

# MTV to Air in Black and White for the First Time in Network History, Share Artist, Politician and Audience Perspectives on Race on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

Through New Initiative **#TheTalk**, MTV to Engage its Audiences in a "Color Brave" Conversation Led by Cultural Figures Including Kendrick Lamar, Common, Big Sean, Ava DuVernay, David Oyelowo, Penn Badgley, Jordin Sparks, Pete Wentz, Sen. Rand Paul, Rep. John Lewis, Sen. Cory Booker and more

NEW YORK--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- [MTV](#) today announced an expansion of its *Look Different* anti-bias campaign called **#TheTalk**, a multiscreen effort to encourage its audience to have candid, confident and "color brave" conversations on race with family and friends. According to a 2014 MTV study\*, 73% of Millennials believe having more open constructive conversations about bias would help people become less prejudiced.



Artist and activist Common shares his perspective on race as part of MTV's **#TheTalk**. (Photo: Business Wire)

"Millennials believe strongly in fairness, but they can also find it difficult to talk openly about race - to be not simply 'color blind' but 'color brave,'" said Stephen Friedman, President of MTV. "Our audience is looking for a way to bring the national conversation on race into their homes and this campaign will give them a forum to express true color bravery."

**#TheTalk** will begin at **9:00 a.m. ET/PT** on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day when MTV will kick off a 12-hour period in which all programming will air in black and white for the first time in the network's history. Every commercial block will begin with personal reflections on race from luminaries including Kendrick Lamar, Common, Big Sean, Ava DuVernay, David Oyelowo, Penn Badgley, Jordin Sparks, Pete Wentz, Sen. Rand Paul, Rep. John Lewis, Sen. Cory Booker and more.

An excerpt from MTV's "Talk" with Ava DuVernay:

*"To be color blind is not a thing I think that one should boast about. See color and celebrate it. See our differences and celebrate it. When someone says to me 'I'm color blind, I don't see color', I'm thinking they're missing out..."*

On-air creative on MTV, MTV2, mtvU, MTV Hits, MTV Jams and a comprehensive editorial push across MTV's online, mobile and social platforms will encourage audience members to share their own reflections using the **#thetalk** and get involved through the *Look Different* website, [LookDifferent.org](#). MTV will share many of the audience contributions on-air and online.

MTV's *Look Different* campaign launched in April 2014, and continues to be shaped by the network's research and insights on young people and race, gender and sexual orientation. According to the same 2014 MTV study\*, many Millennials were raised to believe they shouldn't acknowledge racial differences with 84% saying their family taught them that everyone should be treated the same, regardless of race.

However, this well-intentioned approach has its drawbacks. Millennials often feel blinded to lingering historical inequities because they've so seldom discussed race openly. The MTV study found that 63% of Millennials rarely talk with their family about race and 54% agree that it is hard to have a respectful conversation about bias in person or online. However, 69% of Millennials would love the opportunity to have an open respectful and judgment-free conversation about bias. These findings, coupled with the recent events in Ferguson, Cleveland, New York and elsewhere, inspired the creation of *The Talk*.

To learn more about **#TheTalk** and view embeddable video testimonials from artists and activists, please visit [MTVNews.com](#) and [Lookdifferent.org/videos/the-talk](#). [LookDifferent.org](#) will also provide resources for learning more about racial stereotypes, tips on how to take action on issues of racial bias, and different conversations other young people have had on race. Resources include an Implicit Bias Quiz, shareable media and opportunities to get involved with leading organizations fighting bias.

**\*2014 MTV/David Binder Research Study. For full results, please click [here](#).**

**About MTV:**

MTV is the world's premier youth entertainment brand. With a global reach of more than a half-billion households, MTV is the cultural home of the Millennial generation, music fans and artists, and a pioneer in creating innovative programming for young people. MTV reflects and creates pop culture with its Emmy®, Grammy® and Peabody® award-winning content built around compelling storytelling, music discovery and activism across TV, online and mobile. MTV's sibling networks MTV2 and mtvU each deliver unparalleled customized content for young males, music fans and college students, and its online hub [MTV.com](http://MTV.com) is a leading destination for music, news and pop culture. MTV, a unit of Viacom Inc. (NASDAQ: VIA, VIA.B), one of the world's leading creators of programming and content across all media platforms. For more information, go to [www.mtvpress.com](http://www.mtvpress.com).

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