. While at it, let’s talk about a colorist practice that prevailed: the brown paper bag test.

Black people in different bubbles performed the brown paper bag test to determine one’s skin color and prevent dark-skinned people from entry. It was a prevalent practice in Black sororities. Now here’s the thing. I was in a sorority part of the National Panhellenic Conference, which consists of predominately White sororities, and while there is racist history with them, that does not mean that the Divine Nine or other Black Greek Life organizations don’t have any discriminatory behaviors. And another variation of the brown paper bag test is the blue vein test, which is another colorist practice that excludes dark-skinned Black people but through detecting the visibility of blue veins.

From here, let's talk more about HBCUs outside of Greek Life. Spelman, Morehouse, Howard, are some of the most well-known HBCUs in the country. Unfortunately, there were still disparities due to skin color, which is associated with having a better upbringing (more likely to have more money + better educated, which will be talked about later). Homecoming queens at HBCUs were mostly light skinned, as for the homecoming court as a whole. It didn't help that homecoming audiences at HBCUs insulted and jeered dark-skinned queens (sad, I know. But it's reality and we have to talk about it).

Light skin carries privilege while at the same time bringing questions about one's identity. Overtime, natural hair and dark skin tones became closely associated with the looks of Black people. That may sound like a good thing, but it also made some people forget that you can be Black and light skinned. And I won't lie, I remember at around 10 years old telling my paternal grandmother and aunt, who are both light-skinned, "You look like a Caucasian." That was how I said it back then. I remember it vividly, and they reassured me, "I'm Black, baby." Little did I know that light-skinned people can be Black, and that was colorism on my part. Nowadays, I know a lot better than to say something like that and that Black people come in a wide variety of skin tones, more so than White people.

Though the main point is that being a light-skinned Black person can bring questions about if you are "truly Black," especially since light skin is not always associated with Black people. With light skin being prized yet sometimes questioned about Blackness and dark skin being frowned upon and being associated more closely with Blackness, it can cause complications with identity and "feeling Black." Various research scholars conducted in the last three decades of the 1900s showed varying results: some saying that African Americans preferred African Americans with similar skin tones, others saying that African Americans preferred African Americans with lighter skin tones, and that African Americans with medium skin tones were seen as the most normal and are most likely to feel content with their identity.

All of this varies from person to person, but that bit is food for thought. As we go into the subsequent sections, think about some of the points I made and how they reflect situations of the past, present, and how they may affect the future.

(transition music)

I think back to a colorism example I first heard about it in a session with Dr. Graves, who is now a faculty member at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro's African American and African Diaspora Studies department. She showed the Straight Outta Compton casting and its blatant colorism, which was executed by Sande Alessi, a casting agency. The movie had a predominately Black cast, but that doesn't mean that colorism wasn't present.

You can search this up to follow along, but tiers were listed with A-list being the most favored and the D-List being the least favored. Sande Alessi deleted the casting call from their Facebook page years ago, but since nothing on the Internet is ever truly deleted, the description is still out there. Let's read it right now, shall we?

- A-Girls- These are the hottest of the hottest. Models. MUST have real hair—no extensions, very classy looking, great bodies. You can be Black, White, Asian, Hispanic, Mid-Eastern, or Mixed Race too...
- B-Girls- These are fine girls, long natural hair, really nice bodies. Small waists, nice hips. You should be light-skinned. Beyoncé is a prototype here...
- C-Girls- These are African American girls, medium to light skinned with a weave...
- D-Girls- These are African American girls. Poor, not in good shape. Medium to dark skin tone. Character types...

These descriptions not only qualify as colorist, but also racist (see how the C and D tiers explicitly says “African American girls”)?

Take some time to think about who you think would end up where based on these descriptions.

When I read the A-Girls and B-Girls description, I immediately thought of Cheslie Kryst, who was Miss USA 2019. She’s biracial (more specifically half-Polish and half-African American) and considering that she was pageant material (why would she have won otherwise?), she could easily end up in the B-List (long natural hair, really nice body).

Same thing with Kaliegh Garris, who won Miss Teen USA 2019 and is also mixed race. She perfectly fits the description for the A-Girls (short hair, they’d probably even consider her hottest of the hottest). This A-D ranking scale is not a rarity. It’s no secret that Hollywood favors those with light skin, a thin body, thin nose, and so on. Texturism (discrimination based on hair type) was at play with the hair. Recall that real hair is considered A-Girl hair, long natural hair is considered B-Girl hair, while a weave is considered C-Girl hair. Featurism (discrimination based on features) was also present with lines such as “great bodies,” “small waists,” “nice hips,” and “not in good shape.” Colorism, texturism, and featurism all intersect to sum up the discriminatory preferences of Hollywood.

Predictably, Sande Alessi, the casting agency, made an apology after the backlash and were supposedly (using that word loosely) interested in non-African Americans filling the C and D roles. But they know what they did. Voicing your discontent for dark skin and Black hairstyles like that is no accident. Again, it’s a common practice in Hollywood casting.

Speaking of which, that is a bridge to the next main point about the differences between the treatment of mixed race actresses.

In an interview with thegrio.com, Cheslie said, “I call myself a Black woman. That’s how I identify. When I was younger, there were no identity books for mixed race people.” Considering that the multiracial option on the Census did not exist until 2000 (when she was about 8-9 years old; she was born in 1991), Cheslie is correct. Although 8.4 million Americans identified as mixed race in 2016, some within that group may identify more closely with one side than another, while others that didn’t check off the multiracial box may check off as one race for a multitude of reasons. Mixed race people have their own struggles with which side they’re more

connected with (mentioned in previous episode), and passing as Black, White, or in the middle based on things like hair and skin color influences their looking-glass selves. Plus, identifying as both instead of one side over the other can cause feelings of not being included with either side, though it can exist when identifying with only one side.

Even so, half-Black people and monoracial Black people are not the same, and mixed-race actresses like Zendaya, Jennifer Beals, Halle Berry, and Maya Rudolph are seen as more desirable and have an edge when it comes to being casted. This most commonly applies to actresses who are White-passing or are in the middle of Black and White. Zendaya herself has acknowledged that she has privilege due to being light-skinned and stated in her *Cosmopolitan* interview in 2016, “Can I honestly say that I’ve had to face the same racism and struggles as a woman with darker skin? No, I cannot. I have not walked in her shoes and that is unfair of me to say.” Despite the differences, the media and the general public still call mixed-race Black/White people Black when celebrating their accomplishments (i.e., Halle Berry being the first and only Black woman to win the Best Actress Academy Award, Vanessa Williams becoming the first Black Miss America). I didn’t lie when I said that the colorist history of the one-drop rule still goes on.

Though meanwhile, non-mixed Black actresses like Lupita Nyong’o, Viola Davis, and Gabrielle Union have talked about their struggles as dark-skinned Black women and advancing in Hollywood as Black actresses. Modeling industry is no different, as Naomi Campbell has faced struggles in that area as a Black woman, not fitting the White female model archetype, and being outspoken (especially coming from the UK and having been branded as the ‘Angry Black Woman’). She also doesn’t like being the token Black person. “Everyone used to think that you liked being the token Black person in the room. It’s absolutely the opposite. I never did,” she stated on her 2020 *WWHL* interview with Andy Cohen.

On the music side of the entertainment industry, mixed-race women such as Mariah Carey and Alicia Keys have a greater edge in having commercial success as artists, and that also applies to lighter-skinned Black artists such as Beyoncé. Mathew Knowles, Beyoncé’s father, even admitted that Beyoncé having lighter skin than her fellow *Destiny’s Child* bandmate Kelly Rowland gave her an advantage in the music industry and that he discovered while teaching a college class that light-skinned Black women were more successful than dark-skinned Women. He cited that the music industry lightened Whitney Houston’s skin in photos, and Whitney isn’t light skinned.

Rihanna is also cited as someone who benefited from having a lighter skin tone, but she has been praised for having her makeup line, Fenty Beauty, provide dozens of foundation shades, and not just a few dark shades with the rest being light, but a variety of them

Looking it up, there really is a huge variety of shades, and not just light ones, but also a variety of shades for dark-skinned women. Historically, makeup has mostly catered to White women and light-skinned Women of Color, from the products to the makeup artists themselves, so Fenty Beauty having a variety of foundation shades across the board is a step in the right direction and

something that other beauty brands should take note of. Rihanna deserves huge props for going above and beyond to address the issue of colorism through creating those shades!

(transition music)

Expanding on tokenism and on the colorist disparities, let's talk about the differences between two women: Kamala Harris and Stacey Abrams. Kamala Harris is the first Person of Color to become Vice President (she's mixed with Afro-Jamaican and Indian descent; mind you that not everyone in Jamaica is Black or solely Black). Stacey Abrams is the first African-American woman ever to run for governor in any U.S. state (let's say she lost the race due to voter suppression, which is what she dedicates her platform to nowadays). Two phenomenal and accomplished women, right? But there is an imbalance as to who gets more favoritism. You may be like "Oh, but Harris is Vice President. Obviously, she is going to get more attention than Stacey," but hear me out.

Kamala Harris is light-skinned. She's not half-White, but her husband is White and her hair isn't the type to be considered "nappy." She is an Alpha Kappa Alpha alumna, but due to her features and how she appears, she is more palatable to White people.

Meanwhile, Stacey Abrams is dark skinned with natural hair. She ran against a White man (Brian Kemp) for governor and openly denounces voter suppression.

Let this quote sink in: "I am a sturdy Black woman with natural hair. When you close your eyes and imagine the person you think of as a leader, I'm likely not the image that pops into your head." Those were Abrams' words, and the fact that she's dark skinned and was asked to straighten her hair and lose weight before running for governor further proves the disparities between her and Harris. Though may I also mention that Kamala Harris' track record as California's Attorney General is not favorably seen by everyone and makes some question her integrity towards Black people? I won't discuss it here but search it up and be the judge if you would like.

A quote that stood out to me from a Harper's Bazaar article titled "A Cautious Celebration of Kamala Harris's Historic BP Nomination" was said by Noëlle D. Lilley. While discussing the significance of Harris becoming the Democratic Vice-Presidential Candidate, Lilley said, "She's a thin, conventionally beautiful, acceptable representation of Blackness. Now that doesn't make her any less Black. But I can't help but think about the vitriol that was directed at Stacey Abrams, and it's hard to not see the thinly veiled fatphobia and misogynoir." That final word is perfectly mentioned, because misogynoir will be talked about more deeply in the next episode. Lilley made a very valid point and I just mentioned that Stacey's weight made her seen less favorably, so fatphobia was definitely present.

Shall I also mention right quick that in 2013, back when Harris was California's Attorney General, then-president Barack Obama referred to her as "our best-looking attorney general in the country" and said after the laughs "It's true. Come on." Of course, different people find different things attractive, and Obama wanted to be funny. Though he himself is mixed race and

is another example of a half-Black and light skinned person achieving a first for Black people while also being digestible for White people. Now I know some may be listening to this and thinking, “Why are you talking this way?”

Obviously, they can’t do anything about their skin color. It’s not a bad thing to have privilege. It’s nothing to be ashamed of and both Harris and Obama have their merits. They are who they are, but it’s really society, and particularly White people, that need to change their views on what is considered worthy of representation and start being okay with being uncomfortable. When I say they need to be uncomfortable, I mean having to broaden their views on Blackness and be okay with a dark-skinned Black person having their shine and being branded as beautiful and intelligent.

Going back to Cheslie Kryst and Kaliah Garris, it’s worth highlighting that in 2019, there were headlines saying, “For the first time ever, Miss USA, Miss Teen USA, and Miss America are all Black.” There were some that voiced criticism over this title and push from the media, because Cheslie and Kaliah are mixed race, whilst the Miss America at the time, Nia Franklin, is a dark-skinned, monoracial Black woman. This was from the pageant world, and the pageant world puts a heavy emphasis on Eurocentric features. That is a discussion for another time, but the fact that the media pushed this despite two girls being mixed-race shows that **there** are biases as to who is considered worthy of representing a whole racial or ethnic group. You can search up images of the three together and think about it for yourself.

I remember watching Miss USA the night Cheslie was crowned, and my mother said to me that “She’s biracial.” Now I wasn’t sure if she was, but my mother ended up being correct. And as I thought about it, her look reminded me of Corinne Foxx, Jamie Foxx’s daughter, who is also mixed race. My mother has been around a lot longer than me and has seen and experienced more all-around, so I see how she came to that conclusion.

Even among non-mixed Black figures, this disparity is present. Take Rosa Parks, whom many know as the first woman to refuse to move from her seat for a White person. What many people don’t know is that she was actually not the first person to refuse switching seats with a White person. That title belongs to Claudette Colvin, who did it around 9 months earlier on March 2, 1955. Parks did not do the same until December 1. Though let’s talk more about Colvin.

(small click as transition)

At the time of the event in Montgomery, Alabama, Colvin was only 15 years old. She sat towards the window on the bus, minding her own business through looking outside. That was until Robert W. Cleere, the bus driver, told her to move for a White woman. Colvin refused, and police officers arrested and jailed her for her act. She was convicted and pressed with three charges: violating segregation laws, disturbing the peace, and assaulting a police officer. Two of the three charges were eventually dropped.

A reason she was removed history was because although she was an intelligent student—a member of the NAACP Youth Council and had an interest in civil rights, she was pregnant with

a married man. Colvin herself said, “My mother told me to be quiet about what I did. She told me to let Rosa be the one, white people aren’t going to bother Rosa, they like her.” That statement alone raises some red flags, because when you think about it, dark skinned people are seen as poor, dirty, and dumb, while light skin is seen as more clean, desirable, and bright. The fact that she was young also played a role, but what’s worse is that the NAACP did not reference her when fighting against segregation.

Colvin went through a lot of racial trauma throughout her childhood. She remembers her neighbor Jeremiah Reeves being electrocuted at 22 after a White woman accused him of rapping her. She remembers hearing Black men say, ‘Do not look at a white woman you see walking down the street... cross the street and pretend you have to tie your shoelaces. Do not make eye contact with white woman.’ This was not that long ago.

And all that loyalty she had to the NAACP, and she was not the pinnacle of that fight. Parks was a secretary of the NAACP Montgomery branch, but she still received the credit. It makes you wonder why she did not pass the credit to Colvin, and even Colvin admitted that “they [local civil-rights leaders] wanted someone, I believe, who would be impressive to white people and be a drawing. [...] And they didn’t think that a dark-skinned teenager, low income without a degree, could contribute.”

What she was talking about is colorism, and she didn’t lie. Parks received the Presidential Medal of Freedom, Congressional Gold Medal, and the NAACP Spingarn Medal. Colvin could’ve been in her place, but thanks to colorism, that didn’t happen. I say this as to insist that she deserves her credit, and since the day she sat on the bus, her life hadn’t been easy.

(transition music)

With light skin being correlated to Whiteness, there are many privileges to being light-skinned. For one, light-skinned Black people receive higher pay, higher education level, higher-quality housing, and greater acceptance by society than dark-skinned Black people. They are less likely to be passed over for opportunities and awards even if less qualified than their dark-skinned peers.

Higher income in the family means intergenerational wealth is more likely, which means descendants of light-skinned families are more likely to live in stable neighborhoods, attend higher-ranked public schools, and be academically fostered via extracurriculars and advanced courses than their dark-skinned counterparts. Light-skinned Black women are more likely to marry men of higher social status due to those men, on average, having a greater attraction to light skin. Of course, you can have dark-skinned parents and end up light-skinned and vice versa, so cases vary, but this is based on evidence and statistics from decades of research by academic scholars.

Though continuing on, light-skinned Black people are more likely to be shown on promotional media for colleges like brochures and websites, and more likely to pass the brown paper bag test, which still happens in a handful of bubbles today. By the way, I tried doing it for myself and did

not pass. My skin is on the medium side, but as you can imagine, it is hard to pass the paper bag test when you have good amounts of melanin in your skin. Not every mixed-race person could pass it either (half-Black people come in a variety of shades too). It looks like I passed the blue vein test due to seeing some blue along my hands, but who knows if I would've been accepted at that time?

Let's talk about Black men for a moment. Dark-skinned Black men are more masculinized than light-skinned Black men and are envisioned to be muscular, tall, strong, and athletic. (You can probably thank the portrayals of Black basketball players for further embedding this notion.) And with that comes racial profiling, being more likely to be villainized and serve long prison sentences than light-skinned Black men. In the corporate world, that means being more likely to be perceived as arrogant and untrustworthy.

As for Black women, colorism hinders them when it comes to dating and beauty representation. The lack of makeup for dark-skinned women has already been highlighted. But considering that physical beauty is highly prized in society, light skin is considered a prize. Let me make a brief mention about toys. When you look in the dolls section, you mostly see White dolls, right? Conducted by two African-American psychologists, there is a study from the 1950s that involved Black children determining whether the White or Black doll was more beautiful. The children overwhelmingly preferred the White doll over the Black doll. Nowadays, some people in the Black community would brand the children as "colorstruck," but when images of White people are constantly shown all around you and you're influenced by that at a young age, it's not rocket science that those children would prefer the White dolls.

The effects listed are alarming, and in case you're wondering, refugees and immigrants are also affected by colorism. They may be victims or witnesses of colorist behaviors, which can lead to them facing similar consequences to the ones mentioned above. Though simply put, race, skin color, gender, and background all influence one's looking-glass self and their personal experiences with colorism.

At this point, you may be thinking, "What are ways I can combat colorism?" That's a good question, and the short answer is, there is not a single correct way to do it. People have different opinions as to what's the most helpful/what's the least helpful, but I think some of the things I'm about to list are really helpful. Here comes the long answer.

If you're a college student, don't be afraid to engage in conversations about colorism. Even if not everyone agrees with you or if you say something a little out of line, at least you are challenging yourself and growing. Even if you are not a college student, there is fiction and non-fiction literature on the subject, which you can find by searching "fictional books about colorism" on Google. Go to events that speak about colorism or racism, whether they be discussions, symposiums, speaker presentations, or anything else under the sun. You don't have to go to all of them all the time, but don't be an armchair activist (aka performative activist aka the type that talks on social media but never follows up with actions in real life).

And don't just be aware about colorism and colorist practices. Check your biases and take action when you notice your behavior is off. Be prepared to take responsibility and learn. You do not know everything, nor do you have to agree with everything. However, reflecting on your behaviors with a balanced mind is a healthy trait that will contribute to making progress. And above all, be media literate. I cannot stress this enough. Don't necessarily go along with everything you read on social media or the Internet in general. When you're skeptical, do a bit of research. There is a lot of misinformation out there, and when you catch yourself believing in it, correct yourself. If someone brings up a piece of misinformation that you know is wrong, correct them as well. Research subjects outside of Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram, because honey, solely regurgitating points from social media ain't activism. If you don't agree with that last point, well, be prepared for my armchair activism vent in a future episode. That's all I'm gonna say about that.

Personal Reflection: While researching for this episode, some of the things I learned were quite upsetting. With Claudette Colvin being nearly erased from history and the fact that she lived in a time when a Black man looking at a White woman could call for a death sentence, it made me sad that these racist practices and rules were ever okay. I know I'm a little off track from the colorism subject, but bear with me. My skin is a more of a medium shade, though I see how I both benefit and not benefit from the concept of light skin privilege. I am not light skinned, so I may be passed over for a light skinned person on something. Though I am also not dark skinned, so I may be favored over a dark-skinned person. Maybe being more in the middle could be considered a privilege. But really it depends on the situation. And honestly, it's rather complex.

It is important to note that colorism factors in with other categories such as race, gender, economic background, hair type, features, and nationality. Colorism gives an opportunity to see things that go deeper than race, but all of it is intersectional and should be considered when analyzing different scenarios and attempting to do research on a group of people intraracially and interracially.

As a reminder, today's episode was titled "Light Skin Privilege? Colorism in America." This episode covered the following topics:

- The definition of colorism and the one-drop rule
- The history of colorism in the U.S. and how it affects Black people
- Examples of colorism in the Black community and how its perpetrated by the media
- How colorism has skewed history and allowed White people to dictate who is worthy of recognition.
- The effects of colorism and how one can help fight colorism in society.

(music plays)

This episode was brought to you by various scholars and valuable insight from 26 sources:

Alford, Natasha S. "WATCH: Miss USA 2019 has words for strangers who keep touching her hair." *The Grio*, 9 May 2019,
<https://thegrio.com/2019/05/09/miss-usa-cheslie-kryst-says-people-keep-touching-her-natural-hair/>

- Alhassan, Mustapha. "The Significance of Skin Color: Implications for Social Work Practice with Refugee/Immigrant Populations." *Phylon (1960-)*, vol. 54, no. 1, 2017, pp. 43–56. *JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/90011263.
- Baker, Brea. "It's Time To Talk About Kamala Harris, Colorism & Who Gets To Be First." *Refinery29*, Vice Media Group, 18 Jan. 2021, <https://www.refinery29.com/en-us/2021/01/10263229/kamala-harris-colorism-vice-inauguration-first>
- Cohen, Andy. "Naomi Campbell Reacts to Anna Wintour's Statement About Black Creators | WWHL." *YouTube*, uploaded by Watch What Happens Live with Andy Cohen, 28 July 2020, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=colbxDfVX40>
- Cooke, Jay Jefferson. "Claudette Colvin was Unfairly Left to Stand in Rosa Parks' Shadow." *Courier - News*, Feb 02, 2016. *ProQuest*, <https://login.libproxy.uncg.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/newspapers/claude-tte-colvin-was-unfairly-left-stand-rosa/docview/1764480563/se-2?accountid=14604>.
- Gasman, Marybeth, and Ufuoma Abiola. "Colorism Within the Historically Black Colleges and Universities (Hbcus)." *Theory into Practice*, vol. 55, no. 1, 2016, pp. 39–45.
- Hall, Ronald E. "The Globalization of Light Skin Colorism: From Critical Race to Critical Skin Theory." *American Behavioral Scientist*, vol. 62, no. 14, Dec. 2018, pp. 2133–2145, doi:[10.1177/0002764218810755](https://doi.org/10.1177/0002764218810755).
- Hargrove, Taylor W. "Light Privilege? Skin Tone Stratification in Health among African Americans." *Sociology of race and ethnicity (Thousand Oaks, Calif.)* vol. 5,3 (2019): 370-387. doi:[10.1177/2332649218793670](https://doi.org/10.1177/2332649218793670)
- Harris, Keshia L. "Biracial American Colorism: Passing for White." *American Behavioral Scientist*, vol. 62, no. 14, Dec. 2018, pp. 2072–2086, doi:[10.1177/0002764218810747](https://doi.org/10.1177/0002764218810747).
- Harris-Perry, Melissa. "A Cautious Celebration of Kamala Harris's Historic VP Nomination." *Harper's BAZAAR*, Hearst Magazine Media, Inc., 17 Aug. 2020, <https://www.harpersbazaar.com/culture/politics/a33626418/reactions-to-kamala-harris-historic-vice-presidential-nomination/>
- Jordan, Winthrop D. *Historical Origins of the One-Drop Racial Rule in the United States*. Journal of Critical Mixed Race Studies, 2014. *eScholarship*. escholarship.org/content/qt91g761b3/qt91g761b3_noSplash_0a796cdb24059058c5fcd734be4d73b3.pdf. PDF file.
- Keith, Verna M, and Carla R. Monroe. "Histories of Colorism and Implications for Education." *Theory into Practice*, vol. 55, no. 1, 2016, pp. 4–10.

- Laughland, Oliver. "Claudette Colvin: The Woman Who Refused to Give Up Her Bus Seat – Nine Months before Rosa Parks." *The Guardian*, Feb 25, 2021, <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2021/feb/25/claudette-colvin-the-woman-who-refused-to-give-up-her-bus-seat-nine-months-before-rosa-parks>.
- Lemi, Danielle Casarez, and Nadia E. Brown. "The Political Implications of Colorism Are Gendered." *PS: Political Science & Politics*, vol. 53, no. 4, 2020, pp. 669–673., doi:10.1017/S1049096520000761.
- "The 'One Drop Rule', a brief story." *AAREG*, aaregistry.org/story/the-one-drop-rule-a-brief-story/. Accessed 19 July 2021.
- Pepitone, Julianne. "Stacey Abrams to women: Don't let others disqualify your ambition." *Know Your Value*, NBC Universal, 5 Apr. 2019, <https://www.nbcnews.com/know-your-value/feature/stacey-abrams-women-don-t-let-others-disqualify-your-ambition-ncna991386>
- Sandell, Laurie. "Zendaya Explains the Real Reason She Came Back to Disney." *Cosmopolitan*, Hearst Magazine Media, Inc., 2 June 2016, <https://www.cosmopolitan.com/entertainment/news/a59215/zendaya-july-2016/>
- Seitz-Wald, Alex. "Balancing the ticket: Stacey Abrams, Kamala Harris top VP picks for 'She the People.'" *NBC News*, NBC Universal, 11 Mar. 2020, <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/2020-election/balancing-ticket-stacey-abrams-kamala-harris-top-vp-picks-she-n1155471>
- Singathi, Chandana. "Dark Secrets Behind Light Shades: Hollywood & Modeling Media." *Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey*, 2020, <https://sites.rutgers.edu/nb-senior-exhibits/wp-content/uploads/sites/442/2020/08/Chandana-Singathi-final-pdf.pdf>.
- Tang, Terry. "'Colorism' Reveals Many Shades of Prejudice in Hollywood." *Florida Times Union*, Jan 20, 2019. *ProQuest*, www-proquest-com.libproxy.uncg.edu/docview/2168662216?accountid=14604.
- Uzogara, Ekeoma E., et al. "A comparison of skin tone discrimination among African American men: 1995 and 2003." *Psychology of men & masculinity* vol. 15,2 (2014): 201-212. doi:10.1037/a0033479.
- VanHoose, Benjamin. "Naomi Campbell Hits Back at the 'Angry Black Woman' Stereotype in Vogue: 'I'm Quite Over It.'" *People Magazine*, Meredith Corporation, 19 Oct. 2020,

<https://people.com/style/naomi-campbell-hits-back-at-the-angry-black-woman-stereotype-in-vogue-im-quite-over-it/>.

Variety Staff. "Mathew Knowles Says Beyonce's Career Benefited, Kelly Rowland's Suffered From Skin Tone Bias." *Variety*, Penske Media Corporation, 19 June 2019, <https://variety.com/2019/music/news/mathew-knowles-beyonce-kelly-rowland-lighter-skin-tone-bias-1203247823/>.

Washington, Zoey. "Kheris Rogers: We need to talk about colorism." *Girls' Life*, 23 Nov. 2020, <https://girlslife.com/life/tough-stuff/37719/we-need-to-talk-about-colorism>.

Webb, Sarah L. "Colorism in Casting Call for 'Straight Outta Compton' NWA Film." *Colorism Healing*, 19 July 2014, <https://colorismhealing.com/colorism-casting-call-straight-outta-compton/>.

"Zendaya: 'I'm Hollywood's acceptable version of a black girl.'" *BBC News*, BBC, 24 Apr. 2018, <https://www.bbc.com/news/newsbeat-43879480>.

To view the list in full, visit the sources section of the episode description box.

Outro: Thank you to everyone who's listened up to this point! I hoped you learned some stuff in this episode and engaged your mind with the content! A disclaimer is that my opinions are not representative of the general public or of every Black person. However, the goal is to start a discussion about these issues and encourage everyone to think critically. It is important that we self-reflect on our prior knowledge, new knowledge, our biases, and how we benefit or suffer from a particular issue. In turn, that can lead to more consciousness about our actions, our biases, and lead to a more equitable and balanced society.

In the meantime, I would like to hear about your takeaways or feedback on this episode! Your takes and additional subject knowledge are always welcome! Get the discussion rolling by writing to findingthenorthstarpodcast@gmail.com. Until then, this is Krista Savage-White signing off!

(music plays)

END EPISODE