



# I'd Rather We Got Casinos: And Other Black Thoughts

*Larry Wilmore*

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From the host of Comedy Central's newest program, *The Nightly Show with Larry Wilmore*, comes the first paperback reprint of his funny and provocative musings on race in America and other nightly topics--updated with new material for this edition. Now boasting three new chapters and an introduction exclusive the trade paperback edition, *I'd Rather We Got Casinos And Other Black Thoughts* by Larry Wilmore gives Wilmore's on-screen character of the same name a place to voice his opinions on controversial topics in a way that anyone can find amusing ... and eye-opening. Exploring various literary forms such as op-ed pieces, epistolary entries, graduation speeches, and long-lost transcripts, the result is a collection that the expanded audience from his successful Comedy Central program will enjoy, including: why black weathermen make him feel happy (or sad); why brothas don't see UFOs; letters to the NAACP; and more, including his frustration with Black History Month--after all, can twenty-eight days of trivia really make up for centuries of oppression?

## I'd Rather We Got Casinos: And Other Black Thoughts Details

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Author : Larry Wilmore

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## From Reader Review I'd Rather We Got Casinos: And Other Black Thoughts for online ebook

### Bradley says

Originally published in 2009 while Wilmore served as the senior black correspondent on “The Daily Show With Jon Stewart,” Wilmore’s essays and insights into contemporary black issues are witty and poignant. Essay topics include commentaries on the search for Black Jesus, why UFO sightings aren’t reported by black people, Wilmore’s texts from a Birmingham jail (a nod to MLK, Jr.), why it is acceptable to hate someone because of their profession, and Wilmore’s letters to the NAACP advocating that “chocolate” replace African-American as the preferred black nomenclature. This collection of Wilmore’s deepest thoughts and criticisms, while exaggerated, offer a valuable social commentary on the experience and plight of the black community.

The title of the book is a not so subtle reference to Native American culture and their stake in the casino industry. In the introduction, Wilmore is asked about Black History Month and if it is relevant in educating the public on the accomplishments and struggles throughout black history. With a resounding “Hell, no”, Wilmore says he would have preferred the black community be given casinos. This perfectly sets the tone that weaves in and out of each essay; the systemic racism that continues to marginalize the black community and what can be done to ease the pain. Of course, a lot of the view points in the book cannot be taken literally but are offered in such a tongue-in-cheek manner.

Six years after publishing this book, Wilmore now hosts his own show. “The Nightly Show” allows Wilmore to continue addressing key issues that affect blacks and other minorities while often editorializing his own viewpoint to ease the tension and offer a solution. Also joined by a panel with their own unique take on current day racial issues, Wilmore applies a process to tackling topics that is thought-provoking and funny. That is not to say that racism is a topic that should be taken lightly. It is a very serious issue. What Wilmore’s humor does is take an uncomfortable topic and finds a thread that can connect all people. Through humor, Wilmore can break down the tension and find unifying ways to address an issue. This belief that racial humor is funny but racist humor is not is nothing new. But what it does offer is a chance to identify and own our differences just as long as it doesn’t result in the systemic oppression of a particular group. Wilmore’s “black thoughts” focus on racial humor to both reinforce and raise a group of people. It isn’t quite politically correct, but that is fine. Besides, if you disagree with Wilmore’s point then that makes you a racist and he is judging you your cracker ass.

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### David says

One of the better books by a comedian out there. His repeated letters to the N.A.A.C.P. asking them to encourage the adoption of Chocolate in lieu of African-American or Black are hilarious. "Everybody loves chocolate and you don't even have to change your initials!"

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### Christina says

It's interesting that the library shelves this book in the 305s (social science) not the 817 (humor) as I feel it is

a work of comedy (social satire) more than a documentary. The chapters on black Jesus and angry black churches were the funniest. The most wildly humorous section was the mock letter-writing campaign to the NAACP to change the term African-American to chocolate. A friend laughed when I told him about this. D. will be the first to correct you if you call him black instead of African-American. So remember these are Larry Wilmore's "black thoughts" and do not represent everyone's views. You will not be disappointed if you take it as a work of comedy yet the chapter on the Shetland Negro on TV was not funny. I really liked this book and encourage you to read it.

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## Stefanie says

A quick read and pretty funny insight into the mind of Larry Wilmore, most known for his role on the Daily Show as Senior Black Correspondent. A fun read, but not actually as insightful as I would have expected. Wilmore talks a lot about race relations on TDS, and it's usually a delight satire on modern sympathies. Though his pieces here still contained sort of his token wit, they were a bit lacklustre, and missing a certain spark that I've come to expect from him. It was a quick, easy read, so I wouldn't discourage anyone from tackling it, but I think for me personally, a combination of not being fully able to relate to the material (which isn't terribly surprising) and yet not being confronted with some of the hypocrisies of modern racism (which was sort of surprising) made this book fall short of what I expected.

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## Gavin Leech says

(As in, "Are you in favor of Black History Month?"

"Hell no. Twenty-eight days of trivia to make up for centuries of oppression? I'd rather we got casinos.")

Irreverent about stuff good people don't tend to be: 'community leaders', the funeral for the 'n'-word, Jesus' race, Katrina, *Letter from Birmingham Jail*, The Man.

His patter is sometimes pleurably baroque:

*"A pudgy patron of society would suffer an indignity and cry out, 'This is unmitigated gall! Unmitigated gall, I tell you!'" ...*

*"the level of anger in a black church should be roughly equal to the level of anger in the brother attending said church. You'll appreciate the attention to detail in the Afrocentric stained-glass windows as black Jesus, black Mary, and the black Apostles make even hard brothers nervous with their never-happy Ice Cube-like glares" ...*

*"THE SIMPSONS: Not racist but not very brotha friendly.  
FAMILY GUY: Racist but very brotha friendly."*

Lines this good scattered throughout.

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## **Anna says**

I'd Rather We Got Casinos and Other Black Thoughts, by the Daily Show's Chief Black Correspondent Larry Wilmore, isn't something that I would have spent money on, but I did check it out from the library and got a few hearty chuckles. The book is a collection of essays, (completely fake) interviews, and random thoughts on race, some of which are amusing, some of which are a little head-scratching, and most of which go on a little too long. However, there are some hilarious moments, such as Wilmore's repeated attempts to get the NAACP on board with his plan to change "African-American" to "chocolate" ("At least four out of five black people like it and an impressive five out of five nonblacks do. In other words, everybody loves chocolate!") and the intriguing essay "How Come Brothas Don't See UFOs?"

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## **Claire Hall says**

There are some books that do more than just occupy space on a shelf--there are a precious few--The Wealth of Nations, the Federalist Papers, Uncle Tom's Cabin, among others--that transform the times in which they appear.

This is destined to be one of those books. "I'd Rather We Got Casinos" presents the thoughts of Larry Wilmore. These are not just thoughts. They are profound thoughts. And they are black thoughts--presented by the Senior Black Correspondent for The Daily Show with Jon Stewart. This book is thought-provoking, joyously politically incorrect...and very, very funny.

No summary can do justice to the contents of this volume, but you may get a flavor for what awaits you between the covers by learning that there are chapters on why black audiences talk back to horror movies, why it's OK to hate black people who work at McDonald's in airports, why fat black weathermen make Wilmore happy (and sad), and Wilmore's extended, ultimately futile correspondence with the NAACP, which attempted to persuade the organization to join his crusade to replace the descriptive phrases black and African-American with the far superior term, "chocolate." There's real humor here, but there are deeper meanings as well.

As a white (or in Wilmore's parlance, vanilla) guy, I may not be able to fully appreciate the profound depth of these thoughts--but I do know that I laughed out loud--many, many times. And this book stimulated thoughts of my own. Maybe not as profound as Mr. Wilmore's, but they were thoughts, nevertheless.

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## **Carol Storm says**

Mildly amusing at best -- he's funnier on the Jon Stewart show.

The only two sketches that really show potential here are the one about UFO's -- and why black people don't see them -- and an interview with "the Man," the shadowy authority figure who always keeps black people down.

What Larry Wilmore really needs is more edge -- much more edge. I was looking for an interview with Nat Turner, for example. Or a list of white women in Hollywood most desired by black men behind bars. Something that would shock, jar, and possibly even enrage the mainstream audience.

Unfortunately, this collection of black thoughts is closer to malted milk balls than it is to ribs and collard greens.

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### **Deb Jones says**

If you enjoy social commentary presented in a humorous way or if you like author Larry Wilmore, I feel it's safe to say you would enjoy this book.

I might have rated it four stars if it was a book I owned and could pick up at my leisure to read a chapter/scenario one or two at a time. However, I borrowed mine from the library and found that sitting through it in one or two single reads found my attention wandering after a while.

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### **bup says**

This quick read mostly concerns itself with what I'll call meta-racist humor. It's not racist, but it's *about* racist humor almost exclusively.

Some of it is great, some of it so-so. That's what you get with comedy. If some of it didn't miss, it's probably because the person wasn't trying anything new.

Particular highlights included the trial for the "n" word (Wilmore felt that the metaphorical burial of the "n" word a few years ago was premature without a trial), Wilmore's speech campaigning to be the new self-appointed black leader (it skewers the Jesse Jacksons and Al Sharptons of the world pretty well), arguments that Jesus was black (among the evidence - his parents didn't get to stay at the inn in a situation that makes you go "hmm"; he didn't get a fair trial, and he had a posse), and the final essay on recognizing a category of things that maybe aren't racist, but are not 'brotha friendly.'

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### **Colette says**

"You always hear people say "racism is still a major part of everyday life." Most people accept this premise without investigating it further. Mainly because they agree with it, and secondly, they don't want to challenge it for fear of seeming like the racist in question. They also feel there's nothing they can do about it. It's racism, you can't change it. My problem with this statement is that it is too general. By using words like "racism" or "racists", it keeps the notion distant and "out there." It feels like a problem to be contemplated and discussed like a philosophical construct instead of a problem that could use some concrete solution like a backed up sink."

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### **Mikayla says**

Larry Wilmore is a superb television personality, television writer, and comedian. When an individual is this skilled, they're often approached to write a book showcasing their many talents. Often, these books are very funny, insightful, and well-written. Unfortunately, Wilmore's is not one of them - which truly is a shame. It battles itself, unsure of which genre it wants to be in. (Social science for the first quarter, humor for the

second, memoir for the third, and just simply confusing for the final.)

Because it tries to blur genre conventions, it gets lost in a satire of all of them, which is especially confusing if you understand Wilmore's television career. While TDS was based on satire, TNS is more focused on raw humor. This book tried to do both, which makes sense, given it was published during Wilmore's post-TDS & pre-TNS career.

Nevertheless, there are indeed various LOL moments. In particular, Larry's effervescent and optimistic letters to the NAACP, in which he opined for the changing of the term "African American" to "chocolate" are easily the best pages in the book. But these passages are hidden beneath the many layers of confusing nonconformity and irregular use of the interview format to set up a joke or make a punchline. Confusing at best, bland at worst - Wilmore's book is nevertheless good nightstand reading material.

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## David says

Not familiar with author previously, as we don't have cable TV, but the couple times I've seen Jon Stewart's show I thought it was funny, so when I saw this in library I decided to give it a try.

It was ok. Format is like standup comedy skits/riffs transcribed. Very very light reading -- maybe an hour for the whole book. Emphasis on wordplay. A couple things that seemed (to me) funny such as the list of reasons you can tell Jesus was a black guy, and the series of chapters consisting of imaginary correspondence with the NAACP encouraging them to take up the cause of replacing "African American" with "Chocolate" (they wouldn't have to change organization acronym, etc.).

This is totally subjective of course, but a lot of the rest of it seemed unfunny to me. As with "men are like this; women are like that" comedy, the "differences between Black and White habits/perspectives/experiences" thing is challenging at this point for comedians because it is so well-mined. Black people are more likely to talk back to movie characters? to not conjugate the verb "to be"? To show up late for stuff (if male)? To be exuberant in church? To have creative unusual first names? You don't say.

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## Sarah Sammis says

Larry Wilmore is currently the senior black correspondent to The Daily Show. He has written for The Office, The Bernie Mac Show and a bunch of other things I haven't watched except for clips here and there. I read his book, I'd Rather We Got Casinos because it was offered at a recent Bookcrossing meeting and I liked the title.

The book contains a collection of his "Black Thoughts" essays. They discuss important things (race, discrimination, profiling etc) and silly things (why UFOs are only interested in whites) with the same semi-serious semi-comedic tone. Put together these essays form a mosaic of what it's like to be black in the United States.

My only complaint is that some of the essays are repetitive. The same jokes and talking points show up in different essays. After the first half of the book I went from carefully reading to skimming. If I had been a

regular watcher of The Daily Show or otherwise a fan of Larry Wilmore's work I probably would have enjoyed the book more than I did.

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## **Donald says**

Wilmore's my favorite part of The Daily Show right now. He's replaced Lewis Black as the moment of comedy that's going to make my week. The best pieces in here have the tone of his Daily Show pieces (notably, "Give Us the Superdome,"). But I ultimately found the book disappointing. There were some solid moments and a few really funny jokes, but a lot of it fell flat. Many of the pieces, especially the ones written as transcripts of his supposed radio show, felt like they were actually routines meant for another medium, generally audio. Also, the pieces felt too light, too brief. I know, "awful, and such small portions!" but I felt that if there were some longer pieces or full-on essays, if he'd carried some of the jokes out further, I'd have found it funnier. Also, I wanted more random black thoughts. There are only 4 in the book, each only about a line or two long, but they're like a sucker-punch of hilarity.

I had some high expectations for this book, and I'm sorry to say it fell short.

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