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The Zimmerman Verdict: Race

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The nation waited with anticipation and fear for the Zimmerman verdict; would killing Trayvon Benjamin Martin be justified? The verdict was read—not guilty. For some in black America, the verdict was yet another betrayal from the criminal justice system. Another black boy killed and the murderer walks free from prosecution—and now the outrage.

To understand the indignation, one must look through the lens of black America; remember Emmett Till; remember Megar Evers, surely Dr. King—and now Trayvon Martin. While the comparisons may not seem reasonable, the killing of them all is an historical manifestation of what is real for many black Americans.

In America, we continue to wrestle with race and discrimination. The reaction to race continues to inundate our lives. We cannot seem to dismiss ourselves from the past transgressions of white supremacy and bigotry and the continued racism and discrimination that some face. When blacks and whites are at odds, we tend to resort to race issues. What is it with black and white people?

Interesting, we all see color; to not see color reduces the person to being invisible. I want my color seen; seeing me as a black man humanizes me. The issue becomes how one reacts to my being a black man. We continue to live in a racist society; however, on many fronts, we have attempted to overcome the demons of hatred and ignorance. We have come a long way in race relations; yet the race battle continues.

I recently watched a video entitled: *What does it mean to be white in America?* After the Zimmerman verdict, I wonder what does it mean to be a black boy in America? The responsibility to minimize racism and discrimination takes the work of all people—ending racism and discrimination may not be a reality—but a journey towards a more perfect union.