

## AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY



**Jason Reynolds** is an American author. Born in Washington, D.C. and raised in neighboring Oxon Hill, Maryland, Reynolds found inspiration in rap and began writing poetry at nine years old. He published several poetry collections before publishing his first novel in 2014, *When I Was the Greatest*, which won the Coretta Scott King/John Steptoe Award for New Talent. In 2017, Reynolds returned to poetry with *Long Way Down*, a novel in verse that was named a Newbery Honor book, a Printz Honor Book, and best young adult work by the Mystery Writers of America's Edgar Awards. Reynolds was named as the Library of Congress' national ambassador for young people's literature in January 2020. It's a two year position to increase appreciation of youth literature. Reynolds is featured in a YouTube series entitled "Write. Rite. Right." where he engages with young writers in an attempt to give them writing prompts to stretch their imagination and to learn to write authentically.

Adapted from [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jason\\_Reynolds](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jason_Reynolds)



**Ibram X. Kendi** is one of America's foremost historians and leading antiracist scholars. He is a National Book Award-winning and #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of seven books. Dr. Kendi is the Andrew W. Mellon Professor in the Humanities and the Founding Director of the Boston University Center for Antiracist Research. He is also the 2020-2021 Frances B. Cashin Fellow at the Radcliffe Institute for the Advanced Study at Harvard University. Dr. Kendi is a contributor writer at The Atlantic and a CBS News Racial Justice Contributor. In 2020, Time magazine named him one of the 100 most influential people in the world.

[www.ibramxkendi.com](http://www.ibramxkendi.com)

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Though published as a book for young people, how do readers of all ages benefit from *Stamped*?
2. What surprised you in this book? What angered you or made you empathetic? What other emotions did you experience while reading?

3. The first chapter defines segregationists, assimilationists, and antiracists. Were you familiar with these terms before you read *Stamped*? Did your understanding of these words change by the end?
4. What are examples of racism that you have encountered or experienced? Are these personal experiences with racism tied to racist ideas that are hundreds of years old such as those listed in Chapter 6?
5. As seen with movies like *Tarzan*, *Planet of the Apes*, and *Rocky*, pop culture and media have played a large role in reinforcing racist ideas, whether their stories are overtly racist or are covert in their propagation of racist ideas. What current movies, TV shows, and stories promote racist ideas, and how?
6. The authors note how Richard Nixon would demean Black people in his speeches without ever saying “Black” and “White” by using words like “urban” and “ghetto” (pages 191-192). What are other ways we invoke race without overtly mentioning race?
7. Abraham Lincoln, W.E.B. Du Bois, and Booker T. Washington are remembered as defenders of Black liberation. How did these figures propel antiracist thought and enforce racist ideas? Can a person have racist, segregationist, and antiracist ideas all at once? How?
8. Why is Angela Davis a champion of antiracist thought and practice? Discuss the ways in which Davis fought for antiracism at different points in her life.
9. Jason Reynolds introduces the concept of double consciousness: “A two-ness. A self that is Black and a self that is American” (page 124). Why might people of color feel this way?
10. How do race, gender, and sexual orientation intersect and create different barriers for queer women of color?
11. After finishing *Stamped*, how do you feel about the history of racism? What habits and actions can you implement to promote antiracism?

Adapted from hachettebookgroup.com

## BOOK REVIEWS

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### Publisher’s Weekly

Reynolds (*Look Both Ways*) lends his signature flair to remixing Kendi’s award-winning *Stamped from the Beginning* into a powerful “not a history book” primer on the historical roots and present-day manifestations of antiblack racism in America. In five sections, Reynolds’s conversational text discusses the influential figures, movements, and events that have propagated racist ideas, beginning in 1415 with the publication of the infamous work that laid the groundwork for subsequent religious justifications of enslaving African peoples and continuing through the “war on drugs” and #BlackLivesMatter. Employing a format that hews closely to Kendi’s original, Reynolds discusses and differentiates between segregationist (“a hater”), assimilationist (“a coward”), and antiracist (“someone who truly loves”) rhetoric via figures such as Angela Davis, W.E.B. DuBois, Thomas Jefferson, and Cotton Mather. Short chapters, lively phrasing (“You know what hits do—they spread”), and intentional breaks (“Time Out,” “Let’s all just

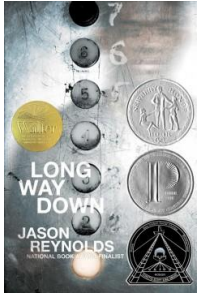
take a deep breath”) help maintain a brisk, compelling pace. Told impressively economically, loaded with historical details that connect clearly to current experiences, and bolstered with suggested reading and listening selected specifically for young readers, Kendi and Reynolds’s volume is essential, meaningfully accessible reading. Ages 12–up. (Mar.) --Staff (Reviewed 01/27/2020) (Publishers Weekly, vol 267, issue 4, p)

### Kirkus Reviews

Award-winning author Reynolds (*Look Both Ways*, 2019, etc.) presents a young readers' version of American University professor Kendi's (*How to Be an Antiracist*, 2019, etc.) *Stamped From the Beginning* (2016). This volume, which is "not a history book," chronicles racist ideology, specifically anti-blackness in the U.S., from its genesis to its pernicious manifestations in the present day. In an open, conversational tone, Reynolds makes it clear that anti-black racist ideology in the U.S. has consistently relied on the erroneous belief that African people (and black people in general) are "dumb" and "savage," ideas perpetuated through the written word, other media, and pseudo-science. Using separationist, assimilationist, and anti-racist historical figures, a direct line is drawn throughout U.S history from chattel slavery through the Civil War, Jim Crow, the civil rights era, the war on drugs, and #BlackLivesMatter, with plenty of little-known, compelling, and disturbing details inserted. Readers who want to truly understand how deeply embedded racism is in the very fabric of the U.S., its history, and its systems will come away educated and enlightened. It's a monumental feat to chronicle in so few pages the history of not only anti-black racism in the U.S., but also assimilationist and anti-racist thought as well. In the process it succeeds at connecting "history directly...to our lives as we live them right this minute." Worthy of inclusion in every home and in curricula and libraries everywhere. Impressive and much needed. (Nonfiction. 12-adult) -- (Kirkus Reviews, December 1, 2019)

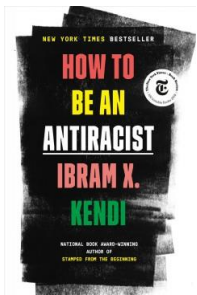
## READALIKES

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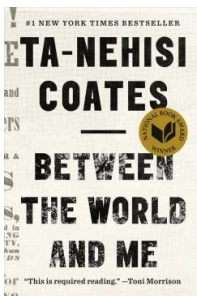
### ***The Long Way Down* by Jason Reynolds**

Driven by the secrets and vengeance that mark his street culture, 15-year-old Will contemplates over the course of 60 psychologically suspenseful seconds whether or not he is going to murder the person who killed his brother.



### ***How to Be an Antiracist* by Ibram X. Kendi**

From the National Book Award–winning author comes a bracingly original approach to understanding and uprooting racism and inequality in our society—and in ourselves. Ibram X. Kendi’s concept of antiracism reenergizes and reshapes the conversation about racial justice in America—but even more fundamentally, points us toward liberating new ways of thinking about ourselves and each other.



### ***Between the World and Me* by Ta-Nehisi Coates**

Told through the author's own evolving understanding of the subject over the course of his life comes a bold and personal investigation into America's racial history and its contemporary echoes.

## OTHER MATERIALS

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A discussion guide is available to download from the publisher using this link.

<https://www.hachettebookgroup.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/StampedBookClubGuide.pdf>