

Race: Perspectives

An SLCC Community Writing Center
Community Anthology

Race: Perspectives is published by the SLCC Community Writing Center

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Race: Perspectives

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Introduction

Everyone Can Write!

Conversations—honest conversations—about race, ethnicity, and cultural identity can be difficult to have: political correctness can be a concern, others aren't sure how they feel about race, and some may have strong feelings but fear offending. Words can have an impact, but so can silence.

Based on the Michelle Norris' national project, the Utah Race Card Project instigates candid dialogue about race, ethnicity, and cultural identity by asking people to write one sentence of only six words on the subject.

From those six words, community participants have written longer pieces of either poetry, nonfiction or fiction genres exploring their own thoughts, feelings or experiences with race, ethnicity and cultural identity. It is these voices that make up the *Race: Perspectives* community writing anthology.

The SLCC Community Writing Center (CWC), in collaboration with The Grand Theatre, Utah Humanities Council, Salt Lake Arts Council and many other community partners, has expanded the idea of the Race Card Project with not only this anthology, but with various community Race Card walls, panel discussions and lectures, and multiple exhibits throughout the Salt Lake Valley.

The Utah Race Card project plans to continue the community dialogue on race, ethnicity and cultural identity. For more information about upcoming events or how you might share your voice or get involved, call the SLCC Community Writing Center at 801.957.2192.

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Race: Perspectives

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Race: Perspectives

An SLCC Community Writing Center
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Preface

“All writing depends upon the generosity of the reader.” This quote, penned by author Alberto Manguel in *A History of Reading*, reveals the essence of reading and writing: the text and the reader animate each other. A generous reader will dance with a text—following every turn—appreciating the rhythm, pace, and flow. A hostile reader takes the lead—pushing and pulling when the text doesn’t perform as expected—forcing it to conform to a preconceived expectation.

As you read this anthology, challenge your expectations. Each turn of the page will surprise you. Consider it a conversation, between friends, family, neighbors and total strangers, on a topic people tend to avoid. A generous reader has an active role in the discourse: to appreciate the diversity; to acknowledge each piece of writing as an opportunity to view the world through a different lens.

Each writer has an intimate relationship with their own opinions and the unique experiences that inform them, as does every reader. This presents an unusual situation, because candid discourse about race tends to take place between people who look like each other, talk like each other and share similar backgrounds. This ensures that individual and social perspectives—the comfortable space from which we view the world and everyone in it—are never questioned; however, productive discourse about race requires a willingness to question perspective, no matter how frightening and awkward that may be.

Dancing with a text that challenges your worldview may be clumsy at times, but each false step presents an opportunity to learn and grow. A single perspective is much too small an area to perform this dance with any pizzazz. Learning these steps requires space, patience and humility. Embrace the challenge; revel in every twist, even when it’s dizzying, to find an understanding and a true appreciation of the diverse people and opinions that build a community.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Mary Zoloth". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping horizontal line at the end.

Culture is Colorblind and It Changes

Sara Palomino

THE
RACE CARD
PROJECT

Culture is colorblind and it changes.

It seems as though people forget that culture is a dynamic adaptive system that transforms itself according to the ever-changing realities of this world, a process that does not ask you whether you are of a certain color/race to participate. This

is an experiment that goes beyond the color of your skin; it's about self-identity, the love of your parents, the first song you learned how to sing, your neighborhood, friendship/communion, shares valued and dreams, and of course who you follow in twitter. We do not show loyalty to America with our skins; on the contrary, we show allegiance and are united as Americans by our shared belief on the "American Dream." Thereby, the next time you see a Newyorkrican that is $\frac{1}{4}$ Filipino and a little bit Cherokee, smile because he/she is the future of our nation.

THE
RACE CARD
PROJECT

La cultura es daltónica y cambia.

Parece como si la gente se olvida de que la cultura es un sistema dinámico y adaptativo que se transforma de acuerdo a las cambiantes realidades de este mundo, un proceso que no requiere que seas de una raza o color determinado para participar.

Este es un experimento que va más allá del color de su piel. Este experimento es sobre: tu sentido de identidad, el amor de sus padres, la primera canción que aprendiste a cantar, tu barrio, amistades, acciones, valores y sueños compartidos y por supuesto a quien sigues en twitter. No mostramos lealtad a los Estados Unidos con nuestra piel, por el contrario, mostramos lealtad y nos unimos como Estadounidenses por nuestra creencia compartida en el "Sueño Americano". Así que, la próxima veas a un newyorkrican que es $\frac{1}{4}$ Filipino y un poco Cherokee, sonríe porque él o ella es el futuro de nuestra nación.

Releasing Monsters

Doug Woodall

THE
RACE CARD
PROJECT

*What monsters are being
created today?*

I was raised in the LDS faith. When I was growing up, the origin of different skin colors was an important topic. We were taught about it the same way sidebars are used in newspapers and magazines. The subject was important, but it couldn't be a full-length article, lesson, or sermon. Also, the audience had to be friendly. One reason

is we were told dark skin is a curse brought on because of disobedience to God by earlier generations. Another reason is the church refused to ordain blacks to the priesthood.

For many years, the LDS church has tamped down its teachings about race. The change started in 1978 when President Spencer Kimball, the prophet of the church, said he received a revelation where God said he'd removed the curse and black men could have the priesthood. I was happy with the change, but I can say my religious upbringing didn't make me a racist. For most of my life, I thought this was true for everyone I knew from church. But in the last decade, I've changed my mind. My current belief is just talking about why God created different skin colors released a monster. Once the monster was released, the church had no control over it. As in my case, the monster bypassed a large swath of people. Others became fearful. Some learned to hate.

I first saw what the monster did about seven years ago. This was when I was shown a flagrant racist letter written by an apostle of the church to the governor of Michigan. The apostle was Elder Delbert L. Stapley, and the governor was George Romney. In the summer of 2010, I saw the monster one more time. This was when I heard an elderly woman talk of her fear at the least and her hate at the most of President Barack Obama. These two instances reminded me I had a glimpse of what it was like to be black and Mormon before 1978. Also, they made me wonder what monsters are being created today.

I got to know Stapley slightly better than most members of the church when I was 19. The place was the Salt Lake City Mission Home on North Temple Street in Salt Lake, and I was there for one week of training prior to going to New Zealand to serve a proselyting mission. While at the Mission Home, a small number of apostles and seventies crossed the street from church headquarters to come speak to us. Most were dour men who used lofty language and spoke of exalted ideals. Not Stapley. He was the one exception who seemed to know who we, mostly 19-year-old males, really were and how we thought.

Stapley told us he served in the Southern States Mission. He went out in 1914 when he was 18. The one story I still remember is Stapley had a companion he disliked. The man was slightly crippled. I believe he had

one leg that was shorter than the other. Also, they often went from one place to the next by walking on the railroad tracks. When his companion was in the lead, Stapley followed by imitating the way he walked. At this point in his speech, Stapley stepped away from the lectern to show us in an exaggerated and mocking way what he did. We all laughed. Stapley told us more of his antics, and the sum of his stories made us love him.

Starting the day Stapley visited the Mission Home, I treasured him. Then I was introduced to the letter he wrote to Governor Romney. His letter is typed, probably by his secretary, on church stationary. The date is January 23, 1964. At the time, Congress was debating legislation that became the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Romney was for the legislation; Stapley was opposed.

"He says he's concerned about Romney's position on civil rights. The main reason is it doesn't square with Joseph Smith's teachings."

Stapley writes respectfully. He says he cannot speak for President David McKay, the prophet of the church. All he can do is speak for himself. He says he's concerned about Romney's position on civil rights. The main reason is it doesn't square with Joseph Smith's teachings. At this juncture, Stapley gives the titles and page numbers of two books where Romney can read the first prophet's own words about blacks. The first book is *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith* by Joseph Fielding Smith, pages 269 and 270; and the second is *History of the Church* where Joseph Smith is the author and B.H. Roberts is the editor, pages 436 to 440. Stapley's next thought is about the last three U.S. presidents who worked for "the Negro cause." He says, "I am sobered by their demise." He continues by telling the story of a friend who wasn't LDS but believed McKay was a prophet of God. Stapley says he "was a great champion of the colored race," and "he had a very tragic end by drowning." The message of what happened to the presidents and the friend is clear: God will destroy those who work against his will. For me, the worst statement in the letter is the following: "It is not right to force any class or race of people upon those of a different social order or race classification. People are happier when placed in the environment and association of like interests, racial instinct, habits, and natural groupings."

The woman who spoke disparagingly about Obama was 84 years old, and I met her in August 2010. She was in a class I taught on writing personal essays. All my students were senior citizens who wanted to write for Salt Lake County Aging Services Silver Pen Contest. The theme was "Then & Now." Contestants were asked to write about how the world was at a time in their past and how it is today.

"On the last election night," the woman said about the presidential election of 2008 to me in class, "I cried most of the night."

Because I couldn't decide what caused her to cry, I asked her to tell me more.

"To think," she said, "one of those people is sitting in the Oval Office."

She took a few seconds to ponder and then added, “That’s not something I can write about, is it?”

“No, you cannot,” I said sternly.

“I know,” she said, “but I remember a time when a black man couldn’t walk across the campus at BYU.”

“Thank goodness times have changed,” I said and went back to teaching.

I have a dim memory of what it was like before 1978. One reason is in June it’ll be 36 years since Kimball said God spoke to him and another reason is all my lessons about race were academic. My world was filled with white-and brown-skinned people. Except for two brief times, no blacks went to my schools or lived near my house. Then New Zealand didn’t have many blacks. That’s where I was living in 1978. I recall one of the big stories on the news and in the newspapers in June that year was about Raymond Clinton Phillips, 16 years old, of Wellington. He was born in Montreal, Canada, to a white mother and black father, and he was the first black person in New Zealand to be ordained to the priesthood. Because he was a student at the LDS church’s boarding school in Hamilton, I can only wonder what it was like for him. All the male students at his school were ordained deacons at age 12, teachers at age 14, and priests at age 16. For four years and through no fault or transgression of his own, Raymond was left out.

I am grateful the race monster my church released didn’t catch me. When I first read Stapley’s letter, I lost a person I was fond of and to some degree admired. Then I still have a difficult time believing a prim and proper elderly woman could ever say, “To think, one of those people is sitting in the Oval Office.” Before that day, I had no clue there was a time when a black man couldn’t walk across the campus of Brigham Young University. Then I wonder what Phillips must have felt when he saw young men no better than himself be given offices and privileges he couldn’t have. When he was born, the church said one drop of African blood was enough to exclude a man from the priesthood.

The sum of Stapley, the 84-year-old woman in my class, and Phillips makes me wonder what monsters are being released today. One instantly comes to my mind. As in the case of blacks, the LDS faith says it knows the origin of LGBTQ people and they are not entitled to equal rights. Their attacks are relentless. They even have the gall to say the First Amendment gives religion more rights than the individual. Never mind the first words of the Constitution, which were there before any amendment, are, “We the People.” This new monster has caught a large number of people. Their fear and hate might last their entire life. They might pass it on to the next generation. All I can say is heaven save us from all monsters that spread fear and hate.

Doug Woodall is a longtime volunteer for SLCC’s Community Writing Center. Currently he’s one of the mentors for Gay Writes, a DiverCity Series writing group. Doug is active in Toastmasters International. He’s won multiple speech contests, and is close to finishing his Advanced Communicator Gold designation. For more than two decades, Doug has worked in a number of positions for three different property and casualty insurance companies. Doug has traveled extensively. His favorite place in the world is New Zealand. When it comes to hobbies, Doug says, “I’ve lived my entire life outdoors.” When he has to be indoors, he likes to read, write, and challenge his math skills.

Take A Lesson From The Dead

Bailey James

THE
RACE CARD
PROJECT

*Take A Lesson From The
Dead.*

Listen.

A land that was once declared free,
Dragged the chains of hostility.

Listen.

Fifty thousand men baring their souls, These
stained red fields burned like hot coals.

Listen.

Smoke and lead pouring through their bodies,
Boys too young to see past physical inequalities.

Listen.

Pain and hatred destroyed each one,
This disunity of men is more than done.

Listen.

Take a lesson from the dead,
Love one another before YOU fall into the same rotting bed.

Listen!

I Want to be Japanese, too!

Linda Waters

THE
RACE CARD
PROJECT

*I want to be Japanese,
too!*

They lived down the street, and around the block.
The Yoshidas, and Miradas were exceptionally quiet.
They seemed especially nice, polite and kind,
even to a five year old.

The families were different, never loud,
never butting into our daily lives,
never dropping in unexpected,
like the other neighbors did.

Their yards were neat, bushes nicely shaped.
Same silver-green bushes we had, theirs were pretty.
I walked by each day
looking for someone to say “hi” to.
If I wandered up the pruned walkway,
peeked into their backyard,
I might see the small man
hunched over his tidy Koi pond,
or reaching high atop a ladder, picking apricots.

One day he motioned, inviting me to see his fish.
I passed by a carved figure, concrete, just my height.
Who was this, why was he sitting in the center of the yard?
Not wanting to be rude, I turned my head, pretended not to notice.

On my next birthday, a young boy, Steven,
knocked on my door with his mother.
She was beautiful, willowy like the trees.
Her ebony hair pulled back in a perfect bun,
bright red sticks holding it in place.
Her face was dressed in a gentle smile.
The shape of her eyes caught me quite by surprise.
I’d been teased for my squinty blue eyes for so long.

When I laughed they nearly closed.
Hers were perfectly formed, God made them, just so!
Mine must've been a mistake, so I was taught.

She placed a gift at my feet with a graceful bow.
Wrapped in thin gold foil, a treasure to unfold,
I gasped...so grand a present!
My own sun-yellow and red-swirl paper parasol!
Now I was certain, being Japanese was best.
I want to be just like you, I mused.
Really, more than ever, I declared,
"I want to be Japanese, too!"

After 28 years with AT&T, and raising two daughters, Linda Waters pursued her heart's passion for promoting peace. She loves traveling extensively as a training facilitator, with an emphasis on developing human potential. Linda believes that her grandsons and children everywhere deserve to thrive, and strives to act on their behalf, knowing it's easier to "say" than "do". Her hope is through increased awareness, hands on educational tools, and mutual support the World can be a kinder and healthier place for all generations to come.

Welcome Back Students

Caz Ondra

THE
RACE CARD
PROJECT

*The First Day of your
Future...*

I leaned into the heavy door and pushed my way to a sense of freedom only felt at 2:48 in the afternoon. I had officially survived my first day of high school. I laughed out loud, talking excitedly with a friend about our new teachers and that huge assignment

we already had in Honors English. Students gathered at the front of the school as parents siphoned, one car at a time, through the carpool circle. We were the lucky ones—oblivious to our own luxury for having stay-at-home moms who dedicated their afternoons to picking us up from school; the same moms that ensured we were wearing the right clothes for a first day impression that would mark the next four years of our lives.

The weather had already cooled slightly, proving that a Carolina Fall was just around the corner. A few dozen students stood among their friends, sorted by various cliques. Most of us were oblivious to just how well we had it; oblivious to the idea that anyone had a life different from us. We lived among the words that made our parents hot under the collar—like “bussing”—without understanding why it even mattered.

My mom thought it was best for my sibling and me to stop riding the bus year prior. I was in fourth grade at the time. Back then, my siblings were recent transfers from a private school in Red Springs. They started attending the same high school I now attended, riding the bus home like everyone else until my sister came home in hysterics. I was sitting on a stool at the kitchen counter watching afternoon cartoons as I mindlessly ate the fresh fruit my mom cut up for me as a snack. I paused for a long moment, my hand still in the strawberry bowl as I watched my brother walk directly past us with a pissed off look on his face. Looking down at his feet with nothing to say, he ran up the back set of stairs, disappearing from the kitchen where my mother stood, trying to calm my sister. I ignored them, listening to the sound of my brother’s heavy footsteps walk the length of the house and shut the room to his door with a loud thud.

I stared at the ceiling, looking in the direction of his room with concern before returning to my afternoon snack, attempting to go unnoticed in my attempt to translate my sister’s frightened rambling into something that actually made sense. Apparently, students surrounded my siblings on the bus, aggressively accusing them of being slave owners. There were a lot of words I didn’t understand as she lowered her voice

periodically in her explanation. All I could hear was, “They called us.... and then the accused of being... haters. I tried to tell them we weren’t like that! We weren’t from here!” Although I couldn’t understand every word my sister was saying, I understood enough to know my brother went into hiding, dejected by his inability to fight back here, in this place we now lived, where he was no longer a big fish in a small sea and the idea of fighting reached beyond a once macho display into the realms of life or death. It was something I heard my dad say once after a day of school where some high school boys had intimidated my sister with some inappropriate behavior. Back home, he stood up for us. Back home, no one came to school with the plan to kill someone.

So there I stood with little regard as to whether or not I would have a better first week of high school here than my brother and sister had so many years prior. I had plenty of friends. I had known these same kids since elementary school. We wore the same clothes. We shopped at the same stores. We came from many different backgrounds and all had one thing in common—the constant competition to be top of our class. Our lives were simple; clueless towards the amount of hatred that existed around us.

Before I could join in complaining about our seemingly endless homework, I noticed someone running towards the school from the far side of the carpool circle. He was probably a student. I assumed he was running back towards school to avoid being caught behind the small, red church across the street where it was common knowledge that kids from all backgrounds skipped class to smoke a bowl or share a drink. With one hand, he held his pants to his waist, dodging barely moving cars briefly as he jumped to the front curb of the school, cut right, and took off even faster down the front side walk with little regard for anyone who stood in his way.

I looked after him, barely in sight now, when a student to the side of me stumbled backwards, into my brand new, bright yellow book bag. I reacted, reaching out just slightly to help him stabilize himself. I thought the mysterious running student must’ve shoved him aside as he jumped to the curb. The student attempted to step away from my book bag, stumbling still as he fell forward with one hand to the side of his head. A car horn blared, cutting through the moment as if to announce a sudden instinct of fear. The student nearly fell into the street as his foot slid off the curb. He reached out towards the car parked just in front of him. With the sudden twist of his ankle, he fell back and hit the ground with an audible crack. A rush of clear and dark liquids streamed from his skull towards the tips of my shoes. Reality caught up to my senses and with little warning, I too fell to the ground.

I woke to the faces of three cheerleaders knelt over me in the front lobby. “She’s awake!” they announced. My sister was the cheer coach. She came to my side, slowly helping me to my feet with a slight laugh,

joking that they thought they had lost me too. There was no need to explain. I knew what had happened. My mind pieced it together though the sharp pains of a post-adrenaline headache. I had passed out and now that I was awake, I was a witness to how the seemingly innocent Mexican boy on the curb was pronounced dead after a young, black boy rushed the front platform to punch him in his temple, using a combination lock as a makeshift pair of brass knuckles.

Everything had happened in a matter of seconds. It was the first time I had seen a fight and most certainly the first time I had witnessed anyone die right in front of me. Shocked, I sat in the front office of the school holding myself as if in a blizzard. I watched as everyone moved on with their lives as if nothing had happened. To them, it seemed like a sad excuse to shuffle around more paperwork - the only noticeable difference to any other day. There would be no news coverage. To the news, it was just another day, the story wasn't special and the high school certainly didn't want the responsibility of bad PR. I didn't understand.

To me, it was a turning point of the reality I perceived. My innocence was captured by a brief visit to a reality that once moved past me and now, nearly swallowed me whole. When their version of the story was described to me based on the accounts of other witnesses, all I could do was nod in silent agreement. No one wanted to know why. The why was already explained and seemingly allowed by the fact that it happened between a black student and a Mexican student. Even the authorities seemed to operate as if it had nothing to do with them and would be best to just stay out of it. None of it seemed real. I hardly believed it for myself until my sister walked me through that same heavy front door with one hand rested reassuringly on my back and then I saw the dark, reddish-purple stain of an obvious hand-print at the hood of a parked car and an already forgotten stain on the now empty platform. There was only the sound of a large, vinyl banner waving back and forth in a light, summer breeze. Distracted by the sound, I burst into tears as I read the sign as if for the first time, "Welcome Back Students! The First Day of your Future..."

"It was the first time I had seen a fight and most certainly the first time I had witnessed anyone die right in front of me."

DADDY, PEOPLE DON' T HAVE ANY COLOR !

Jim Kelley

THE
RACE CARD
PROJECT

*Daddy, People Don't
Have Any Color!*

When my daughter, Pamela, was little we used to both enjoy our weekly adventures. ("Bentures" as she would call them.) We would go for ice cream, or take the bus downtown, or check out the airport. We'd work on her vocabulary and skills she'll

need when she is a mom by preparing a gourmet lunch of macaroni and cheese with hot dogs and work on a more exotic name for it. I always had fun giving her new words and watching her get her mind and tongue around them. I loved showing her the world and seeing it filtered through her glacier green eyes.

One "benture" I remember particularly well. Pam was just learning her colors. I'd point to something and ask, What color is that? or she would point to something and tell me the color. Green was, and still is, her favorite. Sky is kinda blue. Cars are really blue. New blue jeans are kinda black. I just had to hear what she would say as I looked into her intelligent eyes and held my tanned arm against her delicate pink one, "What color are we, Pam?" I asked "What color are people?"

She seemed annoyed that her Dad, who knows everything, would ask such a dumb question. "Dad," she explained authoritatively, "People don't have any color." "People are just plain."

Oh this is just too good to pass up, I thought as I discretely pointed to a nearby dark skinned couple. "What color are they?"

If I had been a more experienced parent I would have easily recognized the early symptoms of "teenage eye roll syndrome" as she exasperatedly declared, "D-a-d-d-y, People don't have any color!! People are just plain!"

I was staring. I don't think I was saying it out loud, the way I do when I don't understand something, but I might have been. Where did she learn to not sort people by color? Not from me. I'm the one who taught her the word for "idiot driver" that got us both in trouble with her Mother. If it's learned, she got it from her Mother who is so loving and accepting of everyone – especially children.

I am sure she can see the colors. She doesn't know the clichés like; sky blue or metallic blue or indigo. I'll bet if I took flesh colored paint and mixed some with pink, some with sienna and some with burnt umber then put it on paper, she would be able to describe the color for me. But on people they are just plain.

Did I once know that? When did I forget it?

Wouldn't this world be a better place if we all had the wisdom of my young daughter. People don't have any color. People are just plain.

I gotta write this down before I forget it. No pencil. Repeat it several times to remember it. People don't have any color. People are just plain.

Changes

Gabriel Omar Laurel

THE
RACE CARD
PROJECT

*Nothing has changed,
racism still remains.*

Nothing has changed, racism still remains.
I walk the streets the same, head held up
high, color is no shame. These white people
need to change, how long will they oppress
America's going fate? Immigrants founded
this place, who are you to put a color code

on this space? America the land of the free where you can live and
see what racism has grown to be. Black and Brown people aren't the
only ones shooting in these streets. Your fellow white man is killing all
our growing seed. They do as they please, white is all they fucking see.
America the home of the brave and land of the free will never be what
you wished it could be. Living day by day waiting for my people to stop
living like the modern day slave. Its time for change, things can never
remain, will I live to see another day, to tell the story of how I was made,
or get taken out by the white man today and be forgotten like a slave.

People Should Be Treated the Same

Alex Obradovich

THE
RACE CARD
PROJECT

*People should be treated
the same.*

In the past, people have not allowed colored people to play many sports or have discriminated against them in other ways. For example, in the 1936 Olympics, Hitler and the Nazi party said that their white athletes were far superior to the other black

ones. Another example is baseball and other sports the leagues were white only. People have thought colored people are inferior in many ways. They are wrong, and you will soon find out why.

Colored athletes are no different in ability than their white counterparts. For instance, as stated above, the Nazi party said that their white athletes were far superior to the colored ones. However, Jessie Owens proved him wrong, winning gold in 100-meter sprint, 200-meter sprint, long jump, and 100 by four relay, beating out the other white athletes. Also, MLB would not allow black people to play until 1945, when Jackie Robinson played his first year in pro baseball. In his career, he had six All Star team selections, led the league in steals twice, led in batting once, and was inducted into the Hall of Fame. It would be hard to argue that these athletes were athletically inferior to the white athletes.

The leagues and conditions black athletes had to play in were not nearly as good as the white-only leagues. The Negro Baseball League players rode on old buses to games and sometimes had to sleep on them because white hotel owners would not let them stay in their hotel. Also, they faced abuse from white people, who would call them nasty names and taunt them. They had to live with that, like most black people, and had to play a sport under it as well, which must have required immense willpower. The athletes who integrated pro sports were very brave and had to put up with a lot.

The discrimination of the black athletes and all blacks of that time was a violation of the 14th Amendment which states, "...nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws." The racism against black athletes was just representing the larger struggle for civil rights. Separating and mistreating people based on skin color is like separating people based on the color of your hair. It wouldn't be right to give people with blond hair less rights than people with brown hair, right? It is just the same with skin color. All people, regardless of skin color, race, or religion, should be treated the same.

Some people disagreed that blacks should be treated equally. They only have few arguments to support their stand, as most of their hate is based on decades of a sort of traditional hatred of black people. Their major argument is that the conditions were separate, but equal. This was not true, however, as the old buses of the teams, and the schools of that time show (black students received less public funding per student than white students.) Separate was true, but equal was not.

As a rule, it is not right to mistreat and segregate people based on physical properties like hair or skin color. However, since the abolishment of slavery, people have segregated black people in the form of sports as well as other things. When sports were integrated, it was a major step in the battle for civil rights. In conclusion, it is not right to discriminate based on race.

Doctor Derp and His Evil Minions

Nick Obradovich

THE
RACE CARD
PROJECT

Doctor Derp and his evil minions.

Doctor Derp, (aka Hitler) chases people to spread his evil hate around, in a deadly game. When he catches someone he wraps him in his evil hate and turns him into an evil Derp minion.

When a minion catches someone, he holds him down, so Hitler can come and wrap him in his evil hate, too. There's a lot of wrapping people in hate, until there are only a few good people left. Those people left have to overthrow the evil hate by thinking of the people they love.

When Hitler comes around and tries to wrap them in his evil hate, the love overthrows evil, and Hitler can't wrap people in hate any more. The evil minions become good again.

Some races hate other races, like Doctor Derp (aka Hitler). He wanted to overthrow the world because he hated other races. Only love for each other can overthrow hate.

If Hitler ever comes around to your door, remember all the people you love and try to spread it around the world.

When The Jews Came To Utah

David E. Moore

THE
RACE CARD
PROJECT

*When the Jews Came to
Utah.*

I graduated from the University of Utah College of Medicine in 1977. When I was applying to the “U,” I had the good fortune to be friends with Bill DeVries and Cecil Samuelson. If you know of these guys, you know how lucky I was. Both of them

told me that the “U” was a much better school, with a much better national reputation than one would expect given its provincial location. As evidence to this “fact,” they offered two names: Max Wintrobe and Louie Goodman, two exceptionally famous, published doctors. I thought it was odd that Utah had these important teachers, and wondered why.

In 1942, a decision was made to expand the Utah College of Medicine from a 2 year trade school to a 4 year professional institution: make it into real medical school with research and everything. This created a crisis of recruiting an expanded and qualified faculty. There’s a legend which suggests how this task was accomplished.

At that time, if you were a Jewish academic at a first rate medical institution on the East Coast, there was a glass ceiling limiting advancement within medical departments regardless of your qualifications. You were stuck serving your WASPy nominal superiors (often intellectual inferiors) as an associate professor. Someone in power at the “U,” I don’t know who, got a bright idea. A Utah raiding party was sent to Johns Hopkins medical school to court smart, young, angry, Jewish, academic clinicians. They were offered the opportunity to come to the backwaters of Utah and become full professors and department chairmen immediately. It worked. They came in 1943 and effectively created the Utah College of Medicine as a modern school.

The afore mentioned pair, Wintrobe and Goodman, had already edited and written the “Bibles” of Hematology (Wintrobe, 1942) and Pharmacology (Goodman and Gilman, 1943) for the nation and probably the world: I’m not exaggerating. Ask any doc from that era. Wintrobe went on to edit Harrison’s Internal Medicine in 1950, a big deal in medical education. They came to Utah with a number of their colleagues. I didn’t know who the others were when I first heard about it. Frankly, I wondered if the story was true; but I wanted it to be true.

Twenty years later, I was practicing Orthopedics in St. George. A retired U of U academic surgeon named David Dolowitz came to see me. I asked him if he practiced during Wintrobe’s era. “Yes” he said. “Dolowitz,” I said, “That’s a Jewish name isn’t it?” He nodded

cautiously. "Did you happen to be at Johns Hopkins before coming to Utah?" He answered "yes," and I responded that "I've heard this legend." I repeated it to him; asking whether it was true. He told me "I was one of them. Sixteen of us came. Most all stayed."

After the glass ceiling fell, Harvard, Yale, Johns Hopkins, and the rest of the East Coast elite came to Utah courting to no avail...karma. I had the good fortune to be taught by both of the "big two" professors during my four years at the medical school. I remember being assigned to review the diagnosis and treatment of a VA patient with pernicious anemia to Wintrobe. To me, and many others, he was the foremost hematologist known to man. I was rightly terrified. I read his text carefully and paraphrased it as I presented the patient. He was nice to me: he only made me squirm a little.

I recall hearing a talk in church that suggested that "Right things should be done for the right reasons," I suppose it was a cautionary principle against hypocrisy. It seems to me that a very good thing "the Jews coming to Utah" had happened—for doctors in training and a great many patients in this state. And this "very good thing" seemed to have happened for the wrong reason: Racism in the form of anti-Semitism in the East. Personally, I've ceased to worry about "wrong reasons" and become content when right things happen. Hell, most the time, I'm not sure why I do anything, let alone the reasons why others do things! Good things happening for any reason is good enough. This was one.

I, David Earl Moore, am a retired orthopedic surgeon, father of seven children, and husband of Linda. Every Friday afternoon, I volunteer at the free Hope Clinic in Sandy. I grew up in Ogden, went to MIT to become an engineer, built parts for space ships, got a MSPH at UNC, an MD at the U, practiced orthopedics, and experienced as many of Utah's canyons as my legs would allow. I've noticed that I'm getting old, but I aspire to deny it as gracefully as I can.

He Never Called Me A Jap

Linda Waters

THE
RACE CARD
PROJECT

*He never called me a
jap.*

He crawled through the jungle,
trained to kill on site
snipers tied to treetops
well concealed, dense,
dark, rain soaked,
cloaked in mud.

Three days,
his hunger fed
by smoky artillery,
and buckets of hate,
hold the next inhale
in case it's the last.

A blast, his buddy
lay limp twenty feet
straight ahead,
crawled forward,
head tucked,
he grabbed
what was left of an arm,
drug him to safety,
already too late.

Fueled by fiery grit,
a pact to fulfill,
lunged toward the bunker,
shot his foe,
smack in the face,
Hellzapoppin'
the next blast, down,
a damn bitter fate.

It took six months
to get back to the states,
stretcher bound,
dodging torpedoes,
ships sunk all around,
he found nothing
close to smile about.

He yelled “no!”
when they said
they’d take off his leg.
Months in traction,
then full body cast,
he fought for his sanity,
a new bride bedside,
Purple Heart and Silver Star
near his ever-present
bottle of rose colored wine.

Time moved on,
days upon days,
restless nights, five kids,
a pain-laden limp, lugging along,
an unusually ordinary life.

Lopsided, jaw clenched,
he planted both feet,
taking a solid stand,
for lasting peace.

Swift end to fifty-three years
of unspoken pain,
his last breath, final, serene.
Twenty-one gun sendoff,
Marines in military suits,
doubtful this gesture
was one he’d approve.

His box, left to rest
on a west coast hill,
peered over the sea
that carried him home,
from those blood-soaked isles,
distant ghosts.

Shen, his old workmate, slipped by,
whispering, wiping his eyes,
“How did he do it,
when he was trained to hate?
He never called me a jap...Not once!
I will not forget..
A true buddy...the best I ever had.

He never called me a jap.”

for Dad...M.L.Waters 1/19/14

Race is a Narrative Still Unfolding.

Zendina Mostert

THE
RACE CARD
PROJECT

*Race is a narrative still
unfolding.*

Just because race is one story today doesn't mean it is the same story tomorrow or the next. And just because our grandmothers or fathers had one story doesn't mean we can't have a different one all together. And our children? They can define an entirely

different world; we don't have to pass on the same racial baggage and untruths that have seeped into our vernacular.

I am an ethnographer, which means, I collect stories. I believe that stories, copious amounts of stories from all the individual perspectives and corners of the world, are what will save us from ourselves. Stories are what connect us to the bigger picture of humanity and remind us that there is so much more beyond what we can see, or what we experience. And that truth is elusive, not ours alone.

For many years we have segregated our narratives from each other. We talk about race (or don't talk about race) amongst the people that look like us and feel like us. The people that we can relate to. We seek out people of color to comment on race but that is only part of the story, and therefore, only part of the solution. For change to happen, white people need to be able to share their story, work through their guilt, shame, anger and even indifference to be a part of the conversation.

There is power in context, the reason behind our actions or feelings. Every frame of reference is equally valid. Stories encourage us to ask more questions, or seek a different perspective, which in turn, cultivates our humaneness. Stories start with the individual, but they grow big enough to redefine the society we aspire to be. So, when we decide to change the story, we need a more inclusive approach.

We need everyone at the table.

Sick of Being Silenced by Guilt

Kaya Hartley

THE
RACE CARD
PROJECT

*Sick of being silenced by
guilt.*

While I completely agree that racism and discrimination towards minority groups are still huge problems in America today, I also believe that 'reverse racism' is another existing problem that nobody talks about, or wants to acknowledge.

Because for me, a white female, if I were to come out and say that I have experienced reverse racism I would be considered ignorant, self absorbed, and racist. BUT, for me, a white female to come out and say that I am an advocate for minority groups, and share my opinions on racial discrimination, I am not taken seriously. I have been told that I 'have no idea what it's like' so therefore I have no right to advocate, because I can't relate.

It seems to me that no matter where I stand on race, I am silenced. I am stuck in this middle because I am guilted into the mindset that because my ancestors and society treats certain ethnic groups wrongly, I am also in the wrong. I can't speak out for whites, because that's racist, and I can't speak out for minorities, because I'm naïve.

Everybody Has an Opinion That Matters

Julie Liljenquist

THE
RACE CARD
PROJECT

*Everybody has an opinion
that matters.*

Regardless of our skin colors, I believe we are all people. We all deserve to be treated the same way as we ourselves want others to treat us. I know people of different colored skins who bleed from the inside because of the way people treat them—these people

don't feel like their opinions count.

We all have opinions. Everybody has different opinions about something. I think all people's opinions matter. Our opinions should matter no matter where we come from or the color of our skin.

We are all the same. We bleed the same color of blood. We drink from the same water. We catch no germs from those who are of color. Unless we allow ourselves to think differently about the color of a person's skin, the whole world will be stuck with the opinion that skin color makes a difference.

The color of people's skin makes no difference to me. Don't let the color of a person's skin keep you from accepting his opinion. If you have an opinion, please express it to a person of color. Make them feel valuable and accepted by listening to their opinions. Everybody's opinion matters.

Meanings of Race That Matter

Gary Howard

THE RACE CARD
PROJECT

*Meanings of race that
matter*

Race should be irrelevant, but isn't. The only race that should matter, as many have observed, is the human one—but try trying to end discussion or debate after saying that, and you find yourself right back where you started—curiously unfinished, incomplete,

up against an impervious barrier somehow able to reach out defensively to engulf your consciousness.

It is a baffling, indecipherable enigma, and the more we seek to unravel the innumerable threads comprising any pattern, the more entangled and ensnared we may become.

Why should we think that we can begin to get close to a serious apprehension and understanding of this issue, and yet I suppose we must try—as NPR's Michelle Norris has proposed. Nothing less may be at stake, at least for Americans, than defining our place within history, or our relationship with it. But again, there are no clear, uncluttered paths—only varying degrees of obstruction and disorientation.

So as complex and problematic as the subject of race has been in American history, and in the entire context of human history as well, the only redeeming option now is to focus on what has been gained, and on what we as Americans are becoming. This to me represents our best hope for escaping the inexhaustible blindness, ignorance, and cruelty of the past, and moving steadily toward a shared humanity, a united community of covenant and purpose.

There are, of course, no guarantees. Social psychologists and many others have argued that humans are nothing if not infinitely resourceful in their creation and perpetuation of scapegoats, and targets to hate. There is nothing yet to suggest that humans have abandoned this ravenous predisposition, and race is as paramount as any factor in stimulating our appetites.

Such luminaries and heroes as Robert Reich, Paul Krugman, and Joseph Stiglitz have patiently and steadfastly exposed “the politics of inequality” that many oligarchs have mobilized in pursuing a ruthless and relentless agenda. Much of this agenda is aimed squarely at race, though massive efforts are always made to conceal and obfuscate. Thus, the importance of a Jimmy Carter operative in secretly revealing the narcissistic arrogance of a Mitt Romney, or the blunderbuss stupidity of a Donald Trump. And, yes, one must allow that not all opposition to Obama is predicated on obscene vitriol and racist demagoguery. The

President is sometimes his own worst enemy in sabotaging what he epitomizes, champions, and defends.

But, the essential lesson here may be what Obama has been perceived to symbolize and uphold, namely an America incrementally growing more comfortable about its many diverse expressions of identity, not only in race, but in gender, sexual orientation, and belief structure (e.g.: from institutionally religious to non-religious to spiritual to atheist to secular).

So, the continuing story seems to be that we are becoming more accepting and inclusive (in the midst of our political and ideological polarizations) of our differences and our sameness. Differences in that we hail from a collective hodgepodge of racial and ethnic origins and identities; sameness in that DNA has disclosed, more definitively than ever before, how much we are all alike, how the only genetic markers that matter show how much we all share and have in common.

This, therefore, should be good news, notwithstanding our creative genius for stirring up divisiveness, viciousness, and indiscriminate aggression. There is no sign yet that these are slated for extinction in spite of Steven Pinker's hopeful forecast in *Better Angels of Our Nature* that our violence as the human race has declined, and that sunnier climes await us. To be fair, I'm wondering if Dr. Pinker has adequately factored in ferocious global competition for shrinking resources, the scientifically immutable reality of global climate change, and the unending human quest for more—i.e. power, greed, conquest, inexorable innovation and change. Is it realistic to believe that these perils, both within and without, many of our own making, can be blunted and/or deterred? The answer for now is...undetermined.

So, to conclude, there is evidence that we can make substantive progress toward racial integration and amalgamation as we set aside old boundaries, hostilities, and artificialities (as idealistic and wishful as this still may sound), and strive to resolve the greater challenges confronting our survival and our world's, as formidable and inseparable as these are.

To reiterate, there are no guarantees. Our impediments are immense, perhaps impossible. But, to the degree that we ALL affirm and celebrate our unique and universal membership in the only race that matters, the odds can be tilted toward the only promise we can make ourselves, a reasonable and sustained expectation of success.

Race is Only So Deep

Jesse Lovato

THE
RACE CARD
PROJECT

*...the color of my skin
mattered.*

As a young child, I didn't know about racism. I lived in Kearns. My family was the only Hispanic family in an area with Anglos, Chinese, Puerto Ricans, and Greeks. We boys got along well. It never occurred to me that there was a difference in people.

I first watched Martin Luther King Jr. give a speech on TV in 1964. I remember him talking about equality. I didn't understand what he meant by equality until I went to junior high.

My initial experience with racism came from what I saw on TV. I saw a lot of beatings of different people of color in Georgia and other southern states. This started me to realize that the color of my skin mattered.

My first encounter with racism was in junior high. At age twelve, I quickly learned about the color of my skin and that it makes a big difference. I began to notice discrimination in my own school towards people with darker skin and disabilities.

This made me angry.

To be treated equal, I had to fight for my rights in more ways than one. The difficulties I had to endure were sometimes in words and sometimes in physical encounters.

In school, this meant fighting for my rights for a good education. My peers would make fun of me and embarrass me. Fortunately for me, I was good in high school sports and the coaches and teachers passed me along. Unfortunately, I didn't better my education.

What Color is Underneath the Skin?

Nicole Brown

THE RACE CARD
PROJECT

*What color is underneath
the skin?*

What is race, is it the color of my skin? Does it have to do with the way I dress and talk? Is my race based on the geographical location of where I live currently, or is it where my ancestry generates from? Am I classified by the group of people I choose

to associate myself with? My religious group, the values and beliefs that I have adopted into my life, do these things help determine what race I belong to? Merriam-Webster's Dictionary describes race as: a class or kind of people unified by shared interests, habits, or characteristics. Do I agree? Do you agree? I believe that race is an idea we have created as a group of people to divide ourselves. We do this to not to intentionally alienate others but to help ourselves appease the quenching desire found deep within each of us to feel accepted. It is a paradox to divide ourselves in the cause of unity.

In reality, if we were to pull back the skin and remove all the things we have allowed to divide us, we would see exactly the same thing. We would see that we all have a powerful brain and a strong heart that undoubtedly has been broken. We would see that every human being that has ever lived, is now living, and ever will live on the earth has had to overcome heartbreak, fears, challenges, struggles, and insecurities. These fears and struggles may be very different for each person but that is what makes each of us interesting, it makes us a unique individual.

The day that we can look past all of these divisions and see what is on the inside, to see that the color underneath the skin is the same, and learn to cherish each other and learn from each other's different experiences, the day we can look past our outward appearance and see what's on the inside, see the reality that we are more the same than we are different and to celebrate differences instead of alienate and look down upon them. That is what I believe Martin Luther King's dream was and when we can achieve that it will be the day we see Mr. King's dream fulfilled.

Regardless of our skin color, each of us has within ourselves the power to influence others for good or bad. Each "race" is equally capable of performing criminal acts and demanding entitlement. These stereotypes we have pinned to only one skin color should be pinned to something much bigger the entire "human race." The solution to racism is to stop dividing ourselves from one another and recognizing how we truly are one in the same.

Let's Become Blind and Love Everyone

Nelly Victoria Potenciano-Cortez

THE
RACE CARD
PROJECT

*Let's become blind and
love everyone.*

My life, my dreams, depend of how society sees me.
Have I tried to show them the meaning of success, yes!
And yet they still see me as a threat, why?
I have thought and wonder why? Would I be the outsider?
I have grown to the words of liberty and freedom.
Liberty to have dreams and accomplishments,
I have Freedom to speak my thoughts.
The dreams that I once had were crushed.

My skin color is different from yours and everyone else's
However I feel proud of the color of my skin
Different colors like a beautiful rainbow.
My culture is different, we all know
We had success stories why not pay attention to that?
My last name does not sound important, that does not mean I am not.
I have saluted our flag many times with no hate however with much love.
I have shown you the progress of things we can do
Yet you ignore our voices because of our accent.

Maybe if you become blind you will recognize me,
I am the one that gives you a smile, with no care of your color.
If you were blind you would let me walk next to you, telling me the
stories of the past
If you were blind you would feel my presence and you would not mind
where I am from
Oh if you were blind you would let me stay here
Where I belong, were I feel that am from.

If you were blind, I would have become a greater person in life,
With no problems no one holding me back.
Only if you were blind you would cherish
That picture in your head, with the people around you.
If we were all blind, love will be for each other.

Not caring who you are from the outside, only the inside
With no terror, that I will be judged for my hair, my color, my culture.
As long as our image in our head is clear and we only hear
The heart beat you will know that I am exactly like you
If only you were blind you would love us equally
If only you were blind we would see each other with
Love and respect, like I look at you.

Interracial Marriage

Noosha Shahini

THE
RACE CARD
PROJECT

...people of different
races holding hands...

Nowadays, many people from different nationalities and cultures get married together. As we all know, immigration creates cultural diversity, also the internet is a great tool for meeting people as well. Many countries are composed of various

ethnic groups and mixed cultures, especially the United States.

There are 215 nations in the world, and every one of them has someone living in the United States. New York City has over 170 distinct ethnic communities. Houston has two radio stations that broadcast in Chinese and a daily newspaper that prints in Chinese. Nearly 61 percent of the people of Miami were born outside the United States. More than 32 million people in the United States speak a language other than English at home. Asian Americans make up 45 percent of first-year students at The University of California, Berkeley. (Lucas 22-28)

In today's world, it is not a novelty and unusual to see people of different races holding hands and going about their daily lives. Interracial marriage has become a common trend in society. "By the middle of the nineteenth century, so many people from so many lands had come to the United States that novelist Herman Melville exclaimed, 'You cannot spill a drop of American blood without spilling the blood of the whole world'" (Lucas, 22-28). In society, it is necessary that people know how they should communicate and understand differences between two cultures. Interracial marriage can enhance people's views of the world, help them learn multiple languages, and advance their cultural understanding.

Interracial marriage can reduce the distance between cultures. It is a great way to get wider experience with diverse culture such as food, poetry, dance, religion, etc. Because it can give you a new perspective on life. When you get to know another race and different background, you will share your thoughts and feelings. It allows you to experience and learn about new cultures and also provide you with an understanding for others that they may not have previously had. Therefore, when people are able to understand one another, I believe it will result in a better and peaceful world, because a strong interracial marriage develops into a powerful family, a powerful family becomes an amazing community and an amazing community creates an incredible nation to the world. What makes interracial marriage interesting is that you can make a richness and unique culture also you can choose the part of culture that you like.

Knowing different cultures and customs brings a new culture with mixed values.

Interracial marriage gives children the opportunity to learn more than one language, so they can communicate with others well and strengthen their relationships because they have greater access to people. "There are as many bilingual children as there are monolingual children and our world is becoming increasingly multilingual. We can consider some of the statistics in the United States that shows 21% of school-age children (between ages 5-17) speak a language other than English at home. This number is projected to increase in the coming years"(Lowry). Also parents can learn another language from their partner. Usually people think in their native tongue and then translate into a second language to speak, sometimes they make mistakes in meaning. So it is valuable for couples to take steps to learn each other's language and improve communication.

Furthermore, interracial marriage helps children understand how people are different and learn judgment. It is very important to teach children justice and equality, so we can increase desire to put racism behind ourselves because it is important to change society's views about personal prejudices. Interracial marriage leads to more understanding between two cultures, so more interracial understanding would reduce levels of racism and make our society more united.

"...more interracial understanding would reduce levels of racism and make our society more united"

I interviewed my host family about multicultural relationships. My host parents are in an interracial marriage and have lived together for about 26 years with four children. The wife was born in Ecuador and the husband is from Utah. Their experiences with interracial marriage are very positive. They have a successful and happy life because they know how to communicate with each other without barriers. When they married, they discussed where they should live and raise their family, because both of them have opportunities for working in their careers and the support of their respective families. Although they have different ways of thinking and kinds of taste, they are able to compromise and do not put obstacles in their way. Also they have a wonderful rapport with their children. They decided to celebrate two cultures and adjust themselves to their way of life with ease. They firmly believe that challenges are prevalent in all relationships. They think misunderstandings can happen for both same-race couples and interracial couples. They also mentioned if we all were like each other in life, it would be a boring world. I actually agree with them because diversity is not only for humans, is abundantly evident for animals

and plants. So cultural diversity can make life more beautiful. They recommend interracial marriage to anyone to increase the chance of marriage around the world because there are more choices for people of different races to meet each other.

Some people think that interracial marriage can create pressure, tension and conflict between couples, because they are from two totally different cultures and religious beliefs, so sometimes forces one side of the couple to leave his or her family to follow the other half. But I believe that an interracial marriage is a marriage like any other and it is all about coming together as two separate people to become one. In every condition, couples should respect their different ideas and create a balance in their decisions. Partners should remain open-minded when facing other religious beliefs because all people have their special beliefs and rituals. They should avoid ethnocentrism and not think that their own nation is better than any other. They should not care about the color of a person's skin, because finding love in the right places and the human race is the important thing. If interracial couples do not minimize their different expectations and paradoxes, children will feel like they do not belong to any parent's ethnic group and they will be confused. Couples should immerse their children in both cultures to the best of their abilities.

Many years ago, interracial marriage in most parts of United States was against the law but nowadays it is legal in all part of the U.S. Unfortunately, in some societies it is still illegal to marry with someone of a different religion especially in Muslim countries. Well-educated people are realizing that freedom to marry is one of the basic and vital personal rights for everyone and laws have been passed banning racial discrimination. Interracial couples should not agree with all cultures and practice of all groups and they can stay in the middle such as a scale that needs balance. So we can understand each other and make a bridge between two cultures.

Interracial couples can create a positive understanding and provide some enriching opportunities for their children's growth. The numbers that I mentioned in my introduction prove the fact of rising interracial marriage and some places have the fastest growth in mixed marriage. All collective races such as Whites, Blacks, Asians, Hispanics, American Indians, etc. represent a majority of the Unites States population. So interracial marriage is not a big deal and all we know some values are universal such as respect, openness, patience, sacrifice, etc. that have an impact on how we observe and understand. We should have a strong understanding of biracial families and treat every one fairly by showing respect to our cultures. We can incorporate every aspects of our partner's culture into our daily life and make life interesting.

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A Wave of Love Overflows Everyone

Nick Obradovich

THE
RACE CARD
PROJECT

*A wave of love overflows
everyone.*

Hate stinks like a squashed tomato

with moldy purple spots.

Hate causes war.

Hate corrupts the mind.

Hate is green and mean like a seasick crocodile.

Hate opposes everything good.

Hate hates love.

If hate gets the right feeling

hate's heart can grow too big

for its peanut size brain.

Then hate pops into a million pieces,

and a wave of love overflows everyone.

Old Habits Do Not Change Overnight

Nicole Brown

THE
RACE CARD
PROJECT

*Old habits do not change
overnight.*

My father was raised in the Deep South, in North Carolina and Florida, he was ten years old when Martin Luther King Jr. gave his “I had a Dream” speech, though he admitted he could barely remember the speech and he had no idea it would

be of such historical significance at the time, I could not think of a better person to discuss race with. Through this encounter I discovered that racism is a habit that doesn’t die overnight. It is dissolving from generation to generation. I feel that racism, no matter how slowly, is fading away and with more time it will be nothing but just the sticky past.

My father remembers very distinctly how his grandpa felt about colored people. My father summed up his grandpa’s opinion by quoting directly from him, “Just soon as shot ‘em as look at ‘em.” My jaw dropped when I had heard this information. “What?! Is this for real?” I thought to myself. I was completely shocked to hear that this kind of comment would come from someone in my family. It is one thing to read about these kinds of comments in a history book and an entirely other thing to hear a first-hand account from my own family.

As we move to the next generation improvement can be seen. My father continued to explain how his family growing up had a black maid and that his father didn’t really have a problem with colored people “as long as they stay in their place everything is ok.” An improvement from the previous statement, yes, but still contains a sense of inequality.

Which brings me to my father in and of himself, today my father claims to have nothing against black people, and until this point in my life, when I actually sat down and had a formal conversation with him about race, I did not believe him because of one comment he would make from time to time. While watching a movie or television show with him, occasionally he would say a comment similar to this one, “Why are there so many black people in this movie?” Growing up, I couldn’t understand how I could go through my daily life watching TV and movies, and never stop to think about someone’s color of skin. How could my father be looking for something like that? Why is the color of skin so important to him? They taught me in my school very clearly, color didn’t matter, so why did it matter so much to my father? What I had not realized before talking to him; is my father simply grew up in a different world. My father mentioned about how he remembers the

time when there were segregated drinking fountains and bathrooms for white and blacks. The color of someone's skin was something that was extremely prominent in society in his early years, so naturally it is something he still notices without even thinking about it.

He acknowledged there are still racial issues in the United States today, but he sees it going both ways now instead of how it was in history with whites dominating over blacks. He explained that for some reason it is socially acceptable for a colored actors or actresses in Hollywood to make an offensive "racist" comment, but if a white person were to say the exact same comment or equivalently degrading comment the white person would get harassed and labeled as a racist. He doesn't understand the double standard of speech. He thinks because of black history, of slavery and being suppressed, that sometimes they may use this as a justification for some of their actions.

From what I have discovered in my family history I believe that racism is fading away. There is obviously still a problem, but we are moving in the right direction. You can see how something that started out as complete hatred has morphed into where I stand today. What started in my family as a very straight forward hate has been passed on to the current generation where through education and having a different culture to grow up in; I barely even think about someone's color of skin unless it is brought up by someone else. I believe old habits die hard and over time and continued openness of all; racism will be dissolved.

A Perception of Race

Carina Yesenia Aguilar

THE
RACE CARD
PROJECT

*Not a description of
your soul.*

A hurricane composed of characteristics
Not a description of your soul
A faithful Mother Tongue
Not accompanied by talent
A sole perception of life
Not the judgment of brain content
A clash of culture
Not what defines character

We enter as we become unique
Our neighbor enters the doors along side
Admittance to a Race

THE
RACE CARD
PROJECT

*No es algo que define el
alma.*

Una Percepcion de Raza

Un huracan compuesto de características
No es algo que define el alma
Una fiel Lengua Materna
No acompañado por talento
Una sola percepcion de la vida
No es el juicio de el contenido de el cerebro
Un choque de cultura
No es lo que define caracter

Entramos al convertirnos unicos
Nuestro vecino entra las puertas a nuestro lado
Entrada a una Raza

So I Am an ALIEN, Apparently

Repeka Touli

THE
RACE CARD
PROJECT

*So I am an ALIEN,
apparently.*

“Alien” is the one word I grew up hating because when I was old enough to carry an Identification Card (a job requirement), I thought it was the coolest thing ever because it made me feel like I’ve grown up and I get to own one just like the adults did.

Unbeknownst to me, I was unaware of the impact it would have on me for years to come.

Every year for as long as I can remember, my parents and I would visit the Immigration office which meant I had to miss a full day of school. Missing a day of school was like punishment to me because it was my happy place as a child. Inside the Immigration office were a vast amount of strangers sitting for the entire day, waiting for their turn to see the Immigration officer. I had no idea why we were there to start with until I became a teenager. Nonetheless, it was an annual routine because I had done it before time and time again over the course of my younger years.

At one point, I sat and watched a number of people stand in front of a colored (fabric) back-wall while their pictures were taken to obtain their ID cards. I watched the next person get called up, took his/her picture, but not before an officer walked up towards him and changed the color of the back-wall (for point’s sake...from blue to red) behind him and I became confused. I asked myself, “Why did he change the color of the back-wall?” I quickly realized what that back-wall meant... One color was for “citizens” and the other for Aliens and suddenly, my world crashed and for the first time, I felt like an Alien, an “outsider,” in a place I called, “Home.” Sheer disappointment washed over me and suddenly, the feelings of being ashamed hit me, followed by the agony of the reality of my life’s status: “So I am an Alien, apparently.” From that point on, I really took notice of the minute details on my ID card. Next to my name, I was referred to as Alien, and in those moments, it hurt so much to come to the saddest realization and understanding of “why.” After all my growing up years that my parents and I visited the Immigration Office, never did it occur to me that it was to renew our Alien status in a place I have lived in for almost my young life, a place I loved because it was my home.

I started to question the purpose of such a harsh and derogatory term of identification because the primary association of Alien I knew was: A tall, skinny, bald looking creature with big grey eyes that by

definition are creatures from outer space, I used to see on TV as a child. As a teenager at the time, I asked myself, "Who in their right mind would refer to another human being as Alien when there are better and more humane adjectives in the dictionary to choose from?" What of "foreigner" or "non-citizen" or "newcomer?" Surely there is a better way to define the "other" other than Alien.

Alien is short for "alienated" or "alienation" which by definition is: "To make indifferent or hostile, to turn away, transfer or divert." This is how I always felt or at least it made me feel whenever I looked at my ID card. What used to be something to be proud of became something to be ashamed of, thus leaving me to feel ostracized, isolated, excluded, looked-down at and ultimately feel segregated, just to name a few.

The reality of this unforgettable nightmare occurred in class one day. My elementary teacher was marking something on her roll and she called out to me, referring to American Samoa, "Peka, were you born here?" I instantly did a quick justification in my young mind and said, "Yes, I was born here." The feelings of "belonging" rather than being segregated came over me and for the time being, it felt so nice to be able to say, "Yes, I was born here, (therefore, I am NOT an Alien, and this is where I belong)." But then having been taught right from wrong haunted me for the rest of that year until the following year when the next teacher asked me the same question again, "Peka, were you born here?" to which I shamefully and regretfully answered, "No."

Last year I found some old Immigration forms and when I saw how I was referred to again as: Alien, the ugly and degrading memories came back to haunt me as an adult. Clearly, the sad reality remains unchanged, particularly after living in Australia for the last two decades. It is a scarring reminder that, "Oh that's right, you're still an Alien, because your ID card says so."

Who would have thought that one significant word like Alien could cause an explosion of negative and alienated emotions to a young person like mine? It is a subtle way to discriminate others from different countries and shun away the spirit of unity in humanity, but not subtle enough for a young person "not" to notice. "So, I am an Alien apparently."

After twenty years of living in Brisbane, Australia, Repeka Touli is finally fulfilling her dreams of completing her education. Repeka is currently studying to be a Nutritionist at the Salt Lake Community College and transferring to the University of Utah. She also plans to study Photography alongside with Nutrition. Repeka is known to be the avid Photographer no matter where she is because she would adamantly tell you, "It is all about Making the Memories." Repeka loves singing, listening to classical and easy listening music, reading, walking and eating healthy.

When Pressed Against the Iron Gate

Jaren K. Johnson

THE
RACE CARD
PROJECT

*When pressed against
the iron gate.*

I have walked in the shoes
Of one who is a minority
Racially, Linguistically, Religiously
I know what it is like to be
Alone; to feel—Alone
I know what it is like

When no one else
Shares the same color of skin
When no one else speaks my language
I know what it is like to be known
By a name given by others
I know what it is like to lose a job
Because of my race and gender
And yet, when pressed,
Trapped against the Iron Gate
When anger ruled the day
When I wondered If my then
Sick, weakened frame
Would be beaten, broken, destroyed
When the opposition trembled
With unbridled enmity
Barely able to speak due to rage
Was it because of:
The color of my skin?
No
My ethnicity?
No
The accent of a foreign tongue?
No
Then why?
“YOUR JESUS IS NOT MY JESUS!”
“YOUR GOD IS NOT MY GOD!”
“...YOU’RE GOING TO HELL!”
When we were children living in California
My siblings and I loved
Our playmates from England
One day they did not
Come out to play
Why?

The color of our skin?
No
Our ethnicity?
No
The accent of our foreign tongue?
No
Then why?
Their parents
Learned of our religious beliefs
For that we could not friends?
Heartbroken, confused, sad
But not ashamed
Once in love; once engaged
My friends, family, and I welcomed you
With open hearts and warmth
But you and those from your world
Hated me, condemned me; despised me
You would consign me to Hell
Rather than hope to save me
According to your beliefs
You loved to work with youth
Your colleague was an alcoholic
Addicted to drugs
It was acceptable for him
To work with the youth of your Faith
But when it was learned
That you were dating me
You were threatened
With losing all that you had worked for
The leaders of your faith
Threatened to never let you
Work with the youth again
Your dreams were stolen from you
Because of me
Your drug-addict colleague
Was empowered - because he was a "project"
My ancestors were driven from home to home
Beaten to death by a mob
Shot through the neck - paralyzed for life
Children kidnapped
Deliberately poisoned by the neighbors
We can't change the color of our skin
But we can change our beliefs - right?
If I change my beliefs, then I change
The very mountains—even the air—around me

I change where I came from
I change where I am going
I lose my eternal perspective—
The reason for my existence
I lose my eternal identity
I have always been able
To laugh about, to shrug off
The challenges of race and culture
For me, the color of one's skin
Or ethnic background
Is important and interesting
But it does not tell me
Who they are
I first identify my fellow beings
As a Child of God
If God is the Father of all souls
If God is eternally Just
Eternally Merciful
Then will he not judge us
According to the law that we were given
Rather than after someone else's law?
Can we not be so merciful – one to another?
The hatred directed toward me;
Toward my ancestors, toward my people
Because of our religious beliefs
Is more painful
Than I could have ever imagined.
When pressed against The Iron Gate
It was not because of the color of my skin
It was not because of my ethnicity
Or, for the accent of a foreign tongue
It was because –

I am
a
“Mormon”

When it comes to childhood memories, canoe excursions on Shoshone Lake are Jaren Johnson's favorites. Jaren, along with his dad and brother, would spend a week at Shoshone – canoeing, fishing, and visiting the geyser basin. When not at work or school, he's often found on a dusty trail heading toward his favorite fishing hole. Jaren's endeavors have taken him to Costa Rica, Honduras, and along the US/Mexico border. Jaren is proficient in Spanish, and has studied Russian for three semesters.

Don't Judge Her Because She is Different

Ellen Peterson

THE
RACE CARD
PROJECT

*Things they said made
her cry.*

My friend, Casy, was adopted in England by her step-mom, a British white woman. Casy and her step-mom lived in an area in England with other people whose skin color was the same as Casy's.

When Casy came to the United States, she was judged because of her darker skin color. The people in her neighborhood made fun of her. Things they said made her cry.

The first time Casy came to Special Needs Mutual, she was scared. A couple of us made friends with her. She told us she was afraid to be there because she thought she would be judged. I told her that she didn't have anything to worry about. No one would judge her. Everyone would love her for the person she was.

Our Special Needs Mutual group didn't care where people came from, the color of their skin, and what they looked like. They never judged anyone, ever. Everybody showed respect for each other. We were surrounded by lots of hugs. These amazing people empowered me. Being with these fantastic people every week made me happy.

Casy now enjoys coming to Special Needs Mutual weekly to see all her wonderful friends.

Selfish Learning

Daniel Yocom

THE
RACE CARD
PROJECT

*Through diverse friends
my knowledge grows.*

Accepting the diversity of others is a selfish way of learning. We are told that every one of us is unique; each of us having special talents. Each of us also has a unique background coloring how we see our current situation and how we learn. Being

around people with different backgrounds brings together more pasts, more colors to draw our learning from. I cannot know from my own experiences what it was like to be raised in Africa, Asia, or Manhattan. I know these experiences from others. I find similarities with people who have had other experiences, but I find many more differences.

Through the differences I have learned more about the world than through the similarities. At times it has been tough to accept the differences in others, because I have no common reference to draw from. My understanding was built on the similarities we shared then expanded into the unknown of another person's experiences. These have been opportunities for me to learn from, and to cherish.

From others I have been able to learn and understand what it means to grow up in a different country, a different culture, and even a different time. I have a number of friends who started life in other parts of this country, and other parts of the world. Through them I have come to learn and understand how it was to grow up in other parts of the United States. Places like Alaska where schools closed temperature and not for snowfall. I have learned what it is like to come to this country without the ability to speak English and be immersed in a culture that belittles non-English speakers as being unintelligent. How, because of differences in appearance and culture they struggled as an individual and as a family. How they learned English from television sitcoms and eventually completed a master's degree in communication. I have heard what it was like to grow up during the depression and hopping trains to get work in California and being on a ship when it was attacked by kamikaze pilots.

With these exchanges with others, I have learned empathy and compassion. My father-in-law told me about being on two different ships that were attacked during World War II (I even have his journal that was burned on the edges) and was able to come home and have friends of Japanese descent or had emigrated from Asia after the war. I have learned what it is like to live in Iran during the revolution that removed the shah; and how coming to the United States was a blessing and a curse. There are many more stories of who we are, and why.

In my professional career, here in the Rocky Mountain region of the United States, I have had the chance to work with people from all over the world. In one company of about 300 employees, over 40 countries were represented from all 6 populated continents. The reasons they came are broad, the stories of their backgrounds are broader. I also meet people who seldom travel, preferring to stay home in the comfort of what they know. The people I have met from these other countries did not always have that luxury. They traveled here for more than just earning money. They have stories to tell, ideas to teach.

We have a unique opportunity living in a place so many people want to be. Not because we have all the opportunity of what this land offers us, but from the opportunities all these individuals bring with them. Each brings unique experiences: new ways of looking at old problems, or old insights to new problems. Through our acquaintances, our interactions, our friendships, we now have the opportunity to learn more than any other time in history.

Feeling Guilty to Be White

Benjamin Young

THE RACE CARD
PROJECT

*...is long past but never
forgotten.*

Growing up in America's school system you learn about hardships that other races have had to endure in the world. Some examples are glaring and obviously true. Many are more opaque when you think about them long enough. For instance slavery in

America is cut and dry—it was an evil act then and we still think it is now. At the same time, though, the persecution that the power structure has subjected minorities to in modern America has often helped them to forge an even stronger sense of identity than they had before. The Scots-Irish are one group who took the punches that the New World had to offer and became successful despite stigmas and slurs. When it comes to being classified as Caucasian, though, there seems to be a lot lacking in terms of our culture and background. Granted we have created great marvels but in the end we are defined as a nation of mixed heritage and without these other elements we would be a shell of what we are today. In the end it almost seems like being part of the maligned but eventually triumphant cultures that are evident everywhere in America is preferable to being part of the system that created hardships. This is a feeling associated most closely with guilt—my feelings could be defined as white guilt.

Unless you go back to more ancient times when European societies ruled and created great works of art and literature, there is little to differentiate the struggles that we (meaning American Caucasians) went through from other periods of transformation. We industrialized a nation after we won a war against Britain for our independence and these things are powerful examples of the human spirit, but in the end we defeated those who created us—specifically the same nations that we descend from. This is fine in a general sense but I think that when you look deeper at the roots we have, they lack the rich heritage that comes from suffering. This whole inferiority complex, if you will, is what led us to subject those who were at all different from us to horrible persecution over the decades that we have been a nation.

There is no way that I would gladly volunteer to be a slave or a laborer on the trans-continental railroad knowing the risks and hardship that these sorts of lives entailed, but at the same time it almost does seem preferable to being of the same power structure that was the object of these subject's suffering. That's what I am most concerned about now as I learn more about where I am from and what my culture

has produced over the years; am I OK with being grouped into the same category as American slavers and dirty politicians? I know my “vanilla” race alone isn’t responsible for all the wrong-doings ever committed but at the same time I can’t help but feel that I share some level of burden that’s disproportionate to what I’ve actually done in my life.

The feelings I’ve described may be considered a case of white-guilt, but more broadly I think it should (and that to me it does) speak to how I feel crossing paths with those of non-Caucasian origin. I feel a strong sense of lost time and inadequate reparation for crimes I was never privy to. My feelings are ones of despair that I both did nothing to create problems for the grand-parents of those I see on sidewalks and also am part of a system that did everything to create these problems. It feels like I am part of some horrible charade that is long past but never forgotten. It’s a tough feeling that “guilt” alone has a hard time defining.

Prejudice is Nothing More Than Bitterness

Ali Rahimi

THE
RACE CARD
PROJECT

*Prejudice is nothing
more than bitterness.*

They say all men are created equal, this was written on the backs of the blacks and the extinction of the native Indians. They say all men are created equal, I believe all men are evil. They say you have freedom, but you're just another servant in this greedy

dark kingdom, serving a wealthy white king, yeah that might make a ring. Predisposed to hatred, not working with love, but being persuaded by a person who believes they're better not equal, but superior. The idea that a pure race exists, and they're born in it, I feel like that sounds a little bias. How can you sit there and say that immigrants are taking the country away from the glory of its old days. This country was founded on immigrants, and was built by hardworking Africans, you can't claim this world to be yours, if it's a game of who came first, then the Indians deserve to have their voices heard. The ignorance is real, even though we hide it like it's no big deal, the bigot father raises his kid in fear, but what should a little boy fear, I'm standing right here, tell me what he hears, that I'm a terrorist, a rag-head, towel wearing, low culture, no brain Indian. This what you hear? This is what you choose to believe, the words of a man with a tiny brain, I don't feel bad for a man in so much pain; he closed himself off away from the beauty of diversity. The beauty of color, the beauty of each other, to understand one and another, to accept every color. Our differences aren't so different; we have more in common than our history has forgotten. We are humans! Race is just an illusion constricted to cause confusion. We all fall victim to it, but it just takes a little bit, to notice prejudice, is nothing more than bitterness.

Racism Is Just Fucking Bullshit, Period

Kendall Swenson

THE
RACE CARD
PROJECT

*Racism Is Just Fucking
Bullshit, Period.*

I'm here to say what most are afraid to say. The double edged sword cut both ways ... or does it? The all Black Afro American College Fund. Give me a fucking break! What's going to happen when someone decides it is time for the straight haired

white American College Fund? Who is really being discriminated against? That's right, everybody of every race. It seems pretty equally distributed, so what is racism? When I was 18 years old I went to Union Pacific with my Italian friend to apply for jobs. He was told to come back in 3-months to check where he was on the list. I was told to find a job elsewhere because there was a 12-year waiting list for non-minority workers. It was good advice because I might have been to wait 12-years only to find I was too old to hire. I'm pretty sure someone would have a real problem with W.E.T (White Entertainment Television). That someone would probably be black and be out "TO GET PAYED" over some sort of discrimination lawsuit. Hell, it may even be a law student or a full-blown lawyer whose education was paid for by the all Black Afro American College Fund. I can't help but to wonder if this same person went home after school and enjoyed Television programs on B.E.T. (Black Entertainment Television).

Racism exists and it's a bunch of sad bullshit. It seems like there are many of whom believe they are not part of it, or that it doesn't fly in all directions. I've noticed that money hand outs tend to feel earned and owed based on sins of the past. I am white, and my friends are of any and all cultures. I don't even know what race many of my friends are, and I like that. I didn't discriminate. Is it really true that there are still all black colleges operating in this country? I hope to God that it is not true!

Are You Sure You Belong Here?

Joseph Gallegos

THE
RACE CARD
PROJECT

Are you sure you belong here?

These are my six words describing race. I chose these words because they've transcended the way people have interacted with me throughout my lifetime. From my childhood, growing up in Layton, Utah, I remember my parents telling us how family

members were treated when they moved to Utah in 1954. You see. My father was born in New Mexico and so were his parents and their parents. His family traces back to the time when Santa Fe was founded, whereas my mother is German. She was a war bride. My father met her while he was stationed in Germany. After the war ended, he stayed a few years in Germany, met my mom, got married and moved back to New Mexico. My father had worked at Los Alamos, but when they found out he married a German, they wouldn't let him work there anymore. He was offered a job at Hill Air Force Base, and they moved to Utah.

During the early days in Utah, it was either our family not belonging because we were Mexicans or because, mom was a Nazi. As my mom would tell you, "not all Germans were Nazis." Her story growing up during that time is fascinating in itself. So my older brothers were beat up for either being a wet-back or for being a Nazi, "some of us have lighter skin." By the time I was born, the Nazi hysteria was over, but we were still wet-backs.

By the time I got to grade-school and seeing how my older sisters were treated in school and how they weren't encouraged to do well in school; and when I was told, by a principal that he'd have work for my family in his fields. I wasn't going to let someone tell me my fate. I decided to study, and become good at math and science. I was good at math growing up, but I worked at it. Some of my schoolmates would ask me why and then would follow-up with it's because your mom is German. Even to this day when people find out that my mother is German, and the first thing from their mouth is usually "Oh! That explains why you like math." As if, that is the reason.

At college, in one of the first senior level math classes, the room was full, except for the front row. I was a little late and had to walk from back of class to the front and the professor asked me "are you sure you belong here?" I said this is math correct? Then yes, I belong here. I did well and ended up getting both my B.S. and M.S. in Mathematics, went on to ASU in the Ph.D. program, completed one year before getting a job teaching in San Antonio. My wife and I had a baby, and

that changed my education plans. I started teaching at San Antonio College, and you know what? There were several faculty members that looked like me and with degrees in mathematics as well. I liked my time in San Antonio, but my wife wanted to move back to Utah. When the opportunity presented itself, I applied and got hired at SLCC.

I had taught a course for Continuing Education back in the early 1990s for SLCC, but other than that class, I hadn't taught for SLCC. That first semester, in the very first day of my first class, I walk in; get to the front of the board with my book and syllabi in hand, when a young white man asked his friend "is he our teacher?" They both got up and left the room before I even said "good morning" to my class. I shrugged this off and have been teaching here ever since; however, I do miss teaching at San Antonio College.

That first summer back in Salt Lake City was difficult. One Sunday, I went for a bike ride, my mistake, was deciding to go to Liberty Park. I wanted to ride around the park several times before getting ready for a cookout with my in-laws. I figured it would have been safe to ride around the park without a helmet. To this day, I remember it like it was yesterday. I went along 300 E. to 900 S., I remember seeing several police cars and their flashing lights further up 300 East. I turned up 900 S. and got to 400 E. passing the Asian Market, when a car, pulled out of the lot, almost hitting me as it went out. I got to the park and as I was making my way to the track, the group of people in front of me, stopped and turned to look behind them, this caused me to stop and look as well. A car was on the grass speeding towards us, just then, I felt someone grab my arm from the other side. I was yanked off my and thrown to the ground. Once on the ground, I look up to see a gun pointed at me, inches from my head. I get kicked to turn over and handcuffed. I get pulled up and my wallet gets taken, at this time, I'm asking "what is going on?" and "what did I do?" One officer yells "you just robbed someone with a knife." I said, no I didn't and wouldn't do that because I was a professor at SLCC. He told me, "You don't look like a professor." Just then, on the radio, a voice says that they are looking for a white man with blonde hair riding a bicycle. I tell them, "but I don't fit that description." Keep in mind, I am not wearing a helmet, the only thing in common, was riding a bike. He says, it doesn't matter, because she pointed me out. I said, who? He said that they were driving the victim around in the car and she pointed me out. So I stand in front of a police car, with the alleged victim inside, I couldn't see anyone in the car, but I guess she indicated it wasn't me after all and I

"I said, no I didn't and wouldn't do that because I was a professor at SLCC. He told me, 'You don't look like a professor.'"

was let go.

The following day, I call Internal Affairs to make a complaint; I spoke directly with the person in charge and set up an appointment with him myself. So to my surprise, when I got to the appointment, there was an interpreter there waiting for me to talk. In short, I tell my story, and at the end, the officer says he will look into the matter. At the time, my officemate was in the city council, and I repeat the story to her. I guess she told someone, and the Chief of Police calls the officer. The officer calls me up, and tells me, “How dare I go over his head?” For that, I have to come back in for another interview, because they “lost” the tape of my interview. So I get back, and in an envelope in front of me, I see the outline of the cassette they had made before. I tell them again, and a week later, I get the word that they exonerated themselves and they did nothing wrong.

So those six words “are you sure you belong here?” I ask myself that same question often and wonder why I moved back to Utah.

Racism Knows No Boundaries

Deborah Young

THE
RACE CARD
PROJECT

*So, how do we change
this?*

By age sixteen, I had lived in three countries: U.S., Okinawa, and England. My time in the U.S. was spent in small western or mid western communities attached to military bases. With few exceptions, we lived on the bases, but I was routinely

bused to schools in the towns just outside the front gates. Perhaps I was always surrounded by racism, but my observations while living in foreign countries left impressions that were more permanent. These observations do not excuse racism but put racism in perspective for me.

My early school years were spent in Okinawa. At the time, Okinawa was a part of the U.S. WWII had only been over for about sixteen years. The population and landscape were still undergoing major changes. My observation at this young age was that the Japanese treated the Okinawa people as “dirt beneath their feet.” These people, who worked so hard to bring continuity and longevity to their lives on their island after the decimation brought on from the war, were considered inferior to the Japanese people for reasons that eluded me.

We were stationed in England during my teen years—about 1 hour outside of London by express train. Here, I witnessed the rising of skinheads who created havoc in English society. Using their boots to kick the life out of people scared many of us. Many people from Pakistan were taking refuge in England then, too. The influx of the Pakistani people was forcing many Englishmen to rethink life and adjust their ways. The result was that people from Pakistan were often persecuted.

Since my youth and (as I’ve watched politically, war-torn countries) throughout my life, I have observed that all countries, including the U.S., ostracize and marginalize at least one group of people within their borders. The U.S. rescues some of these conflicted groups in other countries and ignores others, such as the issues in our own country. So, how do we change this?

Oppression Matters:

Trying to Make the Invisible Visible, part 1

Josh Gold

THE RACE CARD
PROJECT

*Trying to make the
invisible visible.*

The US [post-]modern social world contains four primary, constructed [i.e., artificial & contrived] systems w/in which specific structures operate inter-dependently, simultaneously, and synergistically. More than not, these structures are directed by the ruling (sovereign?) institutions of the political economy. Here is the first system [an 'ideal type'], broken down into its structurally oppressive components:

a) the interlocking social categories are all [and have been for centuries] hierarchically organized and ascribed onto [& into] each of us: class, race/ethnicity, gender, (dis)ability, gay-straight, old-middle-aged-young, pretty (handsome)-ugly, fat-skinny, educated-not, urban-rural, religious-which?-not, etc., and they are most often not voluntarily chosen by individuals [P. McIntosh; M. Frye; D. Conley; H. Zinn, R. Wren et al.]. As a consequence, the forms that each of us 'takes' and re-presents to the social world are fixed and rigid, and this is so in a # of social categories. On the other hand, the contents of each of us [what each thinks, says and does] are malleable, subject to and reflecting nurturance, reform and revision, learning and plasticity. [This is for 'good' and/or 'evil' however.]

b) nonetheless, given the stability of the socially ascribed, inter-locked, and hierarchically organized categories pressing down on most Americans over centuries, it is in this part of the social world where political [public] and economic [private] institutions have operated, enabling the dominant group in particular social categories to subordinate 'others': as 'American history has been full of second class citizens, so has it had a relatively small group of first class ones throughout. This system contains structures which have functioned [and cont. to function] like a multi-dimensional 'see-saw' [or teeter-totter] in which one clearly identifiable set of social categories [and the position w/in each] is dominant [privileged], and others are subordinate [oppressed], according to and as a result of the law, the institutional roles and the SOPs of the political and economic institutions which have always dominated and shaped society, by specifying acceptable cultural mores and habits [manners], everyday ['common sense'] forms of language construction and expectations arising from interactions and daily 'talk', etc. Long ago, the norms, narratives, and discourses of the dominant social group became the standard by which all

persons in society are judged, valued, etc. Those norms, narratives, and discourses have also been on regular display in the mass, commercial media apparatus, feeding the nation [self-reflexive] ‘infotainment’ 24/7. Historically only the norms, narratives and discourses of the dominant group were cheaply distributed and widely consumed, while those of subordinate groups were expensive to produce, distribute and access, and/or prohibited by the ruling political authorities owned and managed by the dominant group[s]. [This has changed somewhat, however. The internet—and social networking through it—has greatly lowered the costs of organizing resistance and direct actions against the political and economic elites’ norms, narratives and discourses, as well as their coordinating and planning of the dividing up and selling of the planet. See, e.g., organizing against the World Economic Forum every year in Davos, Suisse.]

c] as a consequence, in the 21st century each individual [American] is internally fractured, because each person’s identity is entrenched in every [mostly involuntary] social category. As a result, some of us have parts [or all] of our identity within the dominant group, while other parts of subordinate group[s]; are only fractured social categories. [white, rich, straight be less fractured [and ideologically] [Mitt Romney, manager, fits here.] the ‘decision fatigue’ of pertinent in the fracturing of positions in the other social categories. I.e., decision-fatigue in the daily lives of poor white single males vs. poor, white single moms, and/or poor blacks and other people and parents of color, should function as a continuum of costs, from those poor people facing the least costs due to being privileged in the first set of categories [poor, white single males] to those facing the greatest costs, due to being in the last of the specified set of inter-locked and hierarchically organized social categories. Most significantly politically, is the fact that the poorest persons in America are children, esp. children of color. [See, e.g., the Children’s Defense Fund, “Report on the State of America’s Children, 2014.”]

d] given all of this, what will each of us do w/ privilege, if we have it? If we don’t have any privilege [due to the hierarchically organized & inter-locking social categories each of us is assigned], then what?

e] Never forget, however: in the US certain social categories carry more weight, wealth, status, leverage and power than others. This is seen clearly in FDR’s social categories—one of those being polio, as

“Those norms, narratives, and discourses have also been on regular display in the mass, commercial media apparatus, feeding the nation”

he was in a wheelchair for four elected terms and 13 years total in the White House—nonetheless being white, male, and fabulously wealthy, and those three categories trumped his (dis)ability, in an age of radio and newspapers exclusively. Put conversely, most poor people in the US are white, but they still derive privileges for being of the dominant ‘race’, even when they’re poor. It usually doesn’t ‘feel’ that way for such [‘white’] persons, but it is so. A reflection of this is that only 1 in 10+ ‘whites’ is poor, whereas 1 in 4 ‘blacks’ is. Or, one in three young, black males [20-29] is trapped somewhere in the US criminal justice system. And that’s essentially how things have always worked in and across America. Today, NYC’s ‘stop and frisk’ statistics show this clearly as well. Being young, male, black and/or brown, raises the likelihood of being stopped and frisked by NYC’s ‘finest’ quite precipitously. Also, the ‘picture’ of the criminal in the US has for a very long time [since early colonial times, in fact], been a young black male, period. In the 21st century, the mass mediated, commercial picture portrays young, black, male sports stars w/ ‘bling,’ ‘schwag,’ and in trouble w/ the ‘law’ [See, e.g., the Portland ‘Jail Blazers’ of the early ‘aughts’ in the NBA.]

f] perhaps not as rigid, there are nevertheless many parallels w/ a social caste system in all of the above: from a political perspective, therefore, how do [or can] we resist social ascription and assignment? Seemingly, for those whose ascriptions mostly [or completely] reside in the subordinate positions of each social category, it should be those persons who can live life on the margins of various subordinated social categories, who should have the least difficulty—suffering fewer costs—navigating along and through the highways and byways of America. [Has this not been true for light-skinned African-American and Latino-American, straight men?] This is an awfully violent country, and having the “freedom of confident action” is priceless, but only at the individual level of analysis [See, P. McIntosh, “White Privilege...” & M. Frye, “Oppression.”]. However, because of the social categories most of us belong to, we need allies. There is power in #s. [“Don’t mourn, organize.” See, e.g., the on-going politics of Occupy Wall St. across America. On the other hand, how do we professionals and middle-managers organize in a “right-to-work” state?]

g] in the end, the Utilitarian maxim of the “greatest good for the greatest number” can be said to be one of the greatest tragedies of American [domestic] history: the ‘white’ race [violently] dominated society for the simple sake that it constituted[s] the majority [not in half the colonies, however] and wielded the political and economic power to subordinate others deemed non-‘white’ to foster the ‘white’ race’s greatest good, i.e., being on top politically and economically, generation after generation. The privileges that systematically accrued to ‘whites’ across American history quite literally divested ‘blacks’ and native Americans [and others] of their wealth from generation to generation.

It still does. See, e.g., current medical studies concerning the unequal application of medical care in the US, by race. Unequal longevity issues by race are therefore directly consequent to the disparities in the delivery of health care today in the US. Also, the collapse of the housing market in the US had disproportionate effects on 'black' and 'brown' families, not 'white' ones. The racializing of the Utilitarian maxim, in the US context [at least], should lay bare its complicity and naiveté in American history. [See, e.g., John Adams, "What is a Republic?"]

h] However, RESISTANCE IS NOT FUTILE. "Another world is possible."*

* David McNally, *Another World is Possible: Globalization and Anti-Capitalism*; slogan of the World Social Forum.

Josh Gold grew up in the archetypal U.S. suburb, Levittown, NY. In 1980 he received a Bachelor of Arts from the State University of New York in Political Science and History. Then, for five years he held full-time jobs in the private sector, seeking to discover what the "real world" had to offer. After finding out, he left the east coast for the University of Oregon where he studied Political Science, receiving a Master of Arts and a Ph.D. While there, he taught courses in Political Science and spent the '91-'92 academic year as a Visiting Assistant Professor at Washington State University. From 1995-1999 he was a lecturer of English Conversation at Pusan University of Foreign Studies Republic of Korea. He is currently an Associate Professor teaching Political Science at Salt Lake Community College.

The Best Neighbor He Ever Had

David E. Moore

THE
RACE CARD
PROJECT

*The best neighbor he
ever had.*

I grew up in Ogden, Utah in a WASM (White Anglo-Saxon Mormon) household of Utah provincials. By the time I went away to college in Massachusetts, I knew that any admission of “racism” (to myself or others) was, at the least, a secular sin.

Yet, I knew that I recognized a black man, or an Indian, or a Mongolian as different from me. As a result, I confessed to myself that, unlike Steven Colbert (who claims satirically no recognition of race), that I do recognize pigmentation and more. By the time I became a father, I told my children that given the fact that we generally do recognize race (and sex, and income, and more) the question of interest is “What do we choose to do about it?”

I’m told by authorities that we humans are all descended from a relatively small group of upright mammals from the Great Rift Valley in Africa. Then again, I’m otherwise advised by other authorities that “We’re all God’s children” by way of Adam and Eve somewhere in Missouri. There are many other uncertain creation stories that have been, and will be, invented. What is clear to me, among these many explanations, is that we’re all the part of a genetically consistent bunch of creatures who procreate with each other, often independent of “pigmentation and more.”

We’re all genetically humans, *homo sapiens*. I’m sure I am. I pretty sure the rest of you are. We’re all the same sort of species of mammals—with admittedly some variability. Given these basics, it seems to me that the Golden Rule, in its many forms, answers the question of what we do about race, pretty well. It feels right. Samaritans, Pharisees, Blacks, and you, the reader, are humans just like me. Variations of the Rule have been independently derived by Confucius, the Buddha, Jesus, Rabbi Hillel, a bunch of Hindu’s, Muhammed, and even some atheists have come to that same conclusion. Despite some quibbling (G.B. Shaw), it holds up well as a guiding principle for tolerant behavior.

Tolerance problems arise at the beginning of personal relationships when our knowledge of another is based on “top down” prejudice rather than “bottom up” experience. Given the above bits of facts, ideas, and reasoning, I’d like to offer some applicable wisdom that my dad gave to me one day regarding the question “What do we do about it?” Race, that is. I was about ten. The issue of racism arose in the context of real estate. A respected Mormon friend of my Dad lived in a mildly

distressed part of town a half mile west of our house. The friend reported that a black man had moved in next-door to him. It was 1955 in Ogden, Utah near Madison and 21st Street. My Dad asked his friend what he was going to do about it? His response was this: "I intend to be the best neighbor he's ever had."

Discrimination or Mismanagement?

Armando Gonzalez-Escobar

THE RACE CARD
PROJECT

*I feel I was discriminated
against.*

My appointment was at three o'clock to see our family doctor, an Asian woman. I arrived at the clinic fifteen minutes before my appointment. I hadn't seen our family doctor since she moved to this clinic, so I came early to complete some forms that

were required before I could see her. I finished the forms by three o'clock and gave them to the Latino receptionist.

The receptionist said, "Mr. Gonzalez, please have a seat to wait for the doctor."

I said, "Ok," and took a seat. From my seat, I watched the receptionist check my forms to see if they were complete. I was sitting with ten other adults while about five children were playing around the room. Three of the adults were Asian, and the rest of the adults were darker skinned. I was the only Latino patient in the waiting room at that time.

About ten minutes later, the receptionist said, "Mr. Gonzalez?"

I stood up and said, "Yes."

She said, "You can go to the exam room."

On my way to my exam room, I saw several Latino patients leaving. With my exam door partially open, I went into the room and sat in the chair beside the examination table to wait. While I waited, I read the story "Queen of the Banda" in People magazine.

After forty-five minutes, a Latino nurse peeked into the examination room. She was surprised to see me. She said, "Mr. Gonzalez, you're still here?"

I said, "Excuse me. What is the reason why I have been waiting for forty-five minutes and no one has come to see me?"

The nurse ignored my questions and replied, "Someone will be here shortly."

After she left, I opened the door wider and watched three doctors working with different patients in other exam rooms. Two of them were Asian men, who had been in the waiting room when I got called to go to my exam room. Thirty minutes later, my doctor finally came to see me.

Why were other patients seen before me? Why didn't the doctor come to see me sooner? Was it my ethnicity or skin color? I feel like I was discriminated against.

Armando Gonzalez-Escobar loves his family. He's a good father. He was born in Guatemala. He's a good driver, very friendly, and an old man. He loves to Salsa dance.

Gaining True Knowledge Through My Experiences!

Rodney Gehlen

THE RACE CARD
PROJECT

*Gaining knowledge through
my experiences!*

My “race perception” is solely based on my own personal thoughts, beliefs and experiences. Stigmas stemming from this topic are purely a learned attitude created from pettiness, suspicions and jealousy as well as individual opinions based on

historical circumstances that to this day continue to influence actions and cause behaviors, further opening doors to misconceptions, close-mindedness and ignorance, opposed to understandings.

Race is a manipulative tool, instilling hate and discontent, in a time that it's not really relevant, continuing to alter life, its liberty and our pursuits of happiness. Hanging on to old ideas and/or believing on other people's perceptions create barriers which hinder us from learning and accepting our social, economic, and educational similarities in life.

It would be my assumption that we, (white America) should of learned and gained some form of compassion through the events in history. It's unfortunate that the natural course of history was altered at key moments when race was a factor. The murders of Abe Lincoln, Martin Luther King, the imprisonment of Nelson Mandela, are all magical moments in history that if never were to occur would of drastically changed the hole outlook and meaning of indentured servitude.

Other major factors contributing to racial barriers are social interactions, lack of education and continued practices focused on organization precepts.

I have unfortunately had the opportunity to spend some extensive time in the California state prison system. And my outlook is that it's one of many breeding grounds for racial misinterpretations.

Department of Corrections continues to segregate convicts according to race, gang affiliation and validation. My belief is this is a method in keeping control and to discourage unity. Within the prison itself strict politics come into play, and a chain of command is expected to be honored. During my stays it was, Don't Eat, Smoke, accept any open commissary items.

Do not touch, hug, or give props to any other race. Or severe consequences are passed down. There was even a point when I was expected to alienate a good friend because of our differences, I've experienced a level of hate & discontent and racial ignorance, that for a time has had a profound effect on my core values, raising havoc with my

Morals and belief system and has done nothing but formulate barriers and read blocks to my Emotional and Spiritual growth.

Society continues to keep what happens historically alive by continuing to revisit the horrors. I believe that the issues or race further dictates negative beliefs and justify discriminatory Values. Even organized Religion and cultural oriented organization promote forms of racism and discrimination because the focus on their own program, instead of the broader more important issues. The loving, treating and respecting one another because we are all GODS children and have something to learn and benefit from one another from all areas of life. I've learned to depersonalize myself and promote less racially reactive social interactions, respecting and empathizing while being myself as living life on its own terms.

On Race, On Folly, On Life!

Linda Waters

THE RACE CARD
PROJECT

*On Race, On Folly, On
Life!*

I thought and thought, and thought...
filled with hope that never dies...I had too
much to say...which "six words" should
I choose?...to express my simple minded
views...on race, on folly, on life...please
excuse my random, rambling phrases...

in no particular order, here goes...

no child is born a racist...trained to hate them, he loved...whitewashed
homes hid dead men's bones...dancing with a black-man, marrying
white...bessy-mae was his kind color-blind maid...from the "other" side
of town...she raised his baby for him..."nigger" never muttered in their
house...he knew she shunned that word...good man, he saw through it...
he could have been angry still...hate died in its own poison...narrow-
minded man taught him to forgive...sharing glazed donuts, better than
not

the jails were filled with innocents...they never mentioned the
unmentionable sin...wonder-bread life has no nutritional value...once
oppressed, good Mormons should've known...who were they to judge
them?...she always rooted for the Indians...race is a four letter word...
learned it, grabbed onto it, blindly...supremacy turned its twisted head...
why do we kill each other?...who would we be without it?...do us a favor,
stop it...short-sighted, far-sighted, learning great new ways...it wasn't
really race, was it?...righteous me-s, once blind, now see...why not do it
right, now?...

have your peace, live it too...god don't make no dumb mistakes...
live, let live, or surely suffer...turning our heads never solved anything...
hatred died in fence-less towns...orange tulips don't judge yellow mums...
garden varieties make life more tasty...we're only left to judge ourselves...
too weird, they got over it...so glad, not sad, it's done...multigrain toast,
spread with many jams...all precious human in his sight...crumbs of
hate crumble over time...

how can I make a difference?...progressively reviewing racial pride,
seeds hope...don't be yellow, it takes guts...home on earth, color matters
not...black, white, brown, yellow, turning mellow...xenophiles like people
of all backgrounds...real power lies beyond brick walls...self love blooms
by loving others...mutts have their own special charm...blended, it made
us perfectly one...embrace our rainbow flavored milkshake life!...

why not say something about it?...deliverance, divinely inspired by
grander men...Ghandi, Lincoln, rumi, king, my heroes...had to die for

tomorrow's peace...Jesus taught well, the golden rule...one race, everyone wins, why not?...universal sight dissolves all human flaws...far greater than our outer skin...hearts can be turned for good...people are people, lofty and low...who will cast the last stone?...

my pie in the sky optimism...why not dare to dream BIG?...it's up to me to decide...one human race, one hopeful day...blue-green speck is sprouting human kindness...splendidly human, earthly creatures, shared destiny...

why not give all we got?

Racism Builds Strength. Strength Equals Empowerment.

Kendall Swenson

THE
RACE CARD
PROJECT

*Racism builds strength. Strength
equals empowerment.*

I am a Cracker. I know that because someone told me, and that someone had skin like mine, only not as dark.

I am not a racist person. That is why I enjoy race-based jokes. I like them even when they are directed at my race regardless

of the skin on the joker.

Laughs have no skin color; nor do words. Maybe words...

Racism is alive and well. I know it because, just the other day, I watched in wonder as a self-proclaimed supremacist embarrassed everyone. That anyone in the place could reasonably affiliate with him. I swear that the room almost turned white. Seriously, their faces seemed to change color!

Being the person I am, I actually felt empowered by it. I was reminded of doing a deal in a place where I looked different. I could have arrived from Cuba, or Jamaica, or anywhere really, but the locals quickly pegged me as a target from the good ol' U.S. of A. maybe it was the accent, or lack of it. Whatever it was, I knew for sure that in order to level the negotiation table, I would simply have to do better than anyone there. I didn't, and I departed in a hateful mood.

I felt discriminated against and cheated. Those people were racist bigots, and I hated them. Maybe I still do. I felt hate, but it gave me drive like nothing else could. I vowed to never fall short again because of my skin color, period. Since then I have felt nothing short of pure elation at my ability to deal in diverse circles. Changing the way I view race-based discrimination has made me better, stronger and smarter, because I knew I had to be. "Feel free to hate on me," is how I often feel when leaving the table. Hell, the racist bigots are the easiest ones!

The advantages of racism don't end there. When I spot another person like me, standing out in a crowd, I am immediately at my best. I never even underestimate those worthy opponents. I figure they have had to evolve like me. It can be a matter of survival!

I thought this would be hard to write about. It's not. I feel a compelling empowerment. I am thinking about writing about my ancestors. I don't have enough information about them to do it. Now that I think about it, I don't even know where my ancestors are from... do you? I know what color their skin was because I have it too. I have lived through hard times with my skin. I know my place, and I know the color of my skin. Do you? I am not a racist. Are you?

Colored Skin Does Not Define Within

Emily Beck

THE
RACE CARD
PROJECT

*Colored skin does not
define within.*

On February 2, 2014 millions sat in front of their televisions to watch the biggest game in America, the Super Bowl. You could be asking yourself, what does the Race Card Project and the biggest football game of the year have in common? If

you watched just for the commercials, like thousands of others, you could probably remember or think of a connection. The sixty second commercial from Coca-Cola, brought many to the conversation on the issue of race and also back to Martin Luther King's 1963 speech.

It was the most talked about the next day. It was trending on Facebook, tweeted about on Twitter and by the time of this writing, only two days later; it had received 1,469,375 hits on YouTube with 13,634, likes and 3,149 dislikes. One seems to automatically ask the question: What is in those sixty seconds that has created such a viral buzz?

The first four seconds are shown with a cowboy riding a white horse. Snowcapped mountains are back dropped behind a lake with pine trees in the next frame. The cowboy returns with his horse and his gloved hand is gracing the face of his beloved animal. The words, "Oh beautiful for spacious skies," are sung by a female voice. The first four seconds probably brought many to tears. But it's not what happened in the first four; it's what happened after.

The next frame shows a young Latino girl in a dark movie theater blowing a bubble with her gum. The song is still being sung but now it's a different voice and a different language; Spanish. For the next forty-five seconds we listen to lines from America the beautiful being sung in all different languages. Images of people from all different races, religions, and sexual preferences are shown until the last eleven seconds when the last five words, "...from sea to shining sea" are sung in English. The last frame was a mountain back drop with the red bottle and white signature coke label. Next to the bottle was the hashtag #AmericaIsBeautiful.

On Facebook and Twitter the comments were either one loved it or they hated it. There was no gray area.

The comments ranged from:

- "I loved it! It shows the melting pot of America."
- "Beautiful!"
- "Well done Coke. Our country is diverse and this proves it."

The negative comments outnumbered the positive:

•“I will never drink Coke or buy their products again!”

•“How dare they take a patriotic song and allow a line of it in Muslim.”

•“Hated it not being sung all in English. Now I hate Coke.”

How does this sixty second commercial and its comments relate to Martin Luther King’s 1963 speech and the issue of race? King professed that, “... we will be able to speed up that day when all of God’s children, black men, and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands...” He also said, “I have a dream that my four children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.”

Coke’s commercial showed America as not just one race that speaks only English but that our country is very diverse with many nationalities and races. Coke also proved that, in different ways, King’s Dream was and was not realized. Overall Coke defined America as being changed and that who we are on the outside does not define who we are on the inside. Colored skin does not define within.

Race is What Defines My Triumph

Anonymous

THE
RACE CARD
PROJECT

Race is what defines MY triumph!

If I would describe race in six simple words it would be “Race is what defines my triumph.” Ever since elementary, I was given lectures and talks about ethnicity and my identity in many different ways—through books, media, teachers, parents and

friends. From all that, I was able to constructively build my identity in a way that framed my personality but I recognize the external factors also has an influence on me. As a Hispanic individual, I have grown up with my goals, values, objectives, personality and mindset shaped by my race. It is the aspect that molds who I am and empowers me to do so much more.

My perspective about race is that it is in a constant evolution driven by the education that is provided and each day improved. I also recognize that it is surrounded by both positive and negative attributes. However, the way I decide to look at it is in the ways that I benefit from my specific race. It may sound somewhat selfish but it is deeper than that, what I mean by “taking advantage of my race,” I am referring to seeking opportunities where my background is valued and needed. This could be by scholarships, empowering talks, clubs/programs that I can participate in and shed some light on my culture, class discussions about Hispanic and the dynamic within that group, etc. I also looked at the aspect of skills I have developed such as being bilingual, culturally competent, immersed in more cultures, etc.

However, for me to come to this point and think about race this way initially began as a child, I came to the U.S. at the age of 8, my first language was Spanish and with time I learned English as well as became familiar with the American culture. It was a process that I went through and at certain times, I felt discriminated due to the background I belonged to. A great aspect about that is that I also became familiar with the hierarchy among the Hispanics. Basically different cultures originating from being Hispanic belong to a place in the hierarchy. What I mean by this is that some countries feel they are better than others despite they all might be from South America. Therefore, I also got a glimpse of some of the “discrimination” within my own group and the background that I identified with.

When I came to the U.S., at first, it was the most exciting experience ever being in the plane going to a new country. However, that excitement soon disappeared as I started school. I remember the first

day of going to school; we all had to go through an evaluation process to determine the correct level of education for us. The session where they were determining my literacy skills was the longest of all, as I did not even know ABC's at the time. The person examining me had a friendly smile on her face and was talking to me in a language that I had no idea what it was. The school I was attending at the time did not have a fully developed ESL program. I was therefore placed in ESL Level 1 during the normal English periods, but was placed at regular mainstream classes for all other subjects.

It took me three times as long to learn and complete the material than any other student just because I had to find out the meaning of the words and as a child, I feel like Race was a huge part of my "trial." Sometimes, I would catch myself saying or wandering about the privilege of being white and mastering the English language. I would feel at times that their race was superior to any other and I lost much contact with my own race and ethnicity. I felt like just the color of their skin, hair, eyes was unfair. I felt like I needed to be ahead of the again if I just wanted to be at that level.

Going to school I felt frustrated and ignorant. I could not make any friends nor do anything during my regular class time but to make sure that my seat was not empty. I'm a very active and outgoing person. However for the duration of the school hour, I was not myself. I could not speak my mind, I could not laugh with my classmates, I could not even answer a simple math question, and I could not answer my parents when they asked me what I've learn at school that day. Even though I dreaded coming to school every day I came, and over time, after observing and imitating I started to pick up the language at a faster pace. I did become successful academically because of the desire to be more or equal. I skipped grades, got scholarships, began college at an early age and graduated high school at the age of 15. Even though these were great accomplishments they were not directed to the purpose of my growth primarily. However, as I became older and understood as well as learned more, I was able to reflect upon this and change my mindset of how I looked at race. Instead of desiring another background, I know feel enriched with my own and highlight my triumphs with my background, those two factors in my life are always a combo. Everything happens for a reason and being in a new country and learning a new language created a new me. I am grateful for this "Race Card project" because it does certainly offer different perspectives and stories behind what each of us feels or think about when we define race.

Roadblocks to Employment and Other Opportunities

Joe Woodward

THE
RACE CARD
PROJECT

*Roadblocks to employment
and other opportunities*

When minorities try to get employment, some kind of road block often keeps us from getting the work. For example, when I was in school, the teachers were racist. I had problems with my homework and getting my grade scores higher. The teachers didn't seem interested in helping me and other students of color. Instead, these white teachers spent more time with the white students. They seemed more interested in improving the white students' educations than the minority students' educations. As a result, many of us dropped out of school without getting an education. Lack of a proper education is one of the roadblocks I'm referring to.

Those of us who have high school diplomas and no criminal backgrounds still seem to have problems getting jobs. These high school graduates fill out application after application and go on countless interviews, but employers rarely contact them to let them know that they got the jobs. Or, if employers do get back in contact, they say that the applicants weren't qualified for the jobs.

After a certain period of time, when your bills, rent, plus other expenses pile up, you have to have money. This need for money forces many of us into desperation. When you're forced into desperation, you do things that are not wise. These unwise decisions lead many of us to committing crimes, like burglarizing houses, acts of violence, mugging innocent people, or selling illegal drugs, just to survive.

After a while, you're going to get caught for committing these crimes. The result is going to jail or prison, which automatically gives us a criminal record. Even after we've served our time for our crimes, our criminal record is used against us later when we go for employment because most employers don't hire people who have criminal backgrounds. Criminal background is another roadblock I'm referring to.

While older generations didn't seem to have criminal records like today's younger generation because these adults didn't use crime as an alternative to getting out of hardships, they still faced discrimination in the job market. Unlike today, they watched over each other within their communities, helping each other out so that criminal backgrounds were not as much of an issue.

Many of us do not choose to live in these conditions of poverty, but we have no choice because of the discrimination we have faced in our society. Criminal background and education are two of our biggest

roadblocks. Having a police record keeps you from employment. How can you expect to get a job if your criminal background gets in your way of getting employment or being offered other opportunities? Without a clean record, even educational skills won't help you.

I feel that if people commit crimes and are punished for their crimes, they shouldn't have to have their crimes hanging over their shoulders for the rest of their lives. One solution, I can think of, is to change the limit to the statute of limitations on criminal records. If we had a way to get around our background checks and have our charges reduced to lesser charges, meaning from felonies to misdemeanors, many employers will hire us.

Six Words on Racism

Scot A. Briggs

THE
RACE CARD
PROJECT

*Prejudice, Oppression, Isolates,
Serious, Offensive, Negativity.*

Prejudice – To cause damage or detriment to ones right or claims.

Oppression – Unjust or cruel exercise of power or authority.

Isolates – To place or keep by itself! Separate from Others.

Serious – Dangerous/harmful.

Offensive – To attack.

Negativity - To refuse to accept or approve.

P.O.I.S.O.N. – To affect, destruct, fully corrupt his/her mind.

I Thought You Were the Babysitter

Repeka Touli

THE
RACE CARD
PROJECT

*I thought you were the
babysitter.*

I never thought for a moment that I would ever be seen as a stereotype but like everyone else, it happened to me too. I was a brand new mother at the time with a six-month baby son. His father is a white Australian and I am Samoan. My son was

born fair and to look at him, you couldn't tell he was anything Samoan except his cute nose inherited from his mother. One afternoon I was out with him shopping and like many times previously, we would get stopped by many young girls "ooh-ing" and "aah-ing" over him because he was fair looking and undeniably handsome. It is not a common practice to see a fair looking child being carried by a Samoan woman anywhere in public, but I did which naturally attracted some attention. One afternoon I was carrying my son as I took him out for a stroll. A lady whom I've never met before in my life (who obviously didn't know who I was) came over and started talking to me, complimenting on how handsome my boy was, etc. After about 10 minutes of playing with my son, she turned to me and asked, "Where is his mother? Are you the babysitter?" I nearly choked. I kept a straight face and said, "I am the mother." To which she replied: "Oh! I thought you were the babysitter!"

Grandad

Mitchell J. Baca

THE
RACE CARD
PROJECT

*A humanitarian can
appreciate the differences.*

“Your grandad is a humanitarian,” my mom said, a hint of pride in her voice. I had asked her who a humanitarian was in my life, since my teacher, Mr. Nelson, had posed the question in class. Mr. Nelson had twaddled on about great humanitarians

of the times, but I couldn’t tell you their names as I was keen to tune him out. But from the explanations I caught between making spitballs, it seemed like you had to lead big rallies, or live in the desert, or hand out rice on the streets, or say smart things using smart words to be a humanitarian. And granddad never did any of that.

My grandaddy is a lot of things. A war veteran. The master of catching cat fish. A checkers champ and noogie extraordinaire. The owner of the local feed store. A hero to his three grand-kids when he takes us out to ice cream even though mom had told him not to. And there isn’t a man on God’s earth I know that has such precision at balancing a beer and cold cut in one hand, and a Marlin Model 55 aimed at prairie dogs in the other. He is quiet and gruff and simple. But I didn’t see the humanitarian mom said he is in the examples Mr. Nelson gave us.

“At the core of being a humanitarian, one must exert a high amount of acceptance to people of all races and ethnicities.” Mr. Nelson fancied turning one-dollar words like “acceptance” into ten-dollar words by making them sound much deeper than its uncomplicated meaning drove at. “Any human—culture, color, or creed—can look at one another and see something different. A humanitarian can appreciate the differences.”

Mr. Nelson went on about different cultures and asked us to take out a piece of paper.

“Sometimes we are judged by the way we look or the traditions we follow. Write about a time when you were judged unfairly based on how others view you.”

What the hell did I know about being treated unfairly ‘cause of how I look? I’m whiter than a polar bear playing in a blizzard. No one gypped me out of change at the store like Michael’s dad ‘cause his skin is dark. Or mocked me by pulling faces with thin eyes like they did at Cindy. Or talked gobbledygook at me like when they made fun of Celia’s Spanish accent. So instead of writing on something I didn’t know about, I drew a picture: Michael, Cindy, Celia and me with the rest of the kids. Laughing with each other, not at each other.

"Your granddad is a humanitarian," mom said, this time with an undeniable sense of honor. The kind of honor that stands alone without the need of anyone else's approval or agreement.

A couple nights before, Granddaddy took my sisters and me to the Chinese market. Mom was working late again and grandad was fixing to indulge our sweet tooth for the candy wrapped in symbols we didn't understand. The store was real quiet, with only a few customers milling about. The owner greeted us and went to the back of the store. The candy was at the end of an aisle facing the register where the owner's wife waited behind the counter. My sisters went for the bright pink and yellow candy while I stooped down for the orange. Grandad looked the candy up and down, trying to suppress the twinkle in his eye that told me deep down inside he was a kid with a sweet tooth too. The store owner's son—a little kid no more than five—walked up and down the aisles until he met us at the colorful racks. He looked up at the top shelf, where the blue candy gleamed under the fluorescent lights.

Grandad hoisted him up to grab a piece, saying the blue was his favorite too. The kid grabbed two, and back on the linoleum floor, handed one to grandad. That's when the guy came in, all dressed up in black from head to foot, carrying a gun. He started yelling for everyone to stand still and for the owner's wife to start emptying the register. Her son had started crying 'cause of the commotion—wailing on behalf of us who were too scared to make a sound.

"The man hollered at the boy to shut up, his demand peppered with slurs and obscenities."

The man hollered at the boy to shut up, his demand peppered with slurs and obscenities. The boy didn't comply—how could he? Even if they shared the same dialect, the language of threats is seldom well-received. He kept harassing the little guy, his eyes wide with malice and dark with uncaring. They were the only thing visible through all the black fabric, and they told the world he was desperate. Desperate for a thrill, or money, or maybe just to be taken seriously. Who knew? People went to strange lengths to be noticed or get what they want. It led me to wonder what use a disguise and a weapon was to a person who wanted to be understood.

The barrel of the gun pointed directly at the boy didn't sway the kid to calm down either, but it stirred our anxiety. My older sister dropped her candy and grabbed my hand. White-knuckled and tight, the grip was her way of saying "It's all going to be ok. And I'm also scared as hell it won't be." I squeezed hers in kind, saying the same thing.

The man had had enough. It all happened in a clamor of bullets and frantic screams, so fast it wasn't until the smoke cleared that I

understood it all. The market owner stood firmly in the door frame of the stocking room, holding a rifle still hot from discharge. The masked man was crumpled motionless on the linoleum, a dark chest stain barely visible through the black sweater. The boy lay on the ground, an arm's length away from where he had stood. Still crying. Granddad was no longer next to me.

Kneeling hunched over, his breathing was labored, and he clutched a red spot on his old army jacket that was spreading over where his medals used to hang. My sister ran to him, and the owner's wife scooped up her distressed child. She was talking hysterically, and we couldn't understand the words coming out of her mouth. But as she held her son close, the tone was universal – “thank you, thank you.”

My sister sobbed silently, cupping granddad's face in her shaking hands.

“Why?” My sister wasn't selfish; she just didn't want to lose a man that meant so much to her.

He didn't say anything, as granddad was apt to do. Just waved feebly for my other sister and me to come closer. He wrapped his arms around the three of us, so tight I could feel the damp spot, and fell still. The blue sweet that was in his hand plinked to the floor.

The whole town crowded around the grave site at the peak of the sloping lawn. I was struck at the turn out. When the news spread of that night, everyone was up in arms, and the result was a noble funeral fit for a man The Herald deemed a “local hero.” Though granddad wouldn't have approved of all the fuss.

I expected sensationalized gossip to detract from the service. But it was a real somber affair; people didn't say much. They just mingled around the bedecked casket, faces marked with streaks of genuine loss. Folks came up to mom to shake her hand or give her a hug. It was then that I learned just how much of a loss his death was to our community.

They had lovely things to say about granddad. How he gave away feed at no cost to struggling farmers and solved plumbing problems to widows and single mothers. How he volunteered at the shelter, and his donations to the church let kids go on campouts. On occasion he'd take a day to drive for miles, assisting anyone he found stuck on the side of the road. It seemed everyone had a story like that, and mom just nodded her head knowingly, a beaming smile between her tear-stained cheeks. He did so much and he never told me about it. But I suppose that degree of modesty was par for granddad.

No one spoke of rallies or rice or rhetoric—just simple stories of kind deeds that touched the lives of many. Mr. Nelson's lesson about appreciating the differences in others suddenly seemed much simpler. Granddad saw the value in the people around him, making it easy for him to be of value to them. He knew the power of a kind word and a helping hand. The last helping hand he gave saved another person's

life. He looked at that boy in the market and saw someone who had the potential to do good in life. After all, we need people in the world who are willing to share blue candy.

I went over to the coffin to bid granddad one last “good-bye.” It seemed almost too simple a container for the humanitarian I had come to learn was laid there. The glint of a shiny wrapper against the wood caught my eye. A ways away, the Chinese family waved at me. I waved back, and then placed my palm to rest on the foil and oak cover.

James Bond and My Unexpected Grades

Nathan Cole

THE
RACE CARD
PROJECT

*James Bond and my
Unexpected Grades*

The question of “where are you from?” was asked of me in 7th grade by our vice-principal. I went to West Junior High, in Rochester, N.Y. My father was an Ironworker, working in a proud Mohawk modern tradition, as he risked life and limb

to help build tall building skeletons in different cities, from New York to Arizona, before we settled down in Rochester, where my mother, also a Mohawk worked as a Registered Nurse. Both were from the Akwesasne Reservation. Our people are part of the Iroquois Confederacy of old. Mom was from the Canadian side, Dad from the New York State side of the “Rez.” My grandparents on either side had little formal schooling in the Indian Boarding schools of their day. None had gone past 6th grade. But they made sure their children went beyond.

The vice-principal had come to visit with me outside of Mrs. B.’s English class. Unlike the mix of ethnic students in the class (Black, Asian, Puerto Rican, Jewish, Italian, Greek, and me), and what few of the mainstream “white” students were in her class, I excelled in her class. He caught my accent, which at the time was a mix of Reservation, Canadian, and inner-city Rochester inflections. I was a curiosity, and my teacher wanted some advice on how to keep me interested, as every assignment, every test, was easy for me. She had to teach to the crowd, the majority of the Bell curve, and many of them struggled with literature, because for them, reading was a chore. For me, it was fun, because Mom and my grandparents had nurtured that fluency. But this inner city pair didn’t know what to do with me, as the curriculum was too easy for me.

Finally, the vice-principal thanked me for my time, talked with Mrs. B., and the rest of 7th grade English was taken doing speed reading, but I maxed out the machine’s top speed. So Mrs. B. gave me James Bond. I read the whole series and went on to other genres too, but he was my companion through a difficult inner-city school atmosphere. You see, I was that bookworm with the glasses, unusual accent, and unexpected grades. Mainstreamed, and yet...not.

Nathan Cole is an enrolled member of the Akwesasne Mohawk Reservation, located in northern New York State. The Mohawk are part of the original Five Nations of the Iroquois Confederacy. He is an Assistant Professor of English at Salt Lake Community College. In addition to first and second year composition courses, he teaches English 2810: Native American Literature and Experience, an introductory course to Native American history, literatures and culture.

I Will Always Win the Race

Katelyn Prawitt

THE
RACE CARD
PROJECT

*I will always win
the race.*

“Competition,” I thought when I heard the “race.”

That’s what I’m good at, winning with grace.

Now, why? Why can’t we shed this social taboo called “race”?

In our younger generation, we are at a good pace.

Continue to talk our differences away,

Let go of our judgments and we’ll see the day.

In the end, I will do my best.

Just one person can protest.

In the end, the question that we’ll face...

What can we do to win the race?

Katelyn Prawitt is a student at Salt Lake Community College, she received her AS in General Studies in Fall of 2013. She is transferring to Westminster College to pursue a Bachelor’s in Public Health.

Katelyn serves on the Executive Council at SLCC. She has never been a writer, but she began to enjoy the process of writing because of Professor Lara Asplund. Katelyn thanks Lara for her love of writing and for spreading the joy it brings to her students. Outside of school, Katelyn enjoys singing, exercising, running, cheerleading, and food.

Untitled

Denise Amber Pineda

THE RACE CARD
PROJECT

*We're all equal, no
matter what.*

When you first read my name you might wonder. What race is she?

I thought I was Puerto Rican until about two years ago when my mother clarified that I am indeed, Mexican. I looked at my birth certificate & sure enough, my dad is on

there as “Mexican.” It’s kind of funny though because his name is James Pineda. At first glance, you might not expect that he is a man of color.

I only had one picture of him, which I no longer have today, & in this picture, he is standing on top of a building, dressed as a construction worker. And he had some blue jeans on & a bright white t-shirt & tan boots, with a tool belt hanging loosely. He had very very very long jet black hair & a dark orange tan complexion. I honestly don’t remember any more than that & I’m sure I might of remembered some things incorrectly, however these are the images in my memory. I still have not seen him or had contact with him since I was five.

I grew up with my mother only, dad left when I was two. My mother is white, really white, with red hair & freckles (Irish) but she was born in Mexico City because my Grandpa was in the military & stationed there. My mother’s first language was Spanish.

I grew up in Dallas, Texas where I was the only white girl out of my friends. The rest were black or Mexican. This is where I learned about music & how to hip hop dance, etc.

I’ve always felt more comfortable being around people of color or different nationalities. It’s strange because when I’m around white people, I feel less than & belittled. But sometimes being around people of color I feel better than, or empowered. Honestly I crave for both approvals. I want people of color to accept me & not treat me as just another white girl. And when I’m around white people I want them to view me as an equal member, not white trash.

I do believe that race is a huge issue still in our country & world wide for that matter. It’s horrible that we are stepping all over each other & still continuing to judge someone just based on their outside appearance.

It is also sad that certain people use their race against people & as you say “give their race a bad name.” They feed into the stereotypes & continue to set examples of why that stereotype was created. It’s a vicious & horrible cycle & I’m not sure it will ever stop, unless we start talking about it.

I am guilty of racial profiling or not being sensitive enough about race.

I'm working hard to change this within myself because I am a very strong believer in equality. Most people think that is directly related to gay awareness & acceptance when in fact it is not singled to any particular group or individual. My understanding of equality & what I try to spread is that: WE ARE ALL EQUAL, NO MATTER WHAT.

In the mean time I am considering on changing my last name just because 1) it doesn't really mean anything to me since I don't know my father or care about carrying on his legacy & 2) I do get judged on paper from it; as in people expect me to be Mexican or something & a blonde white girl appears & sometimes that's worked to my advantage but most of the time it has not. 3) when people see my last name they automatically think that I can speak Spanish; which I can not. Only a little bit. This last name has caused more complications & misunderstandings, misjudgments than I believe it's worth!

I just want to not be judged because of my race (or lack there of) & I'd also like to stop judging people because of their race.

Sprouting Hope for a Kinder World

Linda Waters

THE
RACE CARD
PROJECT

*Sprouting hope for a
kinder world.*

Crowded, the room teemed with the cacophony
of translators, nervous laughter, and upbeat tunes...
a mysterious calling, a reaching, a venturing onward
toward something more.

Strangely, it felt like family, a rendezvous with fate,
a remembering, the odd comfort of home,
no tangible recollection of meeting before.

Cheerful faces, kind embraces, causing no alarm,
citizens of one human race, crossing all ages and form,
a mini-world melting pot on American soil.

The room hushed, a slim, willowy, soft-spoken
power-angel read the names of 51 countries present,
chuckles, applause...borders matter not.

Their common ground, a longing for a caring world
where peace prevails, humanity matures,
wisdom masters the blacker ways of war.

Shedding outdated borders, battle-torn relics of all sorts...
Leaning forward, burdens of hate, of fear fall away.
Past grudges, gone, a simple process and trusted guide.
A kaleidoscope of tears cascading,
bygones fading, nine days washed in grace...

With baby-eyes, gentle smiles, soothing sighs...
they gather, while those, wrapped tight
in plastic pleasures, me-isms, cynicism, despair,
landfills of singular colliding minds, barely know.

Stories of bigness, of smallness, of best-ness, of less-ness,
worn-out words, righteous reasons, primitive remnants...
all folly, jesters of fallen mental courts,
toot loudly their rusted horns.

Meeting, on the edge of innocence, fresh winds smiling
at the quiet evolution, gentle clearing of air...
They fly on the back of a blue-green speck
in a sea of a trillion stars
sprouting hope, finding it a kinder world
for the children of tomorrows, yet to be...

My Street Life Opened My Eyes

Mason E. Gramly

THE
RACE CARD
PROJECT

*My street life opened
my eyes.*

Race

I was born and raised in a small corner of Utah called Taggerts Utah with my family and eight other family's there was not a lot to do as a young kid but head up into the High Uintahs that was our back door or back yard. I never had any interaction with black kids, Mexican kids, or any other race so I was raised to simply see a person as a person or a man as a man I was never brought up to simply judge any man, woman, or child by the color of their skin or their outward appearances.

My first time I interacted with any other Nationality or race if you will was when I moved in with my father in Ogden, Utah so I was already a young man of 16 years old I was raised to respect my others and to treat others as I would want them to treat myself. My best friend as of this day that I had the privilege of meeting is a black man by the name of Anthony Brackett he is the best thing that has happened to me in my entire life I have had to meet interact with many walks of life in all the years I have been on the streets since I was 17 years old up until this current time you cannot honestly judge a person by the color of their skin or their ethnic back grounds so that is where I stand on my take on this matter thank you very much for letting me have my personal view of the very sensitive subject on race and that how I say MY STREET LIFE OPENED MY EYES!

Let the World Grow More Peace

Misha Busch

THE
RACE CARD
PROJECT

*Let the world grow
more peace.*

Everywhere you look,
Hate, anger, war.
Judgment on everyone and everything.
Where is the love?
Where is the peace?
The weeds are overtaking the beauty.
The flowers are in bloom,
Each unique and beautiful.
The gardener only wants the “perfect” ones,
The right ones.
There is no perfect in the world.
There is no right or wrong flower.
Let the world grow more peace.
Let the gardener see that each flower is equal.
Each flower is beautiful in its own way,
Grow more, and let the peace be.

The Changing Nature of Racism Since MLK

Archie Archuleta

THE
RACE CARD
PROJECT

*Racism is a barrier
to overcome.*

The dream is still alive, the reason for it, is too. And we, as a society have made strides towards that dream. But it's still a little iffy. Racism is alive and well in our country.

Simply put: "Race each of the major divisions of human kind having distinct physical characteristics, and a group of people sharing the same culture, language, etc. An ethnic group "Racism the belief that each race has certain qualities or abilities, giving rise to the view that some races are better than others; Discrimination against or hostility towards other races."

On the issue of voting rights, we now have a law that was then changed a little, making it tougher for some people to register and to vote.

On the issue of desegregation of schools we started it, but now they are nearly as segregated as they were when the Supreme Court said separate but equal, ain't equal.

On the issue of jobs and entrance to universities, we got affirmative action and then we put restrictions on the implementation.

We did get public accommodations as a right and that is working.

Well, you get the picture.

As time goes on, the target of discrimination have remained, some have just come to the fore more prominently: The issue of immigration of Latinos, Asians, Africans, Polynesians, Middle Easterners, Muslims, etc. Once again immigration shows its cyclical nature, and close ties to economic busts and booms, and the nastiness of scapegoating.

The issue of the LGBT Movement and the countering of it by a different form of racism: Homophobia. Is alive and well.

We still have Dr. King's legacy including the lessons learned as he experienced and led the movement, such as these, following from his great letter from Birmingham Jail,

"Never again we afford to live with the narrow, provincial "Outside Agitator" idea. Anyone who lives inside the United States can never be considered an outsider anywhere within its bounds"

And when he was scolded with "How can you advocate breaking some laws and obeying others?"

"The answer lies in the fact that there are two kinds of laws: Just and Unjust. I agree with St. Augustine that, 'An unjust law is no law at all...'"

"In no sense do I advocate evading or defying the law as would the

rabid segregationist. That would lead to anarchy. One who breaks an unjust law must do so openly, lovingly, and with a willingness to accept the penalty. I submit that an individual that breaks a law that conscience tells him is unjust and who willingly accepts the penalty of the community over its injustice, is in reality expressing the highest respect for law.”

This answer is set within bounds of critical thinking, a moral judgment and action—WOW! What a blueprint for civil rights activists.

This courage and perseverance of Dr. King, in the face of great odds and being a marked man is affirmed in his posthumously published essay, “A testament of hope,” and is well summed-up by professor Derrick Bell in his book *Faces At the Bottom of the Well*, *The Permanence of Racism*: “So while Dr. King led a struggle toward a goal—Racial Equality—That seemed possible, if not quite feasible, in the 1960’s, there was a deeper message of commitment to courageous struggle whatever the circumstances or odds. A part of that struggle was the need to speak the truth as he viewed it even that truth alienated rather than unified, upset hearts, and subjected censure rather than of King’s Anti-his telegram to during his heavy and his support workers demands mother used to no duele siquiera

*“Keeping
in mind that
I too, am seeking
answers and have
for at least five
decades”*

minds rather than calmed the speaker to general acclaim.” (Here speak Vietnam speech, Cesar Chavez fasting for justice, of the sanitation in Memphis.) My say, “ Si la verdad desencomoda.”

And this leads me King.’ So from discussions on racism, readings, and observations I’d like to present the following unpleasant truths; Keeping in mind that I too, am seeking answers and have for at least five decades, and that this list is provided in hoped of enticing you to study them, discuss them, investigate them, and then act. For you are the hope of the future, and this Gordian knot of racism can only be served with the sword of knowledge and action.

1) Racism is still practiced against Blacks, Latinos, Asians, Polynesians, Native Americans, Muslims, Middle Easterners, Jews, Refugees, etc. The targets of choice have shifted to immigrants, women, the poor and LGBT folk. (Classism, Sexism, Nativism and Homophobia)

2) Social Justice has been elusive and according to Dr. Bell there seems to be a permanence of racism.⁴ (Changes)

3) Demographic changes according to Census Figures of 2010, have brought about major shifts in #'s of ethnic groups. Latinos after Whites are the second largest ethnic group in America. It is predicted that California will soon be 50/50 white with other ethnic groups. Utah has

experienced the phenomenon as well. In the 2010 Census Utah went from 90% white to 80.4% White.*5

4) Miscegenation, the word comes from the Latin *Misère* to mix and Genus race, thus race mixing. Race mixing has been taking place, at least ever since *cro-magnum* met *Neanderthal*... in slave holding Latin America, miscegenation took place regularly, and the child of white and negro was called *Mulatto*, and the child of *Mestizo* and Indian was called *Coyote*, the child of a *Spaniard* and an Indian was a *Mestizo*. And on until it became unwieldy and was scrapped. As *Latinos* we are used to this mixing and we call it *Mestizaje*. In slave holding America, miscegenation took place on a regular basis, the Revelation that Thomas Jefferson had raised a family with Mrs. Hemings is well known. See the movie “Lee Daniels’ the Butler” for a more violent instance of miscegenation. To me this says that our country already has a large population of mixed race people. Perhaps, in a way, this is part of the answer to doing away with racism.

As each new phenomenon arises new problems arise. (The experience with UCLR/Comcast/SLCHS with Latino/White kids.) So their question is do we count and in the Census, are we listed as mixed or other?

Syncretism, the process of combining different religions, cultures, etc. Has taken place in the Americas with religion, when Native Americans adapted to Christianity and adapted it to their own ideas. In food and language adopted and adapted in the U.S., (Examples Cowboys, Foods, Monotheism and Native Religions.) Is syncretism lessening racism?

5) The LGBT Movement, once one of the most discriminated groups has brought about more tolerance and acceptance in a very short time frame. Law suits, ballot issues, state laws, ordinances have brought to the fore the age old struggle between church and state. Homophobia as a different form of racism is slowly being nullified by humanitarian and constitutional wave. This phenomenon didn’t just happen; study the tactics of the LGBT Movement.

6) As groups of us that consider ourselves civil rights advocates gather to discuss racism and its effects on all, we find ourselves talking to each other and a handful of dedicated white allies, we’ve known about dominance, position, privilege and force, sometimes intuitively, but always in fact. We know that many of the educators and scholars that have studied and investigated the issue of white dominance were white. We realize that without white participation there can be no solution to racism.

I’ll use the words and ideas of Gary R. Howard, from his book, *We Can’t Teach What We Don’t Know, White Teachers, Multiracial Schools*.

Howard completed his studies at Yale University in Cultural Anthropology and Social Psychology; he earned a master’s in Education from Western Washington University. Currently he’s the president

and founder of REACH center for Multicultural education in Seattle, Washington. Here are his words:

P-4, 1st paragraph

“....I am convinced there is a prior and equally compelling need for White people, particularly White educators in the United States and other nations of the West, to look within ourselves and realign our deepest assumptions and perceptions regarding the racial marker that we carry, namely Whiteness.” (Howard 4)

P-11 1st

“I was born White and have been that way for more than 50 years.... Since I had never met a person who wasn’t White, had never experienced the “other,” race for me was a non-relevant concept. In my youth I had no conscious awareness of anything that might be called “racial identity.” Like water to a fish, Whiteness to me was the centerpiece of a constant and undifferentiated milieu, unnoticed in its normalcy.” (Howard 11)

P-30 End of 1st Para.

“....From the perspective of those members of society who are not White. It is. Quite clear, both subjectively and objectively, that Whites have been collectively allocated disproportionate amounts of power, authority, wealth, control and dominance. However, for me as an individual White person, subjectively experiencing my own reality, I may not feel dominant. I may or may not perceive myself as belonging to a collective group defined by Whiteness.” (Howard 30)

As you have heard, I have not given you all the information that has led me to say and quote what I’ve said.. I did this to pique your intellectual interest, so that you will explore the issue of racism and hopefully act upon your knowledge. I have included a bibliography of some of the books that have influenced me about Social Justice. I will share them with Dean Hansen.

Let me end with a happening about privileges on position shared with me by a Utah educator, Nancy Livingston:

The Cake story: Mom is preparing to share some cake with her two daughters, one older and bigger, the other younger and smaller.

Mom, “Now I’m giving the larger piece to your sister because she is bigger than you, and the smaller piece to you.”

Little Sister, “ But Mom, if you keep giving the larger piece to her, she’ll always be bigger.”

(the story really is about positionality and Mom’s dominance.)

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