It is unquestionable that the activism, sacrifice, and hard work of the civil right leaders and White allies have enabled many Black and Brown people to vote and have access to socioeconomic, educational, and political opportunities. As such, it can be argued that had Martin Luther King Jr., Malcom X, Rosa Parks, Cesar Chavez, Dolores Huerta, Jessy Jackson, Angela Davis, Denis Bank, and others not dedicated their lives to fight against racial and socioeconomic injustice to pave the political road for future generations of Black and Brown people, Barack Obama, for example, would not have been able to emerge on the political scene the way he has. Countering this argument, however, one might state that Obama’s political victory was inevitable due to his charisma and racial hybridity.

Depending on one’s level of understanding and awareness about the plight of Black and Brown people, one might argue that they are better off today than they were 50 years ago or so, especially when one remembers the Jim Crow era during which Black and Brown people were ruthlessly brutalized, particularly by White supremacist groups such as the Ku Klux Klan. However, if one critically analyzed the achievement gap between students of color and their White counterparts, the decline in incomes, and other forms of educational and socioeconomic inequality that Black and Brown people, particularly poor students of color, have been experiencing for the last several decades or so, one would realize that substantially nothing has changed for them. In light of this view, this article explores the educational and socioeconomic conditions of People of Color, including those of linguistically and culturally diverse students. Specifically, it examines the ways and the degree to which lack of resources combined with institutional racism and the legacy of slavery continue to limit the life chances of Black and Brown people in the 21st century. The author ends this article making recommendations to counter inequality in schools and society at large that Black and Brown people have been facing.

Keywords
People of Color; racism, White dominance, educational inequality, minority students

Are Black and Brown Still at the Bottom of the Socioeconomic Ladder?

As has been historically documented, during colonization and slavery, Black and Brown people experienced brutal forms of racial, socioeconomic exploitation and cultural oppression; however, history has taught us that Black and Brown people were not the only people who were forced into slavery (Firmin, 2000). Firmin (2000) eloquently states,
The most superficial look into history teaches us that slavery has been a universal phenomenon that has existed in every country and in every race. There is not a single European people who has not known slavery at a certain stage in its history as a nation. (pp. 334-335)

Firmin (2000) goes on to illustrate,

The very word “slave” is a clear indication that Blacks are not the only people to have known the degrading yoke of slavery. The word slave has its origin in the word “Slav,” which is a reminder that a notable segment of the White race did experience servitude. Throughout the Orient, one finds Black and White slaves . . . In Western Europe, the institution by the Romans, had the sanction of the law and remained part of the mores for quite a long time. Bristol, London, Lyon, and Rome each had a slave market where Whites bought their congeners and subjected them to the same regime they would later apply, but with a much more exquisite cruelty, to the Africans taken away from their native land thrown into a life of ignorance and utter abjection. (p. 335)

As Firmin pointed out, throughout European history, Blacks were not the only group of people who were enslaved. However, there was a stark difference between the way the White and the Black slaves were treated by their masters. This difference fundamentally has much to do with the racial background of the Black and the White slaves.

Born free in the world like their White fellow human beings, Black and Brown people were quickly removed from it through the slave trade and placed in a world that has been economically, educationally, and politically hostile to them (Asante, 2011). The racist structure of this world, which they have not created, has been so oppressive to them. Because of institutional racism, the majority of Black and Brown people have been deprived of adequate health care, decent jobs, and quality education (Bonilla-Silva, 2010; Mills, 1997). For instance, “It is not news that so many Chicana/o high school students attend schools with poor conditions. Nor is it uncommon to restrict Chicana/o students to remedial and vocational courses of study within high schools” (Yosso, 2006, p. 57). Yosso (2006) goes on to state, “Out of 100 Chicana and Chicano elementary school students, only 44 graduate high school” (p. 57).

Other scholars, such as Mills (1997), capture the sharp socioeconomic gap between Black and White people. In The Racial Contract, Mills reports,

Whereas in 1988 black households earned sixty-two cents for every dollar earned by white households, the comparative differential with regard to wealth is much greater and, arguably, provides a more realistically negative picture of the prospects for closing the racial gap. (pp. 37-38)

Along the same lines, Shierholz and Gould (2011), two researchers from the Economic Policy Institute, report the following:

The black household earning the median income is now bringing in $5,494 less than the median black household did 10 years ago (a drop of 14.6 percent) and the median Hispanic household is now bringing in $4,235 less than the median Hispanic household did 10 years ago (a drop of 10.1 percent). (p. 1)

Shierholz and Gould (2011) further note,

Non-Hispanic whites maintained far lower poverty rates than any other racial/ethnic group. Blacks were particularly hard-hit by increases in poverty from 2009 to 2010, increasing 1.6 percentage points to reach a rate of 27.4 percent. In 2010, over one-third of black children (39.1 percent) and Hispanic children (35.0 percent) were living in poverty. The poverty rate for families with children headed by single mothers hit 40.7 percent in 2010. Of the 7.0 million families living in poverty in 2010, 4.1 million of them were headed by a single mom. (p. 3)

Bonilla-Silva (2005) attributes this persistence in income inequality between Whites and People of Color to what he called “a new racism.” Bonilla-Silva states, “Today a new racism has emerged that is more sophisticated and subtle than Jim Crow and yet is as effective as the old in maintaining the (contemporary) racial status quo” (Bonilla-Silva, 2005, cited in Leonardo, 2005, p. 18). Income disparity between People of Color and their White counterparts illustrates Bonilla-Silva’s argument of new racism. With regard to African Americans particularly, studies show their unemployment rate has persisted steadily over the last 50 years or so (Austin, 2012; Fairlie & Sundstrom, 1999). It is not surprising, therefore, due to institutional racism, that People of Color, particularly African Americans, Native Americans, and Latinos, are still at the bottom of the well (Bell, 1992). For example, segregation, including school segregation, is a recurrent racial and socioeconomic phenomenon that Black and Brown people are facing, and therefore needs to be brought to the forefront of debates revolved around racial justice. Tatum (2007) states,

As long as we live in residentially segregated neighborhoods, it seems we will inevitably have segregated public schools. The strategy of using transportation to achieve racial balance in schools was effective in many communities, particularly in the South, but not popular among community decision makers, as
I argue insofar neighborhoods and institutions, such as schools and the workplace, are racially and ethnically segregated, Black and Brown people and Whites will only have a superficial understanding of one another. True interracial and ethnic relations take place when people are integrated in schools that genuinely support racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity. Schools’ failure to do so has led many students to rely on the media to be “informed” about other ethnic and racial groups. Unfortunately, the media for the most part have portrayed a superficial and negative image of underprivileged racialized groups, such as Blacks, Latino/as, Asians, Native Americans, and Arabs. Tatum (2007) goes on to say,

As school districts move back to neighborhood school policies, the next generation of White students will likely have less school contact with People of Color than their predecessors did. Particularly for young White children, interaction with People of Color is likely to be a virtual reality rather than an actual one, with media images (often negative ones) most clearly shaping their attitudes and perceived knowledge of communities of color. The progress that has been made in the reduction of racial prejudice that can be associated with shared school experiences is at risk of stalling. (p. 14)

The new racism that Blacks and Latinos have been experiencing somewhat reflects in the statistics that Shierholz and Gould, Austin provided above. Institutional racism has not only affected Black and Brown people economically and politically, it has also played a role in their misrepresentation in the media in the school curriculum. Through schooling and the media, people, including students, have internalized negative images portrayed about Blacks and Latinos and other marginalized groups. I argue that institutionalized racism is the underlying cause of the irrational fear that some Whites have about Black and Brown people, particularly Black and Brown men. For example, Trayvon Martin’s and Georges Zimmerman’s case illustrates that many Whites and even People of Color are suspicious and fearful of Black and Brown men because of the way they have been negatively portrayed in the mainstream media. Furthermore, because of largely circulated stereotypes through the mainstream media about Black and Brown people, their presence in some White neighborhoods is often felt as a threat to many uninformed and racially prejudiced Whites. These groups of Whites are notorious for rushing to move out when a few Black and Brown people dare to move in. This fear of Black and Brown people is neither innocent nor accidental. It is rooted in and learned from institutions such as family, schools, and the mainstream media, to which I turn next.

The Role of the Media in Perpetuating Stereotypes About People of Color

Historically, the mass corporate media are known for projecting distinct images of Black, Brown, and White people. Blacks and Latinos, especially Black and Latino males, for example, have been grossly misrepresented in mainstream movies. Specifically, they have been portrayed as violent thieves and drug dealers. Through these movies, the media have presented two different worlds: a People of Color and a White world. The division of the two worlds is made so visible through the mass corporate media that it has been engrained in the minds of many Whites and People of Color alike. Consequently, a great number of people believe that Black and Brown people, particularly Black and Brown men, are aggressive, rapists, stupid, or just savage (Macedo & Steinberg, 2007). Ironically, there are also People of Color who have internalized these stereotypes and negative images about Black and Brown men. The division between Whites and People of Color, particularly Blacks, Latinos, and Native Americans, created and promoted by the corporate mass media has become in some way part of this nation’s consciousness.

Because of this division, many White students and students of color, for example, tend to create their own little world in school cafeteria, segregating themselves as if they have nothing in common to share and enjoy as students (Tatum, 2003). Their interaction is often nonexistent or poor. Sometimes, they communicate or interact with one another, because they have an obligation to do so for matters related to sports or other activities. Otherwise, they do not willingly mingle. In fact, from both my personal and professional observation, Black, Brown, and White people might be colleagues, yet some White people do not invite their Black and Brown colleagues to their house for dinner or for social gatherings. I also know many Black and Brown people who do the same thing. These forms of separatist practices are problematic in the sense that they will not contribute to unity among Whites and People of Color.

Whites fear People of Color because they have been misrepresented through the mainstream media (Hall, 1997). Similarly, the U.S. legal and political institutions have allowed Whites to separate themselves from Black and Brown people. This has been done through school segregation and housing discrimination, preventing Black and Brown people from attending the same schools and living in the same neighborhood as some Whites (Kozol, 2006; Tatum, 2007). However, largely circulated stereotypes about Black and Brown people do not deter racially prejudiced Whites from enjoying the talent of Black and Brown athletes and artists (Zirin, 2009). Many might not have “a problem”
with Blacks or Browns as far as entertainment is concerned. In their living room or at the stadium, they watch basketball or football games, dominated by functionally literate or semiliterate Black and Brown players who toil to enrich privileged White male chief executive officers and owners of these football or basketball teams (Zirin, 2009).

Furthermore, many prejudiced Whites might not find it inconvenient to have Black and Brown musicians or comedians perform for them in their neighborhoods provided that these Black and Brown musicians or comedians and their fans do not hang out there for too long in these neighborhoods after their performance is over. For many prejudiced Whites, it is safer to be informed about Black and Brown people through the corporate mass media, where the latter are misrepresented (Hall, 1997; Moore, 2000).

Given the extent to which Black and Brown people have been misrepresented, it is not surprising that many Whites have mistrusted them. How can one not be afraid of Black and Brown people when they are being portrayed so negatively on TV, particularly through major Hollywood movies? How can one not be reluctant to hire qualified Black and Brown people, when they are portrayed as aggressive, lazy, and irresponsible people? These stereotypes about Black and Brown people circulated through the mass corporate media have unfortunately been the main ideological and political tools that many prejudiced and economically and politically powerful Whites have used to maintain the unequal socioeconomic and political power relations between privileged Whites, People of Color, and poor Whites.

Generally, the White world sparkles like a diamond with the longest life expectancy and ample economic, educational, and political opportunities. Broadly speaking, the world of People of Color, however, is silently dying from a lack of educational and political opportunities coupled with a health care system that does not work for many of them. This form of racial inequality explains the underlying reasons that many Blacks during slavery preferred to commit suicide than to live in a world where their freedom was the property of their masters. In the postslavery era and the so-called postracial era, many Black and Brown people have continued to labor to maximize the corporate profits of those in power; however, for many having two meals a day is a luxury and getting a decent job is a struggle, whereas for others completing a college degree is sometimes the product of luck or a scholarship.

Black and Brown people have continued to be marginalized in a society that has refused to treat them equally. Because of institutional racism, Black and Brown people have been the first ones to be attacked by police officers on the street and to be denied quality education, decent jobs, and housing. Black and Brown children have been locked up in a school system that is structurally designed to fail them, rather than preparing them to succeed in life. Macedo (1994), who captures this racial injustice, maintains, “It is the same colonial model that fails most of the subordinate students in urban schools” (p. 81). Similarly, Kozol (2012) in Savage Inequalities eloquently describes the neocolonized conditions in which poor Black kids are expected to “learn.” He states,

In schools with an all-white student body, the average ran up to $350 allocated per pupil per year. In three heavily Negro districts, by comparison, the averages were $240, $235, and $232. In-class expenditures for Boston as a whole averaged $275 per pupil. In the Negro schools: $213. It was apparent from this report that Negro areas also had the highest percentage of provisional teachers, those who were fill-ins, and no tenure, no seniority, no experience, and no obligation to remain. These seem amazing facts in a country, which daydreams about exporting its democracy. Looking at these figures openly, it is hard not to wonder whether we did not export our democracy a long time ago and now do not have very much of it left for our own people. It is certain that we do not have a great deal of it to spare for the Negro. (Kozol, 2012, p. 56)

As a former high school teacher teaching in an underfunded school located in the most marginalized neighborhood in Boston, Massachusetts, I can speak to some of what Kozol points out in the quote above. I remember how frustrated I became when I did not have adequate resources needed to teach my minority students, including English language learners of color. Through their eyes and attitude, they vividly expressed the greatest desire and passion to learn. But how could I offer them the education that they deserved when school materials were scarce and when I shared a tiny classroom with broken windows with another teacher? How could they concentrate to learn when they came to my class hungry and told me that their parents did not have money to buy school materials?

Black and Brown people whose social class has enabled them to get an education and be successful despite the institutionalization of racism have still been subject to both overt and subtle racism. For instance, although West (1993) is a well-known and highly respected scholar, his fame and scholarship did not exempt him from the same ugly racist treatment by White police officers that ordinary Black and Brown people are experiencing in their daily lives. West narrates his experience in the following terms:

Years ago, while driving from New York to teach at Williams College, I was stopped on fake charges of trafficking cocaine. When I told the police officer I was a professor of religion, he replied, “Yeh, and I’m the Flying Nun. Let’s go, nigger!” I was stopped three
times in my first ten days in Princeton for driving too slowly on a residential street with a speed limit of twenty-five miles per hour. (p. xi)

As West’s (1993) testimony illustrates, the racial oppression inflicted on Black and Brown people during colonization and slavery has taken a different form through racial profiling and symbolic violence (Bourdieu, 1990). Ryan (1976) argues,

As the murderer pleads guilty to manslaughter to avoid a conviction that might lead to his being electrocuted, liberal America today is pleading guilty to savagery and oppression against the Negro of one hundred years ago in order to escape trial the crimes of today. (p. 51)

Another form of racial injustice that is worth pointing out is that Black and Brown people are expected to pay the price for any action that an individual Black or Brown person commits. That is, if a Black or Brown person commits a crime, it is often assumed that all of Black or Brown people are violent.

However, when a White person kills a Black person, or when White soldiers mistreat and dehumanize prisoners of different race, religion, and color, as it has happened in Guantanamo Bay in the United States and in Abu Ghraib, Iraq, the mass corporate media present this criminal act as an individual act committed by socially deviant White persons or soldiers. The cruel acts committed by White people, such as Timothy McVeigh, who killed many innocent people by bombing the federal building in Oklahoma City, and the U.S. soldiers in Iraq and Guantanamo, who humiliated and tortured many innocent people who looked different and professed the religion of Islam, have not consequently subjected all White Americans to racial profiling and stigma. The racial stereotypes and stigma against Black and Brown people have much to do with institutional racism supported by institutions, such as schools and the mainstream media. Those in power often blame racially marginalized groups for their miserable socioeconomic conditions, failing to point out that racism along with classism are the root causes of these conditions.

Like Whites, Black and Brown people can achieve great things and succeed in life if given the opportunity to do so. However, because of unequal distribution of resources and opportunity gaps, many People of Color, including linguistically and culturally diverse students, have not been as successful academically and economically as Whites. Is this a historical coincidence or conspiracy? I argue that the striking difference between Whites and People of Color is intrinsically linked to institutional racism and an inequitable distribution of resources. Prejudiced powerful Whites have used the mainstream corporate media to portray Black and Brown people as inferior, stupid, savage, uncivilized, and lazy, so that they could justify their monopolization of the wealth of the earth. Black and Brown people have been allowed to pick up the crumbs of the wealth of the world due to institutional racism leading to their racial and socioeconomic marginalization.

Although many people of African descent have contributed to the scientific advancement of the Western world, they have not been acknowledged enough in Western history textbooks for their contribution (Asante, 2011; Loewen, 1995; Teresi, 2002). Instead, in many instances they have been victims of Western scientific inventions. For example, the electrical machine that the U.S. legal system has used to unjustly electrocute many young Black and Brown men and women was not invented by People of Color. Moreover, the dangerous weapons that were used to kill Patrice Lumumba in Congo, Steve Biko in South Africa, Thomas Sankara in Burkina Faso, and Malcolm X and Martin Luther King in the United States were not invented by Black or Brown people. Finally, the bombs that the United States used to destroy Hiroshima killing hundreds of innocent Japanese children and elderly, and that has continued to be used to kill innocent people in countries, such as Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, were not invented by Black or Brown people.

However, because of the ugly image the mainstream media have projected of Black and Brown people, their skin pigmentation has been “a marker” throughout the world. In other words, their skin color, which has been unjustly associated with violence, robbery, and laziness, constitutes a shadow that has been following Black and Brown people since adolescence. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that Black and Brown people have been denied many opportunities and, in most cases, the first ones to be racially profiled and killed on the street in New York and Los Angeles by prejudiced police officers. In short, because of their Blackness and Brownness, their life seems to be always on trial.

Black and Brown people not only have to prove themselves as capable human beings but also as capable Black and Brown beings, for they are usually seen and treated as a double creature—a racial and sociopolitical phenomenon that Du Bois (1995) called double consciousness. First, they are perceived and treated as Blacks and Browns. After they prove themselves as “good citizens,” they are sometimes treated as human beings. Because of institutional racism and the legacy of racism, Black and Brown people have been perceived and often treated as subhuman (Bonilla-Silva, 2010; Fanon, 1967; Orelus, 2011). Consequently, many have been denied the opportunity to fulfill their potential. To compensate for their “incompleteness” as socially constructed by the White world, Black and Brown people are generally expected to be either obedient or super nice and feel that they have outperformed their White counterparts to receive the respect that they deserve. Because of racial prejudice and
stereotypes, in such fields as sports in which they have been given a chance to participate, Black and Brown people are expected to outperform their White teammates. Those who do not succeed in passing the White world test are usually considered inferior, useless, and lazy Black. Fanon (1967) states, “There is a fact: whites consider themselves superior to black men. There is another fact: Black men want to prove to white men, at all costs, the richness of their thought, the equal value of their intellect” (p. 10).

Given these deplorable racial and socioeconomic situations that Black and Brown people have been forced to be in, I ask whether they will be able to transcend these situations and succeed. I further ask the following: Can they go beyond negative images and stereotypes that have been constructed about them since slavery and still succeed? I remain convinced they can. To be successful at doing so, Black and Brown people need to steadily cherish their culture, explore further, and hold on to their rich historical legacy and cultural traditions, which have been negated by those in power who strive to maintain White hegemony. Otherwise, they will be condemned to living up to the White world’s standard. Cesaire (2000) states,

We lived in an atmosphere of rejection, and we developed an inferiority complex. I have always thought that the black man was searching for his identity. And it has seemed to me that if we want is to establish this identity, then we must have a concrete consciousness of what we are, that is, of the first fact of our lives: that we are black; that we were black and have a history, a history that contains cultural elements of great value; and that Negroes were not, as you put it, born yesterday, because there have been beautiful and important black civilizations. (pp. 91-92)

Because of a White racial superiority discourse that has been circulated through textbooks and the mainstream media, many White people have learned to believe that they have a biological right to be the leader of the world, to control and oppress Blacks, Browns, and other marginalized people. To counter such a racist and White hegemonic ideology, it is imperative that Black and Brown people use historical facts to remind the ignorant, the arrogant, and the racist Whites that they have gotten it wrong. Black and Brown people can begin by using a simple historical fact that has proven the grandeur, the high intelligence, and strong skills of Black people: the Egyptian civilization. No one, not even the coldest and the most inhuman racist people on earth, can question and doubt the beauty and the splendid legacy of this great civilization (Diop, 1974). It is therefore worth asking the following: What do racist Americans and Europeans, such as Jensen (1969), Herrnstein and Murray (1996), and Gobineau (2010), have to say about the great pyramids that were built in Egypt without the sophisticated technology to which Europeans and White Americans have had access? Does one need to teach them world history, which great Black and Brown heroes, heroes, and critical thinkers, such as Sejourner Truth, Rosa Parks, Cesar Chavez, Toussaint L’Ouverture, Simon Bolivar, W. E. B. Du Bois, Amilcar Cabral, Dolores Huerta, Steve Biko, Malcolm X, Nelson Mandela, Yuri Kochiyama, Toni Morrison, Martin Luther King Jr., Frederick Douglass, Antenor Firmin, Frantz Fanon, Aime Cesaire, Jean Price Mars, and C. L. R. James, have shaped through splendid leadership skills and exceptional scholarly work? Black and Brown people need to remind racist European and American scientists and writers about the historical and cultural significance of the Egyptian civilization (Diop, 1974; Firmin, 2000). Firmin (2000) asserts,

One of the surest ways to refute such a theory (i.e., the theory of inequality of human races) would be to identify a period in history when the proud Europeans were absolutely savages while Black people were holding up the flame of early civilization. Let us open the annals of humanity and question the past. Let us study the vestiges of antiquity, for they have much to teach us and they can shed much light on the debate and confirm the truth. At the dawn of history we encounter one people whose civilization precedes all the others: the ancient population of Egypt. This people, who were unquestionably the initiators of the White nations of the West in science and the arts, had created alone, on the shores of the Nile whose sandy sweet waters flow across such vast lands, the most impressive social organization that a human population had ever built. (p. 226)

World history needs to be taught in school from the perspective of the oppressed, so that Black and Brown people and other marginalized people can have access to the historical facts to which Firmin is referring in the quote above. Unless this happens, marginalized Black and Brown people will continue to be duped, lied to, and misled, and consequently will naively accept the fairytale version of their history that White dominant conservative groups have been selling them through institutions, such as schools and the media. Worse, they will continue to be brainwashed into believing that White, straight, Christian, able-bodied, privileged men were born to rule the world and others were destined to be their subalterns.

The exploitation of Black and Brown people and other subjugated groups does not happen in a vacuum; it has been well orchestrated through two oppressive joint systems, capitalism and racism, which I would call the twins of inequalities. Racism is alienating, oppressive, and inhuman, yet the White, capitalist, dominant class has used it to maximize their profits by exploiting Black and Brown people. In other words, the White economic and political world has been
built on the backbone of Black and Brown people and other subordinate groups. That is, capitalists use racism to dehumanize and exploit People of Color. I argued elsewhere (Orelus, 2009, 2011), one cannot truly understand racism without having a clear understanding of capitalism and vice versa. Black and Brown people’s skin tone has been used in most cases by White capitalists to justify the economic inequality that they have experienced, the political and psychological violence they have endured, and the poverty that has crippled many of them. Simply put, racism has helped the White dominant class to achieve their goal of oppression, exploitation, and exclusion. Moreover, by rationalizing racism and using it as a political and economic weapon to strengthen their power, the prejudiced White upper class has rendered alienation, oppression, and famine the raison d’être of People of Color. What is to be done against these oppressive socioeconomic and political situations?

As Douglass (2012) reminds us, coercive power does not willingly free oppressed and marginalized groups until the latter show their firm determination to challenge and fight against this power and gain their freedom. For example, in South Africa, the apartheid system would have still been in place to oppress and exploit the Afrikaners, had the latter not resolved to fight against this evil system. Moreover, the Haitian and Algerian people would still live under the terror, tyranny, inhuman exploitation, and oppression of their French colonizers, had they not rigorously fought against them. As the first step toward their freedom, I propose that Black and Brown people in the United States and beyond awaken and start asking themselves, for instance, the following questions:

1. Is the social inequality Black and Brown people and other marginalized groups are facing the end result of their racial inferiority or is it the capitalist and racist system that has denied them opportunities?
2. Are Black and Brown people poor because they are lazy or is it because of institutional racism and capitalism?
3. Are Black and Brown people unable to compete with Whites because they are not as intelligent or smart like them or is it because they have been denied quality education that many Whites, especially privileged Whites, often take for granted?

The questions posed above speak directly to the inhuman conditions that Black and Brown people in the Americas and beyond have been forced to live in for centuries. Moreover, these questions unveil the lies that Black and Brown people have been told about their socioeconomic and political situations. For example, the White dominant ideology circulated through institutions, such as the media, schools, and churches, is intended to make Black and Brown people believe that their “biological inferiority” is the root cause of their sufferings and misery. Countering this argument, I contend that their inhuman socioeconomic conditions are directly linked to both the capitalist and racist systems.

Conclusion

The poor educational, socioeconomic, and political conditions of Black and Brown people have gotten worse as a result of what Bonilla-Silva (2005) coined “new racism.” The phrase new racism captures the subtle and overt brutal form of racism that Black and Brown people continue to experience here in the United States and beyond. Despite the few educational, socioeconomic, and political opportunities to which some People of Color, such as President Barack Obama and the two former U.S. secretaries of state, Colin Power and Condoleezza Rice, have had to succeed politically and economically, thanks to the Civil Right Movement and others, the majority of Black and Brown people, including students, are still oppressed. As demonstrated throughout the article, millions continue to be victims of job discrimination and unemployment and are deprived of quality education and health care. Economically, educationally, and politically, we have two worlds in front of us: a White world and a People of Color world. However, White and Black politicians alike, including President Barack Obama, have used lofty political rhetoric to convince people that there is no such thing as a Black, Latino, Native American, and White America, and that there is only the United States of America. However, the present socioeconomic and educational inequalities between People of Color and Whites suggest that in fact there is a Black, a White, a Native American, and a Latino/a America, and these diverse racial groups are segregated. To bridge the educational and socioeconomic gaps between Whites and People of Color, especially the poor ones, I propose Black and Brown people and White allies continue to organize and build stronger alliances to fight against institutional racism and corporate capitalism, to create a better world for themselves, their children, and other people’s children.

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Bio

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