

TYLER MERRITT



AUTHOR | ACTOR | ACTIVIST



About Tyler Merritt

Tyler Merritt is a Nashville-based actor, activist, cancer survivor, founder of The Tyler Merritt Project, and author of "I TAKE MY COFFEE BLACK: REFLECTIONS ON TUPAC, MUSICAL THEATER, FAITH AND BEING BLACK IN AMERICA." Over the course of his career, Tyler has gained recognition through notable acting projects including "Kevin Probably Saves The World," "Outer Banks," and "The Outsider," as well as serving as the face of the worldwide teaching curriculum for The Gospel Project for Kids. Most recently, Tyler Merritt made headlines with his 2018 viral video "Before You Call The Cops," which has been viewed by over 60 million people worldwide and appeared on Jimmy Kimmel, MSNBC, and the New York Times. As a 6'2" dreadlocked Black man living in America, where racial injustices continue to plague our society, Tyler has emerged as a steadfast activist in the face of racism.

Why Tyler Merritt?

- Tyler is a man of passion. He loves Bon Jovi, musical theater, and basketball. He teaches Sunday school every week at church and has seen The Titanic 27 times. Yet, as a Black man standing at 6'2" with dreadlocks, Tyler is heartbreakingly aware of what it feels like to be stereotyped as threatening. Tyler founded The Tyler Merritt Project as a solution to help ease people's understanding of who he is as a Black person, challenge underlying biases, and encourage proximity with those who don't look like you.
- Tyler advocates that Black people are not monolithic and that there is not one specific way to be Black. The stereotypes and biases long attributed to Black culture that constitute what is culturally accepted are an example of everyday racism.
- Hailing from Las Vegas, Tyler's convictions about race in America stem from diverse life experiences. Gang culture, performing arts, church camp, and Hootie and the Blowfish shaped the Tyler we know and love today while also exposing him to an eclectic group of friends, neighbors, colleagues, and classmates from all walks of life who revealed to Tyler the shortcomings of racial equality in America.
- With over 40,000 followers, Tyler leverages The Tyler Merritt Project's social media platforms to provide a "safe place" for people of all races, religions, ethnicities, and socioeconomic backgrounds who may not have had the chance to connect otherwise. Here, Tyler has sparked educational, inspirational, and humorous discussions about everything from race to dating to confidence and pop culture.



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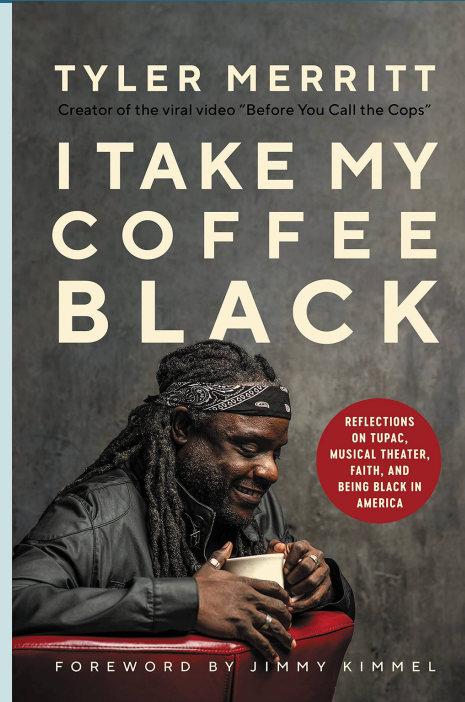


I TAKE MY COFFEE BLACK

REFLECTIONS ON TUPAC, MUSICAL THEATER, FAITH, AND BEING BLACK IN AMERICA

About I TAKE MY COFFEE BLACK,

In his debut book, "I TAKE MY COFFEE BLACK," Tyler Merritt bridges racial divides that seem to grow wider every day by painting a portrait of Black manhood in America, encouraging readers to reconsider stereotypes deeply ingrained in our society, and understand why fostering proximity with one another can be the cure for racism. Painful, hysterical, and passionate, Tyler Merritt elegantly weaves together lessons about white privilege and the history of encoded racism in America alongside the best Broadway Musical of all time, why every person should watch the movie "Love Actually," and the wonders of Gwyneth Paltrow (naturally). Rooted in connection, "I TAKE MY COFFEE BLACK" challenges readers to consider the relational power behind learning about the lives and experiences of others, especially people who don't look like you or live like you from all races, religions, ethnicities, and socioeconomic statuses. Tyler shares, "It's not my job to make every human with fearful or racist thoughts feel comfortable," and instead reminds readers that distance from others breeds suspicion, but proximity cultivates empathy and sparks interest.



Why I TAKE MY COFFEE BLACK?

- In "I TAKE MY COFFEE BLACK," Tyler shares that conceptions about race are rooted in centuries-old class systems. Tyler explains how the discriminatory practice of redlining, for example, has infringed upon access to quality housing and education among the Black community for generations while fostering an environment of escapism for white people. Proximity, Tyler advocates, is the only way to break down racial barriers and forge a real community.
- Through offering vulnerability and relatability, Tyler challenges conventional wisdom in "I TAKE MY COFFEE BLACK" by diving deeper than surface topics and exposing his core convictions. From his relationship with his parents to his dating history and his brushes with racism, Tyler shares a deeply personal journey that leaves readers feeling like they've read the memoir of a close friend, not a complete stranger.
- Aware of the fatal flaws of the American justice system, including the First Amendment, Tyler shares in "I TAKE MY COFFEE BLACK" that despite a constitutional right to the first amendment, he learned very quickly that, "...if you're white, that makes sense. But the rules don't always apply in the same way to white people as they do for black people." Tyler brings to light the grave reality of the fear associated with exercising the First Amendment as a Black American as it's often perceived as a social transgression and responded to fatally by civilians and law enforcement.
- Jimmy Kimmel, Wells Adams, and Heather Locklear are singing the praises of Tyler's entertaining and provocative book, "I TAKE MY COFFEE BLACK." Tyler is the friend, teacher, and confidant we all need in our lives and delivers an incisive perspective on racism in America at a time when we need it the most.



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The New York Times
MSNBC



Suggested Interview Topics



- There is no one way to "be Black"
- We need to normalize the open conversation about race in America
- Proximity is the cure for racism in America
- What the First Amendment means for Black people in the United States
- Miscarriages of justice in America's legal system
- Leading with the awareness of Malcolm X and the posture of Martin Luther King Jr.
- How to overcome a "Netflix moment"
- Black visibility in corporate America
- Creation of The Tyler Merritt Project

Suggested Interview Questions

- What does everyday racism look like?
- Can you provide an example of how we can all foster more proximity with one another?
- How have class systems historically discriminated against the prosperity of Black Americans?
- What inspired your viral video "Before you call the cops"?
- You recently took a two-year sabbatical. What did you learn during that time?
- What is a sliding door moment? Can you share some of your own?
- What are the ingredients for a Better Society Gumbo?
- Why do you believe segregation remains so prevalent in the church?



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