

The Black Male Experience, From the C-Suite¹ to the Street

You would think my experience as a top executive would be different from a black man who is working in a retail or food-service job to support his family. Yet, he and I both understand the commonality of the black male experience that remains consistent no matter what the economic status or job title. [...] As Americans, we must deal with behavior that is unacceptable in today's global world. [...]

If you're not Black, it's hard to relate to situations as a black man might. So you know I'm speaking from a realistic rather than theoretical standpoint, here are a few personal examples I've experienced in the past couple of months.

- Recently I was shopping in an upscale store, and I was being watched and also followed by an overly anxious person. This was not someone trying to be helpful, but someone who was assessing why I was there. Other shoppers did not have "help" following them throughout the store.
- I have gone to dinner at fine restaurants and had the food server explain the tipping² program, since apparently black men don't understand this concept.

- Sometimes I observe two or three white customers ahead of me and after me pay by credit card—and I am the only one singled out to provide proof of who I am before I can make my purchase.
- Most CEOs when they are out exercising don't have car doors locked as they walk by or women move to the other side of the street hugging their purses. Even as a CEO, the black male experience is my reality. [...]

So where do we go from here? [...] The pursuit of life, liberty and happiness can become a reality for everyone if we eliminate issues standing in the way of improved race relations. I love this country and we've made so much progress, but we're not there yet. With deeper understanding and thoughtful and positive participation, America—and Americans—can live up to our full potential in a country built on diversity of thought, spirit, race and experience.

Bernard J. Tyson, *Newsweek*, September 12th, 2014.

1. C-Suite: bureau de dirigeant 2. tipping: pourboires

1. Find information about the author: job title (3 words or phrases), ethnic group.
2. Who does the author compare himself to in paragraph 1?
3. Concentrate on the four examples the author quotes and give the following information:
 - place: ... ;
 - what happened: ... ;
 - the stereotype it shows:

A. Write about your experience

Have you—or has someone you know—ever been discriminated against because of age, sex, ethnic origin, etc.? Say what it was about and on what occasion, what your/their reactions were, etc.

B. Write an essay

Comment on this sentence from document : "I love this country and we've made so much progress, but we're not there yet." (l. 35 to 37)

Quelques mots utiles

<i>a flagrant disparity between</i>	une disparité évidente envers
<i>be denied the right to</i>	se voir refuser le droit de
<i>be discriminated against</i>	être victime de discrimination
<i>be narrow-minded</i>	avoir l'esprit étroit, borné
<i>be prejudiced against</i>	avoir des préjuges contre
<i>despise, scorn</i>	mépriser
<i>endure discrimination</i>	être l'objet de discrimination
<i>fair-/dark-skinned</i>	à la peau claire/foncée
<i>feel inferior/superior to</i>	se sentir inférieur/ supérieur
<i>humiliate</i>	humilier
<i>opportunities</i>	chances
<i>unfair</i>	injuste, déloyal
<i>be restricted to</i>	se limiter à
<i>be treated as</i>	être traité comme
<i>be widespread</i>	être répandu
<i>harsh reality</i>	dure réalité
<i>improve</i>	améliorer
<i>resort to violence</i>	recourir à la violence
<i>segregation</i>	ségrégation
<i>until</i>	jusqu'à (ce que)