***https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2015/09/color-blindness-is-counterproductive/405037/***

How many times have you heard someone say that they “don’t see color,” “are color-blind,” or “don’t have a racist bone in their body?” Maybe you’ve even said this yourself. After all, the dominant language around racial issues today is typically one of color blindness, as it’s often meant to convey distaste for racial practices and attitudes common in an earlier era.

Many sociologists, though, are extremely critical of color blindness as an ideology. They argue that as the mechanisms that reproduce racial inequality have become more covert and obscure than they were during the era of open, legal segregation, the language of explicit racism has given way to a discourse of color blindness. But they fear that the refusal to take public note of race actually allows people to ignore manifestations of persistent discrimination.

For the first half of the 20th century, it was perfectly legal to deny blacks (and other racial minorities) access to housing, jobs, voting, and other rights based explicitly on race. Civil-rights reforms rendered these practices illegal. Laws now bar practices that previously maintained racial inequality, such as redlining, segregation, or openly refusing to rent or sell real estate to black Americans. Yet [discrimination](http://www.amazon.com/The-Face-Discrimination-Gender-Impact/dp/0742548074) still persists, operating through a combination of social, economic, and institutional practices.

Concurrently, it is no longer socially acceptable in many quarters to identify oneself as racist. Instead, many Americans purport not to see color. However, their color blindness comes at a cost. By claiming that they do not see race, they also can avert their eyes from the ways in which well-meaning people engage in practices that reproduce [neighborhood and school segregation](http://www.amazon.com/Hidden-Cost-Being-African-American/dp/0195181387), rely on “[soft skills](https://www.russellsage.org/publications/stories-employers-tell)” in ways that disadvantage racial minorities in the job market, and [hoard opportunities](http://www.ucpress.edu/book.php?isbn=9780520239517) in ways that reserve access to better jobs for white peers.