

First-Year Urban Program Reading Packet 2019



the FUPrint

*your first steps towards FUP love
and the Harvard community*

FUP Reading Packet

This packet is meant to present a variety of perspectives on race, gender, sexual orientation, class, identity, ability status, religion, social justice, oppression, privilege, power structures and what it means to participate in service, activism, and social change here in Boston and Cambridge. There is no one way to “be FUP,” but all the pieces in this packet have been chosen to provoke critical thought, discussion and reflection.

Don’t feel any pressure to agree with all (or any) of the authors - but do take the time to think about the issues they raise. Please do all the reading carefully, as we’ll be meeting in small, organized discussion groups throughout FUP week.

While we tried to include a diverse range of topics relating to service, activism, and social change, there is definitely no way for a compilation of readings like this to cover everything—if there is a topic that you feel is missing, that’s definitely something you can bring up in your small discussion group at FUP! This packet is meant to serve as a way to start the conversations that we will have throughout FUP week, but there will also be plenty of space to talk about your personal experiences with the kinds of topics raised here if you feel comfortable. While reading this packet, it can be helpful to think about what the community you’re from is like and how that has influenced how you see the issues that are brought up in this packet.

Please be conscious of the environmental impact printing this packet may have. Any references to the packet can be made digitally if needed.

Good luck, happy reading, and we cannot wait to FUP with you!

Intro to Harvard

Welcome FUPpie! We want to make sure you all are equipped to take on your first-year year, so here is a list of resources at your disposal for the next four years.

- **Mental Health Resources** *There are a multitude of mental health resources at your disposal.*
 - **Counseling and Mental Health Services (CAMHS)** Taken from their website: *“CAMHS is a counseling and mental health support service which seeks to work collaboratively with students and the university to support individuals who are experiencing some measure of distress in their lives.”*
 - Located at the University Health Services (HUHS) in the Smith Campus Center, open from Monday-Friday, 8:30AM-5:30PM
 - Phone: 617-495-2042, After-Hours Phone: 617-495-5711
 - CAMHS provides a website with consolidated resources for students, including all the different types of resources: professional, peer, and residential support. <https://camhs.huhs.harvard.edu/our-servicesht>
- **Sexual Assault Resources** *There are also a multitude of resources for sexual assault.*
 - **Office of Sexual Assault Prevention & Response (OSAPR)** Taken from the OSAPR Website: *“The Office of Sexual Assault Prevention & Response seeks to eliminate harm, violence, and oppression through the intersectional promotion of gender equity and social justice. We advocate for the compassionate, just treatment of survivors and collaborate with our Harvard community to effect attitudinal and behavioral change.”*
 - Located at 624 Smith Campus Center, open from Monday-Friday, 9AM-5PM
 - Phone: 617-496-5636, 24-hour hotline: 617-495-9100
 - **Title IX Office** Taken from the Title IX website: *“The Title IX Office is committed to maintaining a safe and healthy educational and work environment that is free from sexual and gender-based harassment. Our office supports the entire Harvard community in a neutral role, meaning that all members of the University community can access our resources.”*
 - Located at 901 Smith Campus Center, open from Monday-Friday, 9AM-5PM
 - Phone: 617-496-0200
 - The Title IX Office provides a handbook with resources for students who may be experiencing sexual or gender-based harassment and/or violence. https://hwpi.harvard.edu/files/titleix/files/resource_guide_august_17_2016_final.pdf.
- **Office of Diversity Education & Support (ODES), Women’s Center, Office of BGLTQ Student Life (QuOffice), and Harvard Foundation for Intercultural and Race Relations** *All these offices are located in various basements within Harvard Yard and are available for your use. They are all welcoming and inclusive environments.*

- *Women's Center is located in the basement of Canaday B. ODES and BGLTQ Office in the ground level of Grays Hall. Harvard Foundation is located in the basement of Thayer.*
- **Academic Advisors and Peer-Advising Fellows (PAFs)** *Your academic advisors are assigned to you based on your concentration and help you with any information you need regarding academics. Your PAFs are other students who are there to guide you in everything from academics to extracurriculars. They are both going to be great resources for you to seek out information about academics, extracurriculars, and anything else you will need.*
- **Harvard University Police Department(HUPD)** *The official Harvard University police that can help you with whatever you need if it's simply needing an escort to take you home or something more serious.*
 - Phone: 617-495-1212
- **Harvard University Health Services(HUHS)** *The local hospital where you can get a checkup, use the pharmacy, or go to for any medical needs.*
 - Located at the Smith Campus Center Monday-Friday 8AM-5:30PM; Urgent Care is available 7 days a week from 8:00AM - 10:00PM; Nurse Advice Line is available 7 days a week from 10:00PM - 8:00AM
 - Phone: 617-495-5711
- **Yard Operations or YardOps** *YardOps keeps up the maintenance of all the freshmen dorms and other buildings. They are the ones you go to when something in your room is broken or you have some pests in your room.*
 - Located in the basement of Weld Hall; Number: 617-495-1874

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Introduction to Social Justice

What Is **Privilege**? An Analysis of Privilege, Power Structures, & Systematic Oppression
Adapted from the AFED Women's Caucus "Class Struggle Anarchist Analysis of Privilege Theory."

Tags: Social Justice, Privilege, Intersectionality

Summary: A discussion of privilege, power structures, and systematic oppression.

To read online, visit: <http://www.afed.org.uk/blog/state/327-a-class-struggle-anarchist-analysis-of-privilege-theory--from-the-womens-caucus-.html>

Defined as: set of unearned benefits provided exclusively to people within a specific social group

What do we mean – and what do we *not* mean – by privilege? Privilege implies that wherever there is a system of oppression (such as patriarchy or white supremacy), there is an oppressed group and also a privileged group, who benefit from the oppressions that this system puts in place. The privileged group do not have to be active supporters of the system of oppression, or even aware of it, in order to benefit from it. They benefit from *being viewed as the norm*, and providing for their needs being seen as what is naturally done, while the oppressed group is considered the “other”, and their needs are “special considerations”. Sometimes, the privileged group benefits from the system in the obvious, material ways, such as when women are expected to do most or all of the housework, and male partners benefit from their unpaid labour. At other times the benefits are more subtle and invisible, and involve certain pressures being taken off a privileged group and focused on others, for example black and Asian youths being 28% more likely to be stopped and searched by the police than white youths².

The point here is not that police harassment doesn't happen to white youths, or that being working class or a white European immigrant doesn't also mean you're more likely to face harassment; the point is that a disproportionate number of black and Asian people are targeted in companion to white people, and the result of this is that, if you are carrying drugs, and you are white, then *all other things being equal* you are much more likely to get away with it than if you were black. In the UK, white people are also less likely to be arrested or jailed, or to be the victim of a personal crime.³ The point of quoting this is not to suggest we want a society in which people of all races and ethnicities face equal disadvantage – we want to create a society in which nobody faces these disadvantages. But part of getting there is acknowledging how **systems of oppression** work, which means recognizing that, if black and ethnic minority groups are more likely to face these disadvantages, then by simple maths white people are *less* likely to face them, and that means they have an advantage, a privilege, including the privilege of not needing to be aware of the extent of the problem.

A privileged group may also, in some ways, be oppressed by the expectation of the system that privileges them; for example, men under patriarchy are expected to not show weakness or emotion, and are mistrusted as carers. However, men are not oppressed by patriarchy *for being men*, they are oppressed in these ways because it is necessary in order to *maintain women's oppression*. For women to see themselves as weak, irrational and suited only to caring roles, they must believe that men are stronger, less emotional and incapable of caring for those who need it.

It is crucial to understand that members of the privileged group of any of these systems may also be oppressed by any of the other, and this is what allows struggles to be divided. We are divided, socially and politically, by a lack of awareness of our privileges, and how they are used to set our interests against each other and break out solidarity (more on this in the section on Intersectionality).

Privilege, Social Class, and Cultural Identity

The term “privilege” has a complex relationship with class struggle, and to understand why, we need to look at some of the differences and confusions between economic and social class. Social class describes the cultural identities of working class, middle class and upper class. These identities, much like those built on gender or race, are socially constructed, created by a society based on its prejudices and expectations of people in those categories. Economic class is different. It describes the economic working and ruling classes, and is based on the ownership of material resources, regardless of your personal identity or social status. This is why a wealthy, knighted capitalist like Alan Sugar can describe himself as a “working class boy made good”. He is clearly not working class if we look at it economically, but he clings to that social identity in the belief that it in some way justifies or excuses the exploitation within his business empire. He confuses social and economic class in order to

identify himself with an oppressed group (the social working class) and so deny his own significant privilege (as part of the economic ruling class).

This doesn't make economic class a "primary" oppression, or the others "secondary", but it does mean that resistance in economic class struggle takes different forms and has slightly different aims to struggles based on cultural identities. We can't force men to give up their maleness or white people to give up their whiteness, or send them all to the guillotine and reclaim their power and privilege as if it were a resource that they were hoarding. Instead, we need to take apart and understand the systems that tend to concentrate power and resources in the hands of the privileged and question the very concepts of gender, sexuality, race, etc. that are used to build identities that divide us.

A large part of the resentment some feel of the term "privilege" comes from misunderstandings of how privileges based in these cultural identities work – men, white people, straight people, cisgendered people, etc., can't give up their privilege – no matter how much they may want to. It is forced on them by a system they cannot opt out of, or choose to stop benefiting from. Nevertheless, many feel as if they're being accused of hoarding something they're not entitled to, and that they're being blamed for this or asked to feel guilty or undergo some kind of endless penance to be given absolution for their privilege. This is not the case. While some may feel guilty for their privilege, we must recognize that **guilt isn't useful; awareness and thoughtful actions are**. If you take nothing else away from this document, take this: **You are not responsible for the system that gives you your privilege, only for how you respond to it.** The privileged have a role to play in the struggle against the systems that privilege them – it's just not a leadership role (more on this later).

Answering Objections to Privilege

A common objection to the concept of privilege is that it makes cultural status out of the lack of an oppression. You could say that not facing systematic prejudice for your skin color isn't a privilege, it's how things should be for everyone. To face racism is the aberration. To not face it should be the default experience. The problem is, if not experiencing oppression is the default experience, then experiencing oppression puts you outside the default experience, in a special category, which in turn makes a lot of the oppression invisible. To talk about privilege reveals what is normal to those without oppression, yet cannot be taken for granted by those with it. To talk about homophobia alone may reveal the existence of prejudices – stereotypes about how gay men and lesbian women behave, perhaps, or violence targeted against people for their sexuality.

To talk about straight privilege, however, show the other side of the system, the invisible side: what behavior is considered "typical" for straight people? There isn't one – straight isn't treated like a sexual category, it is treated like the absence of "gay". This analysis goes beyond worries about discrimination or prejudice to the very heart of what we consider normal and neutral, what we consider different and other, what needs explaining, what's taken as read – the prejudices in favour of being straight aren't recognizable as prejudices, because they're built into our very perceptions of what is the default way to be.

It's useful to see this, because when we look at oppressions in isolation, we tend to attribute them to personal or societal prejudice, a homophobic law that can be repealed, a racial discrimination that can be legislated against. Alone, terms like "racism", "sexism", "ableism" don't describe how oppression is woven into the fabric of a society and a normal part of life rather than an easily isolated stain on society that can be removed without a trace, leaving the fabric intact.⁵

Privilege theory is systematic. It explains why removing prejudice and discrimination isn't enough to remove oppression. It shows how society itself needs to be ordered differently. When people talk about being "colour-blind" in relation to race, they think it means they're not racist, but it usually means that *they think they can safely ignore differences of background and life experiences due to race*, and expect that the priorities and world views of everybody should be the same as those of white people, which they consider to be "normal". It means they think they don't have to listen to people who are trying to explain why a situation is different for them. They want difference to go away, so that everybody can be equal, yet by trying to ignore difference, *they are reinforcing it*. Recognizing privilege means recognizing that differences of experience exist which we may not be aware of. It means being willing to listen when people tell us about how their experience differs from ours. It means trying to conceive of a new "normal" that we can bring about through a differently structured society, instead of erasing experiences that don't fit into our privileged concept of "normal".

Intersectionality

Intersectionality is the idea that we are all privileged by some of these systems and oppressed by others, and that, because those systems affect one another, our oppression and privileges intersect. This means that we

each experience oppression in ways specific to our particular combinations of class, gender, race, sexuality, disability, age etc.^{6,7}

If we want a post-revolutionary society free of all oppression, we need all the oppressed to have an equal role in creating it, and that means listening to experiences of oppression that we don't share and working to understand how each system operates: in isolation, and in relation to other systems.

Just as sexism and racism divide class struggle, capitalism and racism divide gender struggles, and sexism and capitalism divide race struggles. All systems of oppression divide the struggles again all the other systems that they intersect with. This is because we find out loyalties divided by our own particular combinations of privilege and oppression, and we prioritize the struggles we see as primary to the detriment of others, and to the detriment of solidarity.

By being able to analyze and point out how systems of oppression intersect is vital, as hitting these systems of oppression at their intersections can be our most effective way of uniting struggles and building solidarity across a number of ideological fronts.

For example, certain strands of radical feminism have refused to accept the validity of trans* struggles, keeping trans women out of women's spaces (see the controversies over Radfem 2012 and some of the workshops at Women Up North 2012 over their "women born women" policies). The outcome of this is as above: the most oppressed get the shitty end of both sticks (in this case **cisnormativity** and patriarchy), with feminism, the movement that is supposed to be at the forefront of fighting oppression that affects both parties (patriarchy) failing at one of its sharpest intersections. This also led to the fracturing of the feminist movement and stagnation of theory through failure to communicate with trans* activists, whose priorities and struggles have such a massive crossover with feminism. One positive that's come out of these recent examples is the joining together of feminist and trans* activist groups to challenge the entry policy of Radfem 2012. This leading to more communication, solidarity and the possibility of joint actions between these groups.

The assumption that a person's gender identity is the same as their sex assigned at birth.

The above examples mean that thinking about privileges and oppressions is essential for organizing together, for recognizing where other struggles intersect with our own and what our role should be in those situations, where our experiences will be useful and where they will be disruptive, where we should be listening carefully and where we can contribute constructively. Acknowledging privilege in this situation means acknowledging that it's not the responsibility of the oppressed group to challenge the system that oppresses them, it's everybody's responsibility because being a part of a privileged group doesn't make you neutral, it means you're facing an advantage. That said, when we join the struggle against our own advantages, we need to remember that it isn't about duty or guilt or altruism, because *all of our struggles are connected*. The more we can make alliances over the oppression that have been used to divide us, the more we can unite against the forces that exploit us all. None of us can do it alone.

The Myth of the "Oppression Olympics"

To say that somebody has white privilege isn't to suggest that they can't also have a whole host of other oppressions. There is no points system for working out how privileged or oppressed you are in relation to somebody else, and no point in trying to do so. The only way that privilege or oppression makes your contributions to a struggle more or less valid is through that struggle's relevance to your lived experience.

A black, disabled working class lesbian may not necessarily have had a harder life than white, able-bodied working class straight cis-man, but she will have a much greater understand of the intersections between class, race, disability, gender and sexuality. The point isn't that, as the most oppressed in the room, she should lead the discussion, it's that her experience gives her insights he won't have on the relevant point of struggle, the demands that will be most effective, the bosses who represent the biggest problem, the best places and times to hold meetings or how to phrase a callout for a mass meeting so that it will appeal to a wider range of people, ways of dealing with issues that will very probably not occur to anybody whose oppression is along fewer intersections. He should be listening to her, not because she is more oppressed than him (though she may well be), but because it is vital to the struggle that she is heard, and because the prejudices that society has conditioned into us, and that still affect the most socially aware of us, continue to make it more difficult for her to be heard, for us to hear her.

Some would argue that government, public bodies and corporation have been known to use arguments like these to put forward or promote particular people into positions of power or responsibility, either as a well-meaning attempt to ensure that oppressed groups are represented or as a cynical exercise in tokenism to improve their public image. We oppose the idea that, for instance, a woman Prime Minister, will be likely to do anything more for working class women than a male Prime Minister will do for working class men. **It should be**

remembered that privilege theory is not a movement in itself but an analysis used by a diverse range of movements, liberal and radical, reformist and revolutionary.

We have to challenge ourselves to look out for campaigns that, due to the privilege of those who initiate them, lack awareness of how an issue differs across intersections. We need to broaden out our own campaigns to include the perspectives of all those affected by the issues we cover. This will allow us to bring more issues together, gather greater solidarity, fight more oppression and build a movement that can challenge all oppression.

Daily Effects of Class Privilege, From the Piedmont Peace Project

Tags: Social Justice, Class/SES, Privilege

Summary: Considers how class privilege can be present in everyday interactions.

- I don't have to feel apologetic for whatever my lifestyle is
- I don't have to fight a tendency to feel ashamed of myself and my background because of others' attitudes about my economic group
- I can assume that money will not keep me from getting whatever job or career I would like, and if I choose a lower-paying job I know that I always have family to fall back on for financial support
- I know that money will not be a limiting factor in where I choose to live.
- I can afford rent, utility, and phone deposits etc. whenever I need them. If not, I have an acceptable co-signer, or can have them waived because of my income level and good credit rating
- I can take vacations and travel as often as my work permits
- I will be able to take care of myself and my family after I retire, and will have wealth to pass on to my children.
- I am not obligated to spend all my resources and personal time taking care of my extended family.
- As a child I will not be placed in a lower academic track or discouraged from taking certain classes because of my economic status.
- My thinking about higher education has always centered around *which* college I will attend rather than *if* I will attend college.
- I can make sure that my children attend schools where they will learn to read, write, and develop other skills they will need to get a job.
- If I achieve outstanding accomplishments of any kind, others will not think it is because I am an exception and different from other people of my economic group.
- I'm not portrayed as ignorant and stupid on TV and in the movies. Other people will not assume that I am dirty, lazy, and unmotivated.
- I learned early on that I can assert my rights and expect that they will be addressed.
- I have been taught to assume that it is my right to express my opinion and to analyze and criticize things.

What about the intersection of race and class?! For more on the topic look up ["explaining white privilege to a broke white person"](#)

White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack, Peggy McIntosh

Tags: Social Justice, Privilege, Lists

Summary: A piece to help you differentiate white privilege from other forms of privilege.

"I was taught to see racism only in individual acts of meanness, not in invisible systems conferring dominance on my group"

I decided to try to work on myself at least by identifying some of the daily effects of white privilege in my life. I have chosen those conditions that I think in my case attach somewhat more to skin-color privilege than to class, religion, ethnic status, or geographic location, though of course all these other factors are intricately intertwined. As far as I can tell, my African American coworkers, friends, and acquaintances with whom I come into daily or frequent contact in this particular time, place and time of work cannot count on most of these conditions.

1. I can, if I wish, arrange to be in the company of people of my race most of the time.

2. I can avoid spending time with people whom I was trained to mistrust and who have learned to mistrust my kind or me.
3. If I should need to move, I can be pretty sure of renting or purchasing housing in an area which I can afford and in which I would want to live.
4. I can be pretty sure that my neighbors in such a location will be neutral or pleasant to me.
5. I can go shopping alone most of the time, pretty well assured that I will not be followed or harassed.
6. I can turn on the television or open to the front page of the paper and see people of my race widely represented.
7. When I am told about our national heritage or about "civilization," I am shown that people of my color made it what it is.
8. I can be sure that my children will be given curricular materials that testify to the existence of their race.
9. If I want to, I can be pretty sure of finding a publisher for this piece on white privilege.
10. I can be pretty sure of having my voice heard in a group in which I am the only member of my race.
11. I can be casual about whether or not to listen to another person's voice in a group in which s/he is the only member of his/her race.
12. I can go into a music shop and count on finding the music of my race represented, into a supermarket and find the staple foods which fit with my cultural traditions, into a hairdresser's shop and find someone who can cut my hair.
13. Whether I use checks, credit cards or cash, I can count on my skin color not to work against the appearance of financial reliability.
14. I can arrange to protect my children most of the time from people who might not like them.
15. I do not have to educate my children to be aware of systemic racism for their own daily physical protection.
16. I can be pretty sure that my children's teachers and employers will tolerate them if they fit school and workplace norms; my chief worries about them do not concern others' attitudes toward their race.
17. I can talk with my mouth full and not have people put this down to my color.
18. I can swear, or dress in secondhand clothes, or not answer letters, without having people attribute these choices to the bad morals, the poverty or the illiteracy of my race.
19. I can speak in public to a powerful male group without putting my race on trial.
20. I can do well in a challenging situation without being called a credit to my race.
21. I am never asked to speak for all the people of my racial group.
22. I can remain oblivious of the language and customs of persons of color who constitute the world's majority without feeling in my culture any penalty for such oblivion.
23. I can criticize our government and talk about how much I fear its policies and behavior without being seen as a cultural outsider.
24. I can be pretty sure that if I ask to talk to the "person in charge", I will be facing a person of my race.
25. If a traffic cop pulls me over or if the IRS audits my tax return, I can be sure I haven't been singled out because of my race.
26. I can easily buy posters, post-cards, picture books, greeting cards, dolls, toys and children's magazines featuring people of my race.

27. I can go home from most meetings of organizations I belong to feeling somewhat tied in, rather than isolated, out-of-place, outnumbered, unheard, held at a distance or feared.
28. I can be pretty sure that an argument with a colleague of another race is more likely to jeopardize her/his chances for advancement than to jeopardize mine.
29. I can be pretty sure that if I argue for the promotion of a person of another race, or a program centering on race, this is not likely to cost me heavily within my present setting, even if my colleagues disagree with me.
30. If I declare there is a racial issue at hand, or there isn't a racial issue at hand, my race will lend me more credibility for either position than a person of color will have.
31. I can choose to ignore developments in minority writing and minority activist programs, or disparage them, or learn from them, but in any case, I can find ways to be more or less protected from negative consequences of any of these choices.
32. My culture gives me little fear about ignoring the perspectives and powers of people of other races.
33. I am not made acutely aware that my shape, bearing or body odor will be taken as a reflection on my race.
34. I can worry about racism without being seen as self-interested or self-seeking.
35. I can take a job with an affirmative action employer without having my co-workers on the job suspect that I got it because of my race.
36. If my day, week or year is going badly, I need not ask of each negative episode or situation whether it had racial overtones.
37. I can be pretty sure of finding people who would be willing to talk with me and advise me about my next steps, professionally.
38. I can think over many options, social, political, imaginative or professional, without asking whether a person of my race would be accepted or allowed to do what I want to do.
39. I can be late to a meeting without having the lateness reflect on my race
40. I can choose public accommodation without fearing that people of my race cannot get in or will be mistreated in the places I have chosen.
41. I can be sure that if I need legal or medical help, my race will not work against me.
42. I can arrange my activities so that I will never have to experience feelings of rejection owing to my race.
43. If I have low credibility as a leader, I can be sure that my race is not the problem.
44. I can easily find academic courses and institutions which give attention only to people of my race.
45. I can expect figurative language and imagery in all of the arts to testify to experiences of my race.
46. I can choose blemish cover or bandages in "flesh" color and have them more or less match my skin.
47. I can travel alone or with my spouse without expecting embarrassment or hostility in those who deal with us.
48. I have no difficulty finding neighborhoods where people approve of our household.
49. My children are given texts and classes which implicitly support our kind of family unit and do not turn them against my choice of domestic partnership.

50. I will feel welcomed and "normal" in the usual walks of public life, institutional and social.

What's the asterisk for, you ask? It's so the phrase trans* can represent multiple identities that share a common root. This includes transvestite, transsexual, transgender, genderless, gender fluid... and so many more!

Non-Trans* Privilege or Cisgender Privilege List

This list is based on Peggy McIntosh's White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack.

Tags: Gender, Privilege, Queer (Trans) Issues

Summary: Considers the effects of cis privilege in everyday life.

- 1) Strangers don't assume they can ask me what my genitals look like and how I have sex.
- 2) My validity as a man/woman/human is not based upon how much surgery I've had or how well I "pass" as a non-Trans person.
- 3) When initiating sex with someone, I do not have to worry that they won't be able to deal with my parts or that having sex with me will cause my partner to question his or her own sexual orientation.
- 4) I am not excluded from events which are either explicitly or de facto* men-born-men or women born-women only. (*possibly anything involving nudity)
- 5) My politics are not questioned based on the choices I make with regard to my body.
- 6) I don't have to hear "So have you had THE surgery?" or "Oh, so you're REALLY a [incorrect sex or gender]?" each time I come out to someone.
- 7) I am not expected to constantly defend my medical decisions.
- 8) Strangers do not ask me what my "real name" [birth name] is and then assume that they have a right to call me by that name.
- 9) People do not disrespect me by using incorrect pronouns even after they've been corrected.
- 10) I do not have to worry that someone wants to be my friend or have sex with me in order to prove his or her "hipness" or "good" politics.
- 11) I do not have to worry about whether I will be able to find a safe and accessible bathroom or locker room to use.
- 12) When engaging in political action, I do not have to worry about the gendered repercussions of being arrested. (i.e. What will happen to me if the cops find out that my genitals do not match my gendered appearance? Will I end up in a cell with people of my own gender?)
- 13) I do not have to defend my right to be a part of "Queer" space or movement, and lesbian, gay, and bisexual people will not try to exclude me from our movements in order to gain political legitimacy for themselves.
- 14) My experience of gender (or gendered spaces) is not viewed as "baggage" by others of the gender in which I live.
- 15) I do not have to choose between either invisibility ("passing") or being consistently "othered" and/or tokenized based on my gender.
- 16) I am not told that my sexual orientation and gender identity are mutually exclusive.
- 17) When I go to the gym or a public pool, I can use the showers.
- 18) If I end up in the emergency room, I do not have to worry that my gender will keep me from receiving appropriate treatment nor will all of my medical issues be seen as a product of my gender. ("Your nose is running and your throat hurts? Must be due to the hormones!")

- 19) My health insurance provider (or public health system) does not specifically exclude me from receiving benefits or treatments available to others because of my gender.
- 20) When I express my internal identities in my daily life, I am not considered "mentally ill" by the medical establishment.
- 21) I am not required to undergo extensive psychological evaluation in order to receive basic medical care.
- 22) The medical establishment does not serve as a "gatekeeper" which disallows self-determination of what happens to my body.
- 23) People do not use me as a scapegoat for their own unresolved gender issues.

Able-bodied Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack

By Amy Kelly

Tags: Social Justice, Ableism, Privilege

Summary: An article exploring manifestations of able-bodied privilege.

To read the full essay, visit:

<http://www2.edc.org/WomensEquity/edequity/hypermail/1180.html>

1. I cannot easily arrange to be in the company of people of my physical ability.
2. If I need to move, I cannot easily be assured of purchasing housing I can get access to easily - accessibility is one thing I need to make a special point of looking for. *
3. I cannot be assured that my entire neighborhood will be accessible to me. *
4. I cannot assume that I can go shopping alone, and they will always have appropriate accommodations to make this experience hassle-free. *
5. I cannot turn on the television or open a newspaper and see people of my physical ability represented. (This is more so the case for people who walk on crutches, or who have some sort of physical distortion, as these people are not as attractive as people sitting neatly in a wheelchair whom you would not know were handicapped if they were seated in a regular chair.)
6. When I learned about history, people of my physical ability were not well represented. (Roosevelt's polio was kept out of the media as much as possible, as is Dole's and Silber's amputation --I would be interested in discussing their decision to not make it an issue with anyone who is interested.)
7. I was not given curricular material which showed people like me as a role model. (Like other minorities, we are only portrayed as either pathetic or heroic, not normal)
8. This point may be arguable, but I have seen few pieces of literature on able-bodied privilege.
9. I cannot be assured that assumptions about my mental capabilities will not be made based on my physical status.
10. I cannot swear, dress sloppily, or even be in a bad mood without people attributing it to my physical disability.
11. I cannot do well in challenging situations very often without being told what an inspiration I must be to other disabled people.
12. I have been asked to speak for all physically challenged people.

13. I have often, when criticizing an organization for not being accommodating enough, been thought of as mal-adjusted.

14. I hardly ever, when asking to speak to the person in charge, will find someone of the same physical status.

15. I cannot buy posters, postcards, picture books, greeting cards, dolls, toys, children's magazines featuring people of the same physical status. (Unless it is a specialty book, aimed at sensitivity training, or a **pc** doll "Share a Smile Becky" with the acronym for the Individuals with Disabilities Act sprawled across her sweater, sending the message: "Don't worry, I am always happy - see my ever present smile?" and "My disability is my sole identity".

16. I cannot take a job with an affirmative action employer without having someone suspect I got my job because of my disability.

17. If I am fired, not given a raise, or not hired, I must question if it had anything to do with my appearing physically incompetent. (although it doesn't serve any purpose to question it, because it would be almost impossible to prove).

Politically Correct:
Pejorative term used to frame oppressive actions against a social group as "offensive to sensitive people" rather than real and systemic.

Class & Socio-Economic Status (SES)

A Safety Net that is Leaving More People Out
By Yvonne Abraham, The Boston Globe

Tags: Class/SES, Housing, Poverty

Summary: A Boston Globe article examining the life of unhoused families in Boston.

Ginna and her daughter had bounced from couch to couch for months before they lost their last refuge: A friend, worried about losing her lease, asked her to leave.

Unemployed and out of options, the young mother went to the state to ask for emergency shelter on Aug. 8. She had previously been denied because she was \$12 over the income limit. Now Department of Housing and Community Development workers suspected Ginna of quitting her job at a sandwich shop to get benefits. She begged them to talk to her former boss, who could tell them she was let go because she had no child care and couldn't make shifts. They didn't.

"If only they had made that call, this would never, ever have happened to me," said the slight, dark-haired 21-year-old.

Instead, Ginna and her 17-month-old began sleeping at South Station. On the first night, a man brought her food. He came back the next night and told her he had a place for her to stay. She was exhausted and her baby was wailing and she had no one, so she went with him. Later that night, the man raped her. She waited for him to fall asleep, then fled with her daughter.

"I work, I don't party, I don't do drugs. I'm a good girl. I want to make something of myself," Ginna, a rape victim who was turned away from homeless shelter.

The Patrick administration's heart might be in the right place when it comes to ending homelessness, but its new approach to this huge problem is hurting some of the very people most in need of help. While boosting resources for permanent housing, the state has begun turning away an alarming number of families from its shelter system. Until recently, 40 to 50 percent of families who applied for emergency shelter were denied each month. Last month, the average was 68 percent. In the last week of September, 74 percent of families seeking shelter were denied. Ginna's case is the most tragic of many.

"We've seen a real spike," said Jim Greene, director of Boston's Emergency Shelter Commission, which took about 500 calls from desperate families last month, compared to an average of 375 earlier this year. "We get calls almost daily . . . reporting that people are staying in emergency rooms because they have nowhere else to go. More people are reporting to us that they're staying in parks and vans." Boston Medical Center confirms that it has seen an increase in homeless families showing up at the ER over the last month.

"We are completely inundated" with calls from families who have nowhere to go, said Ruth Bourquin, senior attorney at the Massachusetts Law Reform Institute. "Before August, we almost never heard of families staying in [cars]. Now it's every day."

Since new regulations went into effect in August, state workers are suddenly far more skeptical about people's claims of homelessness, far less likely to believe somebody who says they can no longer stay with the friend or grandmother with whom they've been doubled up.

"The restrictions have never been this tough before," said Kelly Turley, legislative director of the Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless. "This is the most discouraging situation I've seen. It's scary."

How did we get here? From good intentions, actually. The Patrick administration and many legislators are truly committed when it comes to the issue of homelessness. Currently, the state provides shelter space to about 2,000 families, and houses another 1,800 in expensive motels. Few other states provide that kind of safety net.

In an effort to move people out of politically unpopular motels and head off homelessness before it happens, the 2013 budget contains big funding increases for rental assistance and other programs that keep struggling families in their homes. Accompanying the shift towards permanent housing are the new regulations designed to make getting into shelters more difficult.

"Obviously we want to maintain a strong safety net," said Aaron Gornstein, undersecretary for Housing and Community Development. "But we also want to make sure we're spending taxpayer dollars wisely, investing in prevention and permanent housing, and that emergency shelter is a last resort."

The problem is, there isn't yet enough prevention and affordable housing to save many families from the street. "None of us have a safety net to put under the safety net that has been restricted," said Greene.

What's frustrating to him, and to others who work on the front lines, is that the state seems unwilling to recognize there is a problem here. State officials seem entirely wedded to the notion that almost everybody has somewhere to stay, even when they say they don't. They say this is based on experience – that their past investigations have shown people can almost always find someone to take them in.

They're not persuaded by the stories of families sleeping in cars and on beaches and in the lobbies of apartment buildings, which they believe are exaggerated by advocates determined to grow the shelter system. Privately, they have suggested Greene and others are using poor families as pawns. Publicly, they wonder if advocates are suggesting homeless families put themselves in dangerous situations just to qualify for shelter.

"I hope they're not coaching them to do that," Gornstein said.

Seriously? People who have devoted careers to ending homelessness would advise families to give up homes and put themselves in harm's way?

It's hard to reconcile the Deval Patrick who demanded that his party stop apologizing for its values at the Democratic National Convention with the way his administration is handling this.

"I believe the governor when he said it's about our values," said Senator Ken Donnelly, an Arlington Democrat who is one of a group of legislators trying to rebalance the shelter regulations. "But they have this feeling that people are somehow gaming the system, and you just look at them and say, 'What planet are you on?'"

Look, this is clearly a tough issue. The governor and the Legislature have taken on a difficult and expensive balancing act trying to work out how much to devote to long-term solutions like affordable housing and how much to short-term ones like shelter. It is always a good idea to keep people with family or friends as they await help with permanent housing — as long as that is possible. But the state is increasingly unwilling to admit that sometimes, it's not. And some of the very people shelters are designed to protect are casualties.

"I work, I don't party, I don't do drugs," Ginna said. "I'm a good girl. I want to make something of myself."

When she went back to the housing office in Roxbury after she was raped, Ginna said, housing officials refused to look at her rape kit. They denied her shelter again, then had her escorted out by guards, she said. Then the workers who had refused Ginna and her daughter a safe place to sleep filed a report accusing her of neglecting her baby.

After Bourquin and others got involved, Ginna finally was granted emergency shelter. The neglect complaint was thrown out.

Gornstein said Ginna's shelter denials had nothing to do with the new, stricter regulations. He said she would have been denied last year, too, because workers believed she had quit her job without good cause.

No way, say those who have been fighting for Ginna: They're certain she would have gotten the benefit of the doubt before, that workers would have made the call to her supervisor.

That would have taken three minutes, tops. Last week, that supervisor, Robert Peebles, picked up on the second ring at the cell number Ginna begged state workers to call in August. He said he never received a call or a message

from housing workers. Ginna lost her job “because she couldn’t make it any more, she had her daughter and she was not able to obtain child care,” he confirmed. A second call to the sandwich shop to confirm Peebles was a supervisor there took another minute.

In an affidavit, a Department of Housing and Community Development supervisor said a worker in the Dudley Square office did try Peebles’s cell at some point, but did not speak to him. Ginna said the worker certainly didn’t call while she was pleading with her in the office.

“While she was sleeping in her bed, I was being raped,” she said. “That’s going to be with me for the rest of my life. Nobody can erase this.”

Still, Ginna is trying to move on. The sandwich shop hired her back last week. She is working on finding care for her daughter so she can pick up more hours. She wants to get into her own place quickly, to stabilize her life so she can bring her husband from the Dominican Republic; she is a US citizen.

Gornstein said he is looking into Ginna’s case, and at those of other families across the state who advocates say have been unfairly denied shelter under the new rules. “I want to assure you, we are taking this very seriously to make sure people don’t fall through the cracks,” Gornstein said. “We’re trying to err on the side of caution and make sure we maintain a safety net for people who really need it.”

There will be hearings on the new shelter regulations in Western Massachusetts on Oct. 22, and in Boston on Oct. 25. Ginna may testify. Gornstein points out that his office has already made 20 changes to the new rules based on public input, and that it’s prepared to make more to better protect families who need help.

Good. This must be fixed, and fast. Winter is coming.

Gap’s Inconsistent Corporate Ethics

By Greg Randolph, U.S. News & World Report

Tags: Ethics, Worker’s Rights, Transnational

Summary: A critique putting Gap’s pro-pluralism efforts in contrast with the company’s refusal to guarantee fair working conditions for factory workers.

To read online, visit:

<http://www.usnews.com/opinion/articles/2013/12/11/gap-can-build-on-its-sikh-ad-by-protecting-bangladeshi-garment-workers>

The liberal social media bloc was abuzz recently with praise for Gap, the ubiquitous apparel company known for its khaki, clean-cut sense of style and — most recently — an advertisement that featured a visibly Sikh male model, sporting a pagdi (turban) and a full beard. The ad achieved nationwide fame when the company produced a swift and emphatic [response](#) to racist graffiti scribbled over it in a New York subway station.

But another of Gap’s recent decisions — its refusal to join a groundbreaking accord to protect Bangladeshi garment workers — calls into question whether the corporate ethic of inclusion extends beyond marketing campaigns.

By selecting Waris Ahluwalia to model in its “Make Love” campaign, and immediately denouncing the act of an intolerant graffiti artist who changed that slogan to “Make Bombs,” Gap sent an important message of inclusion to [280,000](#) Sikhs living in the United States, telling them that Gap believes their faces and lived experiences are part of the American story.

Socially minded consumers might find it surprising then, that on another issue of justice and inclusion, Gap’s response has been anemic. After the [death of nearly 1,200 apparel workers](#) in the horrific collapse of Rana Plaza — a dilapidated building housing several garment factories on the outskirts of Dhaka — retailers around the world sought channels for improving working conditions in the country. A landmark agreement emerged, aimed at strengthening worker protections in Bangladesh’s massive apparel industry, but Gap has refused to sign on.

The [Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh](#) goes beyond traditional corporate social responsibility. First of all, a broad coalition of corporations, trade unions and workers’ rights organizations negotiated jointly and endorse the agreement. Second, its signatories are legally obligated to fund independent inspection of facilities, plus structural repairs and renovations of existing factories. Over 100 international brands — including Gap competitors like Abercrombie & Fitch, American Eagle Outfitters and H&M — have already signed on.

The accord is about basic human rights. Bangladeshi workers possess the right to safe working conditions, the right to fair wages and the right to life.

It's also about inclusion. Mirroring the globalization story in many countries, economic growth in Bangladesh has been rapid, but its rewards have not been shared broadly. Rather than creating an economic culture of shared prosperity, Bangladesh has engaged in a "[race to the bottom](#)" – maintaining substandard wages and working conditions in order to make production costs attractively, and artificially, low. The accord is a first step toward transforming those marginalized by globalization into its beneficiaries.

If it joined the accord, Gap would send another powerful message of inclusion to [four million](#) Bangladeshi garment workers: your economic opportunity, your ability to obtain a just job, and your right to share in the fruits of economic growth, matter to us. Further, it could demonstrate to its new Tweeting extollers that the company's progressive attitudes inform its supply chain management, not only its advertising.

Arsalan Iftikhar, the social commentator and online personality who made the Gap ad famous, [wrote last month](#): "I want to live in an America where a fashion model can be a handsome, bearded brown dude in a turban who is considered as beautiful as a busty blonde-haired white girl in see-through lingerie."

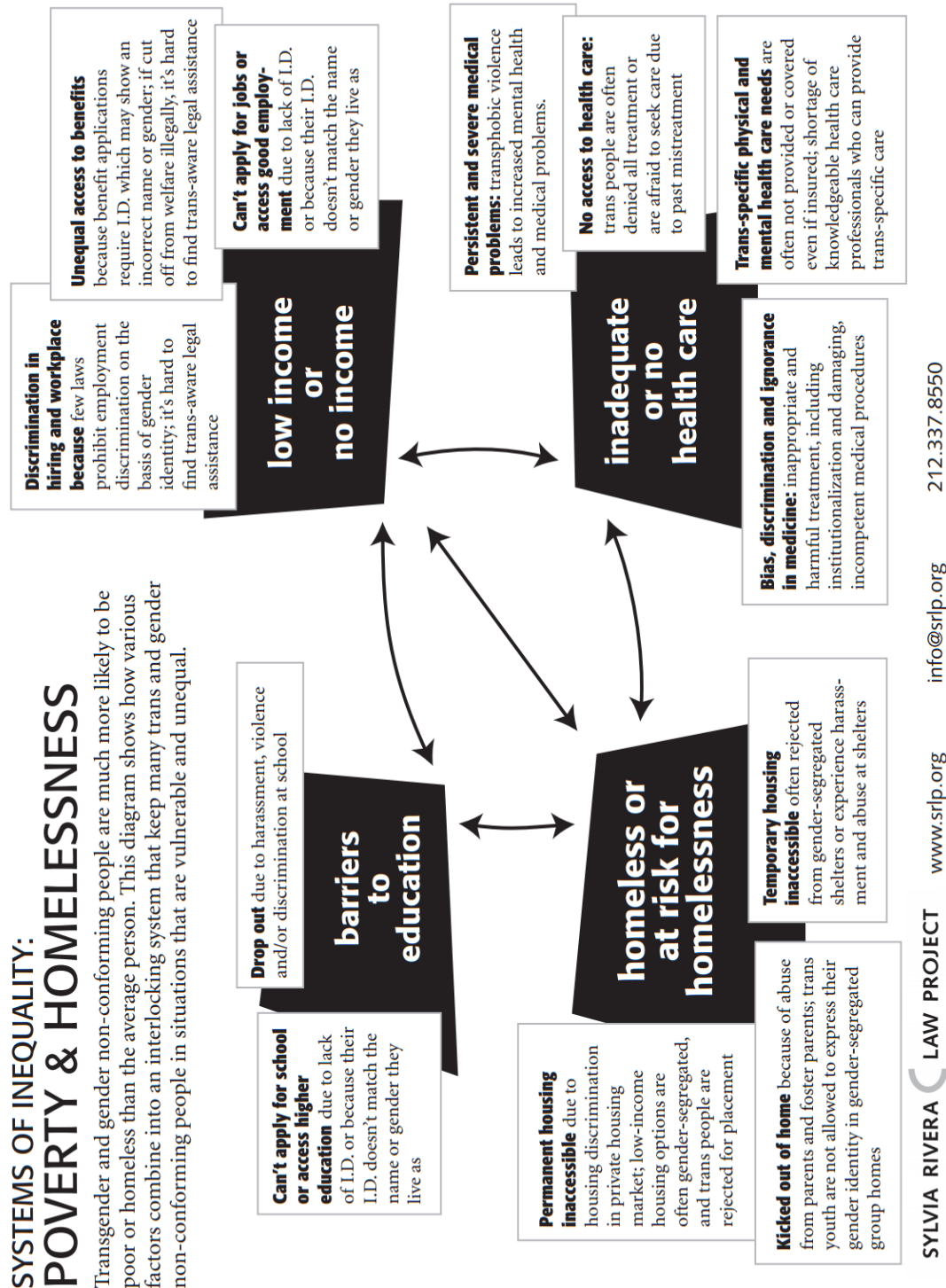
That America does sound nice. But a fashion industry committed to diversity and inclusion stands on hollow ground if the products it markets are founded in economic exclusion. With the power of its brand and the size of its supply chain, Gap can and should do more to create just jobs in the apparel sector. Signing the accord is a necessary step.

Disproportionate Trans Poverty and Homelessness

From Sylvia Rivera Law Center

Tags: Poverty, Queer (Trans) Issues, Housing

Summary: A graphic explaining how anti-trans bigotry leads to a cycle of poverty.



The Art of Survival: Why Poor People Have the Best Anti-Poverty Ideas

By Tim Lahan & Jess Hoffman

Tags: Poverty, Class/SES, Service, Allyship

Summary: A look at the efficacy of anti-poverty programs driven by poor people.

To read online, visit: <https://www.good.is/articles/the-art-of-survival>

“Welfare queeeeeeens, super baby mamas!” a diverse group of women, holding hands, shouted in unison in front of an Oakland, California, welfare office, their voices overlapping as they weaved around each other on the sidewalk. The welfareQUEENS, a performance-poetry group composed of mothers who have survived and cared for their children through extreme poverty, were part of a series of actions staged by POOR, a 16-year-old arts-and-action nonprofit, on a sunny day last November, when POOR invited Occupy Oakland protesters to march out of their City Hall encampment to sites that “occupy” poor people throughout the Bay Area.

“Our lands and resources have been occupied for many years,” says Lisa Gray-Garcia, better known as Tiny, the wiry 38-year-old cofounder of POOR. “More people are now feeling the pain. For us it was not like, ‘Omigod, let’s occupy!’ It was like, ‘More people are waking up to the torture and the tragedy that has hit poor and indigenous people forever—so how do we harness the power of this movement to support the work that’s been going on for hundreds of years?’”

The November day of action was one answer. POOR took occupiers to the housing authority to protest how Section 8 waiting lists have ballooned because of budget cuts. They also demonstrated in front of the San Francisco Immigration and Customs Enforcement office because, as Tiny explains, “If you don’t have money for an attorney, you get picked up on a misdemeanor and suddenly you’re in Mexico or Guatemala, even if you haven’t been there since you were 1 year old.” At the welfare office protest, the welfareQUEENS talked about imminent cuts to California’s food-stamp program—“the last crumbs we had.” And in front of an Oakland police station, speakers called prisons “the last form of public housing.”

Tiny is excited by the energy of the Occupy movement, but she is sure that for real change to happen, “the poorest of the poor” need to be heard. “Survival itself through extreme poverty and crisis,” she says, provides the best ideas for how to create a world where no one has to suffer lack of food, education, or safe shelter. Poor people “have the knowledge this movement needs.”

Tiny—who’s constantly running from one activity to the next, usually in tight jeans, hoop earrings, and a cap that says POBRE—likes to say she’s got a Ph.D. from the School of Hard Knocks. When she was 11, her mother, Dee, lost her job. Dee was sick and overwhelmed by what Tiny describes as “a complex web of phobia, conflict, and poverty.” Struggling with post-traumatic stress from a lifetime of abuse, Dee couldn’t work and often couldn’t leave the small apartment she and Tiny shared in Hollywood, which in the 1980s was more rough than glamorous. “People told me to put her in a home, go off to college, that I was a smart girl and I could do anything,” Tiny says. “I was told from very early on that staying with my mom was the least positive thing I could do.”

Instead, Tiny dropped out of sixth grade and started figuring out how to help their small family survive. If she’d told a social worker or teacher what was going on, she’d have been swiftly placed in foster care. But in Tiny’s view, families struggling with poverty need to stick together. Over the next few decades, Dee and Tiny would manage not only to survive together through bouts of homelessness and incarceration, but also to create POOR Magazine, which is much more than a publication. Right now, POOR is publishing books; running PeopleSkool, which allows people struggling in poverty to teach each other media skills; and creating a project called Homefulness, where formerly houseless people will be able to create their own permanent housing rather than hope for beds in a shelter or project designed and run by people who have no clue what it’s like to be homeless.

* * *

At 12, Tiny created an alter ego named “Rent-starter,” an ideal tenant no landlord could refuse even though she had no cash or credit. Rent-starter embodied what Tiny describes as an odd mix of “sincerity, strength, and extreme sycophantism.” The performance worked many times: Landlords who might have turned away Dee, seeing a dark-skinned single mother (Dee was black and indigenous Puerto Rican, Irish, and Roma) as a bad tenant, believed that a white-looking 12-year-old Tiny (her dad, from whom she’s estranged, is white) was “a 25-year-old making \$65,000 a year.” If Tiny couldn’t come up with enough money to pay rent on an apartment or motel room, she and her mom lived in their car. When they were cited for the illegal act of sleeping in a vehicle, penalties they

couldn't possibly pay piled up and turned into arrest warrants, which turned into stints in jail. Dee and Tiny learned that, when you're poor in the United States, many of the things you have to do to survive are illegal.

When Tiny was a teenager in the '80s, she and Dee made and sold clothes on the Venice Boardwalk and Berkeley's Telegraph Avenue. Their 2-by-1-foot Venice retail outlet doubled as a venue for conceptual-art installations and performances commenting on the economy that was crushing them. In an interactive piece, *The Depressed Box*, black-clad Tiny and Dee stood next to a giant donation box with a sign that said, "Give us a dollar and we'll tell you why we're depressed." They were written up in the *L.A. Weekly* and placed their clothing line, *Street Clothes*, in a few pricey boutiques. Later, while living and working in an Oakland storefront the landlord had insisted was not for living in, they led "Art of Homelessness" tours, guiding viewers through their lives.

Their situation was always precarious. When a month of rain interfered with street vending or a broken foot immobilized Dee, they were unable to pay rent and ended up homeless again. Or rather, "houseless." Tiny thinks "the homeless" is a dehumanizing phrase that takes all people who don't rent or own the place where they sleep and lumps them into a single group that is easy to pity, dismiss, or brutalize. She prefers "houseless," which describes a concrete situation and doesn't carry the cultural weight of decades of philanthropic and government conversations about, but not with, "the homeless."

Just after she turned 18, Tiny landed in jail for failure to pay a heap of sleeping-in-a-vehicle citations. There she met other women in similar situations. Tiny started to see her poverty, her mother's poverty, her grandmother's poverty as "an unending chain of isolated poor women with no resources, no family, no support, and no luck"—and part of a broader story. "From a Western psychotherapeutic perspective, my mom was severely phobic and I was her support system. But from the perspective of almost every non-Western culture, nobody is ever left alone the way they are in the United States," Tiny says. She and Dee were dependent on each other in a society that valorizes individual success. "Perhaps my mother's worst problem was that she had no extended family."

Tiny's next stint in jail—for failing to complete the thousands of community-service hours she'd been assigned last time, something she couldn't have done while keeping up sufficient street-vending hours—led to a surprise break. Osha Neumann, a Berkeley civil-rights attorney responsible for supervising her community service, asked Tiny "an odd question," she says. "He asked me what I could do." She tentatively answered that she wanted to write.

Neumann designed a community-service assignment that she could actually accomplish. Tiny was to write an article about poverty every week; Neumann would meet with her regularly to give feedback. She wrote in 30-minute spurts amid long days of street vending. Soon she was being published in Bay Area alternative papers. She wrote one piece about standing in line for nine hours with hundreds of others whose utilities had been turned off for lack of payment; another was a first step toward the memoir she'd write a decade later about her "crimes of poverty."

But Tiny wasn't interested in making a career for herself as a journalist. "When I'm inspired, I think, how can I inspire other people like me?" Dee and Tiny talked about starting a savings circle for poor people in the Bay Area. Tiny latched on to the idea of poor people's media, which would allow people who were struggling in poverty to tell their own stories via journalism, poetry, and visual art.

In 1996, Tiny and Dee published the first issue of *POOR Magazine*, a beautiful glossy. Its theme was Homefulness, and its content came from writing workshops Tiny and Dee improvised while waiting in lines at welfare offices and eating free meals at shelters. "It's not something nonprofit organizers could do," Tiny says. "These were workshops for poor people, led by poor people, fit into the lives of poor people, in the communities in which we were dwelling, selling, and working. We were them, they were us. We weren't saviors, we were other folks working together within our current realities to make our voices heard."

"POOR could not have happened without the understanding and collaboration of a few folks with privilege," Tiny says. "Me and my mama had a dream, but we were poor people with nothing." Bay Area artist Evri Kwong donated art for the cover of the first issue and allowed the original to be auctioned off to cover printing costs. He and others supported Dee and Tiny's dream with "understanding, consciousness, and empathy" in place of "charity." Kwong, Tiny says, "had no requirements about what we did with his art; he trusted us and supported the leadership of poor people."

When Dee and Tiny got a grant from the San Francisco Arts Commission to print a second issue of *POOR*, they put part of the grant money back into their community. They launched *MamaHouse*, a one-bedroom apartment in San Francisco's Tenderloin neighborhood where they and other single-mother-headed families could live together, sharing both burdens and resources. "Organizational and personal lives are naturally enmeshed [in] poor-people led organizations like ours," Tiny writes in her memoir, *Criminal of Poverty*.

A few years later, while on welfare herself, Tiny won a competitive grant to teach journalism skills to people coming off welfare. That led to the creation of POOR's community newsroom, where participants decide together what stories need to be told, who should tell them, and how; a POOR radio show; PeopleSkool, with stipends, child care, and meals for participants; and the Race, Poverty, and Media Justice Institute, which trains people with race, class, or educational privilege how to support poor people equitably.

POOR is complicated like that. Media education and magazine production have always been a part of it, but poor has never simply been a media project. It has also been about direct actions, such as gentrification tours that disrupt restaurants and museums throughout San Francisco. MamaHouse was just the beginning—or, as Tiny puts it, the “small, rented version”—of Homefulness, the dream described in the first issue of POOR: a cohousing project by and for poor people.

POOR enjoyed a few years of government and foundation support in the late 1990s and early 2000s, when they rented an office and became an official nonprofit. “We were feeling happy for the first time,” Tiny says. But they were also honest in their critiques of the system. The bulk of their funding was public, the result of Clinton administration welfare-reform programs. Tiny recalls, “We were on welfare while training people to write about the welfare system and how messed up it is,” and then publishing that work. Before long, the funding dried up.

In 2002, Dee was diagnosed with cardiomyopathy, which often leads to heart failure, and her health deteriorated. Then Tiny got pregnant; and, Tiny says, “We basically fell apart.” MamaHouse and POOR were both evicted. Tiny found herself once again with no money, and now she was caring for her ailing mother and a newborn. She was often houseless, writing for low pay for independent-media outlets, stealing food to feed her son, and keeping POOR alive. She and Dee were fighting: “fighting each other, fighting to survive, and fighting campaigns”—including one for child care for working-poor parents, something Tiny herself was painfully lacking.

Tiny joined with other struggling single mothers, borrowed \$850 from a friend, and started a second MamaHouse, this time in a three-bedroom apartment in the fast-gentrifying Mission District. The place was only affordable because they shared it with rats and pigeons. “It wasn’t all utopic; we had problems,” Tiny acknowledges, “but that’s what interdependence looks like. MamaHouse was a lifesaver.” The welfarequeens started there, and sharing child care with the other moms allowed Tiny to get a job at an education-policy nonprofit. When a fire destroyed MamaHouse number two, Tiny and her growing community later started a third.

One night in March 2006, Dee finished a segment for POOR’s radio show, went home, and died while napping on the couch. She was 61.

Tiny, 32 at the time, had lived her entire life in partnership with her mother. At POOR, which once again had an office, she created an altar featuring photos, flowers, doughnuts, candles, and a large urn that contains Dee’s ashes. It’s dedicated to her and “all victims of police terror, racism, and poverty in America.”

* * *

"Fill this out." "You're not done yet?" "You forgot this box." "No, this form!"

Members of the welfareQUEENS bustled around the POOR office, shoving paperwork into the hands of young adults who had graduated from some of the best colleges in the United States but were suddenly feeling clueless, unable to complete the forms fast enough.

In the summer of 2009 Tiny and some collaborators created a weekend-long program for people with money, education, or other resources who wanted to help create a world without poverty. I was among them.

Instead of just writing checks or volunteering whatever help we deemed they needed most, we were schooled by POOR's members. The welfareQUEENS performed poems about raising kids with no health insurance and living with the constant threat of separation. Members of POOR ran us through crushing exercises that mimicked the experience of dealing with social-service bureaucracies, shouting at us to cram our life stories into forms. They also told inspiring stories about communities that take care of each other. Tiny, as usual, was both warm and painfully honest, calling out our role in gentrification while addressing each of us as “hon.”

At the end of the weekend, a few of us formed POOR's Solidarity Family. We talk to each other, and others in the POOR family, about things that are both practical and emotional, like how our families relate to money and how to share resources and build real relationships despite class differences. We're one part of a multifaceted funding strategy: Instead of relying on government and foundation grants with all sorts of strings attached, POOR is supported primarily by individual donations from people who are part of its extended family.

In summer 2011, with the help of the Solidarity Family, POOR bought land for Homefulness. The site, located on busy MacArthur Boulevard in East Oakland, is a rectangle of weeds, dead grass, broken concrete, and a small house rendered uninhabitable by weather and neglect. Behind the house a large tree leans precariously. There are a couple of liquor stores in walking distance, and cheap motels where Tiny and Dee occasionally slept, decades ago. On this land POOR will build housing for up to eight houseless or formerly houseless families. There

will be a community garden, offices for poor, classrooms, and a café and performance space. poor doesn't have the money or the exact plan mapped out to make this happen. POOR, after all, is still poor—but as creative and resourceful as ever. Tiny is sure: Homefulness is happening.

POOR held an Interdependence Day celebration on the Homefulness land last Fourth of July. POOR's existing family and their soon-to-be neighbors ate grilled chicken and veggie burgers, and broke into a spontaneous afternoon dance party. But first, two elders blessed the land, and Tiny, in one of her signature fashion-art pieces—tight white jeans, tall boots, and a trim white blazer with "Take Back the Land!" painted on the back—performed a poetic tribute to Dee ("without whom there would be no me") that had half the people circled around her in tears.

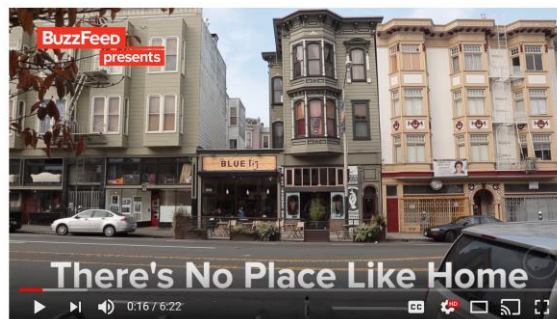
When anyone praises Tiny for her resilience, she's quick to resist. "It's not about my determination. And it's not about working hard," she insists. Dee's mother worked multiple domestic jobs simultaneously and still struggled. "We worked hard our whole lives and had nothing. The thing I have, maybe, is vision—but not vision for myself. I don't believe as humans that we are separate from each other. Anything that promotes disconnect causes pain. The vision is always togetherness, by any means necessary."

There's No Place Like Home: What It's Like to Get Kicked Out of Your Neighborhood

From BuzzFeed As/Is

Tags: Poverty, Housing, Class/SES

Summary: A video of a San Francisco neighborhood exploring its changes over time.



To watch online, visit: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tYNuR1oaQts>

Race & Contemporary Discrimination

5 Things You Should Know About Racism

From MTV Decoded

Tags: Racism, Social Justice, Activism

Summary: In this video, Franchesca Ramsey explains some key concepts about racism.



To watch online, visit: <https://youtu.be/8eTWZ80z9EE>

Masked Racism: Reflections on Prison-Industrial Complex

By Angela Davis

Tags: Prison Systems, Prison-Industrial Complex, Racism

Summary: An anti-racist activist exposes the realities of the US prison system.

To read online, visit: <http://www.colorlines.com/articles/masked-racism-reflections-prison-industrial-complex>

Imprisonment has become the response of first resort to far too many of the social problems that burden people who are ensconced in poverty. These problems often are veiled by being conveniently grouped together under the category “crime” and by the automatic attribution of criminal behavior to people of color. Homelessness, unemployment, drug addiction, mental illness, and illiteracy are only a few of the problems that disappear from public view when the human beings contending with them are relegated to cages.

Prisons thus perform a feat of magic. Or rather the people who continually vote in new prison bonds and tacitly assent to a proliferating network of prisons and jails have been tricked into believing in the magic of imprisonment. But prisons do not disappear problems, they disappear human beings. And the practice of disappearing vast numbers of people from poor, immigrant, and racially marginalized communities has literally become big business.

The seeming effortlessness of magic always conceals an enormous amount of behind-the-scenes work. When prisons disappear human beings in order to convey the illusion of solving social problems, penal infrastructures must be created to accommodate a rapidly swelling population of caged people. Goods and services must be provided to keep imprisoned populations alive. Sometimes these populations must be kept busy and at other times -- particularly in repressive super-maximum prisons and in INS detention centers -- they must be deprived of virtually all meaningful activity. Vast numbers of handcuffed and shackled people are moved across state borders as they are transferred from one state or federal prison to another.

All this work, which used to be the primary province of government, is now also performed by private corporations, whose links to government in the field of what is euphemistically called “corrections” resonate dangerously with the military industrial complex. The dividends that accrue from investment in the punishment industry, like those that accrue from investment in weapons production, only amount to social destruction. Taking into account the structural similarities and profitability of business-government linkages in the realms of military production and public punishment, the expanding penal system can now be characterized as a “prison industrial complex.”

The Color of Imprisonment

Almost two million people are currently locked up in the immense network of U.S. prisons and jails. More than 70 percent of the imprisoned population are people of color. It is rarely acknowledged that the fastest growing group of prisoners are black women and that Native American prisoners are the largest group per capita. Approximately five million people -- including those on probation and parole -- are directly under the surveillance of the criminal justice system.

Three decades ago, the imprisoned population was approximately one-eighth its current size. While women still constitute a relatively small percentage of people behind bars, today the number of incarcerated

women in California alone is almost twice what the nationwide women's prison population was in 1970. According to Elliott Currie, "[t]he prison has become a looming presence in our society to an extent unparalleled in our history -- or that of any other industrial democracy. Short of major wars, mass incarceration has been the most thoroughly implemented government social program of our time."

To deliver up bodies destined for profitable punishment, the political economy of prisons relies on racialized assumptions of criminality -- such as images of black welfare mothers reproducing criminal children -- and on racist practices in arrest, conviction, and sentencing patterns. Colored bodies constitute the main human raw material in this vast experiment to disappear the major social problems of our time. Once the aura of magic is stripped away from the imprisonment solution, what is revealed is racism, class bias, and the parasitic seduction of capitalist profit. The prison industrial system materially and morally impoverishes its inhabitants and devours the social wealth needed to address the very problems that have led to spiraling numbers of prisoners.

As prisons take up more and more space on the social landscape, other government programs that have previously sought to respond to social needs -- such as Temporary Assistance to Needy Families -- are being squeezed out of existence. The deterioration of public education, including prioritizing discipline and security over learning in public schools located in poor communities, is directly related to the prison "solution."

Profiting from Prisoners

As prisons proliferate in U.S. society, private capital has become enmeshed in the punishment industry. And precisely because of their profit potential, prisons are becoming increasingly important to the U.S. economy. If the notion of punishment as a source of potentially stupendous profits is disturbing by itself, then the strategic dependence on racist structures and ideologies to render mass punishment palatable and profitable is even more troubling.

Prison privatization is the most obvious instance of capital's current movement toward the prison industry. While government-run prisons are often in gross violation of international human rights standards, private prisons are even less accountable. In March of this year, the Corrections Corporation of America (CCA), the largest U.S. private prison company, claimed 54,944 beds in 68 facilities under contract or development in the U.S., Puerto Rico, the United Kingdom, and Australia. Following the global trend of subjecting more women to public punishment, CCA recently opened a women's prison outside Melbourne. The company recently identified California as its "new frontier."

Wackenhut Corrections Corporation (WCC), the second largest U.S. prison company, claimed contracts and awards to manage 46 facilities in North America, U.K., and Australia. It boasts a total of 30,424 beds as well as contracts for prisoner health care services, transportation, and security.

Currently, the stocks of both CCA and WCC are doing extremely well. Between 1996 and 1997, CCA's revenues increased by 58 percent, from \$293 million to \$462 million. Its net profit grew from \$30.9 million to \$53.9 million. WCC raised its revenues from \$138 million in 1996 to \$210 million in 1997. Unlike public correctional facilities, the vast profits of these private facilities rely on the employment of non-union labor.

The Prison Industrial Complex

But private prison companies are only the most visible component of the increasing corporatization of punishment. Government contracts to build prisons have bolstered the construction industry. The architectural community has identified prison design as a major new niche. Technology developed for the military by companies like Westinghouse is being marketed for use in law enforcement and punishment.

Moreover, corporations that appear to be far removed from the business of punishment are intimately involved in the expansion of the prison industrial complex. Prison construction bonds are one of the many sources of profitable investment for leading financiers such as Merrill Lynch. MCI charges prisoners and their families outrageous prices for the precious telephone calls which are often the only contact prisoners have with the free world.

Many corporations whose products we consume on a daily basis have learned that prison labor power can be as profitable as third world labor power exploited by U.S.-based global corporations. Both relegate formerly unionized workers to joblessness and many even wind up in prison. Some of the companies that use prison labor are IBM, Motorola, Compaq, Texas Instruments, Honeywell, Microsoft, and Boeing. But it is not only the hi-tech industries that reap the profits of prison labor. Nordstrom department stores sell jeans that are marketed as "Prison Blues," as well as t-shirts and jackets made in Oregon prisons. The advertising slogan for these clothes is "made on the inside to be worn on the outside." Maryland prisoners inspect glass bottles and jars used by Revlon

and Pierre Cardin, and schools throughout the world buy graduation caps and gowns made by South Carolina prisoners.

“For private business,” write Eve Goldberg and Linda Evans (a political prisoner inside the Federal Correctional Institution at Dublin, California) “prison labor is like a pot of gold. No strikes. No union organizing. No health benefits, unemployment insurance, or workers’ compensation to pay. No language barriers, as in foreign countries. New leviathan prisons are being built on thousands of eerie acres of factories inside the walls. Prisoners do data entry for Chevron, make telephone reservations for TWA, raise hogs, shovel manure, make circuit boards, limousines, waterbeds, and lingerie for Victoria’s Secret -- all at a fraction of the cost of ‘free labor.’”

Devouring the Social Wealth

Although prison labor -- which ultimately is compensated at a rate far below the minimum wage -- is hugely profitable for the private companies that use it, the penal system as a whole does not produce wealth. It devours the social wealth that could be used to subsidize housing for the homeless, to ameliorate public education for poor and racially marginalized communities, to open free drug rehabilitation programs for people who wish to kick their habits, to create a national health care system, to expand programs to combat HIV, to eradicate domestic abuse -- and, in the process, to create well-paying jobs for the unemployed.

Since 1984 more than twenty new prisons have opened in California, while only one new campus was added to the California State University system and none to the University of California system. In 1996-97, higher education received only 8.7 percent of the State’s General Fund while corrections received 9.6 percent. Now that affirmative action has been declared illegal in California, it is obvious that education is increasingly reserved for certain people, while prisons are reserved for others. Five times as many black men are presently in prison as in four-year colleges and universities. This new segregation has dangerous implications for the entire country.

By segregating people labeled as criminals, prison simultaneously fortifies and conceals the structural racism of the U.S. economy. Claims of low unemployment rates -- even in black communities -- make sense only if one assumes that the vast numbers of people in prison have really disappeared and thus have no legitimate claims to jobs. The numbers of black and Latino men currently incarcerated amount to two percent of the male labor force. According to criminologist David Downes, “[t]reating incarceration as a type of hidden unemployment may raise the jobless rate for men by about one-third, to 8 percent. The effect on the black labor force is greater still, raising the [black] male unemployment rate from 11 percent to 19 percent.”

Hidden Agenda

Mass incarceration is not a solution to unemployment, nor is it a solution to the vast array of social problems that are hidden away in a rapidly growing network of prisons and jails. However, the great majority of people have been tricked into believing in the efficacy of imprisonment, even though the historical record clearly demonstrates that prisons do not work. Racism has undermined our ability to create a popular critical discourse to contest the ideological trickery that posits imprisonment as key to public safety. The focus of state policy is rapidly shifting from social welfare to social control.

Black, Latino, Native American, and many Asian youth are portrayed as the purveyors of violence, traffickers of drugs, and as envious of commodities that they have no right to possess. Young black and Latina women are represented as sexually promiscuous and as indiscriminately propagating babies and poverty. Criminality and deviance are racialized. Surveillance is thus focused on communities of color, immigrants, the unemployed, the undereducated, the homeless, and in general on those who have a diminishing claim to social resources. Their claim to social resources continues to diminish in large part because law enforcement and penal measures increasingly devour these resources. The prison industrial complex has thus created a vicious cycle of punishment which only further impoverishes those whose impoverishment is supposedly “solved” by imprisonment.

Therefore, as the emphasis of government policy shifts from social welfare to crime control, racism sinks more deeply into the economic and ideological structures of U.S. society. Meanwhile, conservative crusaders against affirmative action and bilingual education proclaim the end of racism, while their opponents suggest that racism’s remnants can be dispelled through dialogue and conversation. But conversations about “race relations” will hardly dismantle a prison industrial complex that thrives on and nourishes the racism hidden within the deep structures of our society.

The emergence of a U.S. prison industrial complex within a context of cascading conservatism marks a new historical moment, whose dangers are unprecedented. But so are its opportunities. Considering the impressive number of grassroots projects that continue to resist the expansion of the punishment industry, it

ought to be possible to bring these efforts together to create radical and nationally visible movements that can legitimize anti-capitalist critiques of the prison industrial complex. It ought to be possible to build movements in defense of prisoners' human rights and movements that persuasively argue that what we need is not new prisons, but new health care, housing, education, drug programs, jobs, and education. To safeguard a democratic future, it is possible and necessary to weave together the many and increasing strands of resistance to the prison industrial complex into a powerful movement for social transformation.

Safe Diversity: Black Is Beautiful... But Not Too Black

By Katrina Richardson

Tags: Diversity, White-washing, gender, societal pressures

Summary: A look at the implications of common standards of appearance for women.

The Daily Show has a new Asian Correspondent. It's a lady. Her name is Olivia Munn. A woman most famous for her cheesecake photos and hosting the live TV program Attack of the Show on the G4 channel.

In theory this feels like it should be good news. Another woman on The Daily Show and a woman of color at that. It feels like I should be writing a different article entirely, praising the show's bold move. But I just can't get excited and I'm disappointed in their choice.

Munn's mother is Chinese and her father is of German-Irish descent. Munn is Asian, but she is also white.

Before we get our delicates in a bunch, let me make one thing clear:

I am multiracial (African American & Malaysian). I am more than familiar with hurtful and misguided efforts made to discredit both my black and Asian identities. I have no interest in doing the same. I am not attempting to challenge her Asian "authenticity" or dismiss her identity. However, Munn's new position on The Daily Show deserves closer examination. Why did they choose her? They claim it's because she's funny. We all know it's because she's hot. She's famous for her hotness. Part of this is because she happens to be a good looking lady. But there's something else at work: she's an Asian woman that looks less like an Asian woman and more like a white girl. Jackpot!

The media devours palatable representations of "ethnic" beauty. It allows them to truly believe they're celebrating diversity while continuing to maintain a certain aesthetic. This is certainly no new revelation, but Munn's presence in the news last week offers us another opportunity to consider the media's habitual white washing of color.

No where has this practice been more noticeable than in images of African American women in film, television, and music. Black women come in a multitude of different shades: Freckly yellow, copper, blacker than black, and even ::whisper:: ashy gray. We have a multitude of different ass sizes and a plethora of hair textures. If, however, you grew up in a small and dark cave with nothing but the glow of a television to light your way, you would never know this.

The problem is, many of us have unconsciously allowed the media to be our only light. No person is immune to the ideas of beauty American culture celebrates. It affects the world. And though we have taken enormous strides and made great progress (Barry Obams!), a quieter method of oppression remains quietly in place.

You might not see it. It moves in and out of shadows.

It slinks. It hides.

It clings to Halle Berry's legs and peeks through Beyonce's hair. Hangs on a Lena Horne note and makes figure eights around Rihanna and Alicia Keys. It is a tricky thing. Conniving. It doesn't shout like Jim Crow. It whispers. It hisses.

Light skin is soft and sexy.

Dark skin is unfeminine.

Dark eyes are boring.

Light eyes are sexier.

Thin noses are pretty.

Wide noses are ugly.

Straight hair is professional.

Straight hair is beautiful.

Natural hair is unruly.

Natural hair is clear evidence of activist leanings.

Black is beautiful...but keep the blackness to a minimum.

It is significant that the majority of our most famous black actresses and musical artists represent one small corner of the color spectrum. It didn't end with Josephine Baker or Dorothy Dandridge. It continues with Halle Berry, Beyonce, Rihanna, Jessica Alba, Thandie Newton, Eva Mendes, Salma Hayek, Jennifer Lopez, and dear Olivia Munn.

These are women of color with tremendous talent, but who are also admired for a particular kind of beauty. They are ethnic enough to titillate, but not too ethnic to offend the white aesthetic. Yellow...but not too yellow. Brown...but not too brown. Black...but not too black.

President Obama Should Go to Chicago. And Yemen. And Pakistan. And...

By Mychal Denzel Smith

Tags: Police Brutality, Institutionalized Racism, Transnational, Anti-War

Summary: An article connecting violence at home to violence abroad.

To read online, visit: <https://www.thenation.com/article/president-obama-should-go-chicago-and-yemen-and-pakistan-and/>

After the shooting death of Hadiya Pendleton, the 15-year-old honor student who had, just a week before her tragic death, performed along with her high school band in the president's inauguration ceremonies, the Black Youth Project started a Change.org petition asking President Obama to come to Chicago and address the gun violence plaguing the city. Initially, I read it skeptically. There's a tendency to want the president to respond to every crisis everywhere, even when his intervention would do little to help. What real impact would a presidential speech or two have in reducing the violence? None that I can see. But that really isn't the point.

The president should go to Chicago. Even if it's not for Hadiya's funeral, which the first lady will attend, he should go to his adopted hometown sometime in the near future, meet with local community leaders, his old chief of staff turned mayor, family and friends who have lost someone to guns, and children of all ages that currently live in fear of their own neighborhood. He should offer them, as he did the families in Newtown, reassurance that they are not alone. He should use the bully pulpit, as Cathy Cohen told The Washington Post, "to command the attention of the country, raising their consciousness about the life and death issues facing young people in Chicago." He should listen intently to their concerns and engage them in dialogue about their ideas for solutions. He should get the country to focus on them, care about their future and stop writing them off. They should feel like someone cares.

Then he should explain to them when and why he thinks their government has right to kill them.

He should tell them about Anwar al-Awlaki and why, like Hadiya, his son has become a teenage symbol of a culture of violence. He should explain who makes the decisions and what criteria they use to determine who poses a threat so imminent the United States ignores habeas corpus in favor of unmanned drone strikes. He should explain why, as David Cole writes in the Post, this policy remains "secret in most aspects, involves no judicial review, has resulted in the deaths of innocent civilians, has been employed far from any battlefield and has sparked deep anti-American resentment in countries where we can ill afford it." They should understand what's being done in their name. He should ask them if they're OK with that.

When he leaves Chicago, the president should travel to Pakistan, and Yemen and Somalia, where he should deliver similar speeches to the families and friends of those who have lost someone to a drone. He should explain to them the endgame. He should tell them how long this is going to last. He should tell them how many Al Qaeda number-twos we have to kill before we feel safe enough to end the "war on terror." The president should tell them he cares about their lives and futures just as much as he cares about the citizens in his own country. They should know how long their kids have to live in fear of the sky.

I don't wish to conflate the issues and act as if they are precisely the same, but I also don't wish to pretend the violence abroad isn't reflected in the violence in our streets and vice versa. And I don't expect that this would put an end to drone strikes, targeted killings, assassinations and the like, much the same way I don't anticipate a speech or two about gun violence in Chicago would put an end to shooting deaths there. What I'm suggesting is

the president, and the rest of us, recognize our contradictions and be more vigilant in addressing violent behavior no matter where it's directed and by whom.

Obama should go to Chicago and ask the country to hold itself accountable for the violence we've allowed to terrorize a community. Then he should hold himself accountable, too.

Ours is a History of Resistance

By Karin Wang

Tags: AAPI, model minority

Summary: A brief overview of activism and resistance in the AAPI community.

To read the full article, visit: <http://reappropriate.co/2018/06/ours-is-a-history-of-resistance/#more-22753>

Sometimes I'll glimpse my reflection in a window and feel astonished by what I see. Jet-black hair. Slanted eyes. A pancake-flat surface of yellow-and-green-toned skin. An expression that is nearly reptilian in its impassivity. I've contrived to think of

No current narrative of Asian Americans is more closely tied to white supremacy and historic white nativist policies than the model minority myth. First coined and promulgated in the mid-1960s by white Americans, the term referred to Japanese and Chinese Americans, focusing obsessively on their seeming success in the face of discrimination. The model minority myth gets denounced on a regular basis lately, and many journalists, writers, and activists have analyzed and challenged the economic and class implications of the myth and the damage it does less privileged Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.

But there's another insidious side to the model minority myth that needs the same unpacking and deconstructing: the narrative of the quiet and obedient Asian – the one who works twice as hard and neither complains nor challenges authority. The myth was born at the height of the Civil Rights Movement, deliberately juxtaposing Asians against other racial minorities. It's an image used not only to keep Asian Americans in their place but one that upholds white supremacy.

Our real history as Asians in America defies this false narrative. Asian American resistance to racism dates back to at least the 1800s. Imported to the U.S. as cheap labor to serve white economic interests in the "new world", immigrants from China, Japan, India, and the Philippines built the transcontinental railroad opening up the western U.S., and worked sugar plantations and farms in Hawaii and on the Pacific Coast. Asian immigrants soon found themselves the target of hate violence and virulent anti-immigrant and racist laws, including those that barred Asians from accessing immigration and citizenship as well as that prohibited (explicitly or implicitly) everything from land ownership to voting to public education to interracial marriage. This would eventually culminate in the mass incarceration of 120,000 innocent individuals without due process.

Yet in the face of such hate, Asian immigrants did not meekly accept their fate. Instead, a number of Asian immigrants looked prejudice in the eye and refused to blink, challenging through the courts the laws they deemed unfair and unjust. Although not always immediately or obviously successful and not necessarily a direct attack on white supremacy per se, these cases were important in that they did directly challenge the whites in social and political power at the time. Some cases went further, paving the way to eventually overturn discriminatory policies or even leading to landmark decisions affecting not only Asians but other communities of color.

Resisting the Chinese Exclusion Act and Anti-Chinese Discrimination

Starting in the late 1800s, Asians were banned for decades from entering the U.S. by the Chinese Exclusion Act and other immigration laws. Chinese immigrants at the time brought a number of legal cases including several that reached the U.S. Supreme Court. Although they did not always succeed (e.g., many direct challenges to exclusion such as *Chae Chan Ping v. U.S.* failed), these cases demonstrate that Chinese immigrants of the late 1800s and early 1900s did not passively accept the Exclusion Act and related discriminatory laws. And although the Exclusion Act itself was not repealed until the mid-1900s, some early cases did have a lasting impact in establishing legal protections for non-citizens in the U.S. For example, *Yick Wo v. Hopkins* (1886) established that the 14th Amendment applied to Chinese immigrants, and *Wing Wong v. U.S.* (1896) determined that the same constitutional protections extend to non-citizens as citizens in criminal cases.

Redefining U.S. Citizenship

From the nation's founding through the 1950s, the United States limited citizenship — and its many privileges such as voting and land ownership — to “free white persons”. The Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, in addition to banning new immigrants, also explicitly barred Chinese immigrants already in the U.S. from becoming U.S. citizens.

A number of Asian immigrants challenged these laws. The most important case was brought by Wong Kim Ark, who was born in the U.S. but, after a trip to China, was denied re-entry to the United States on the grounds that the son of a Chinese national could never be a U.S. citizen. Wong disagreed — and sued the federal government, resulting in the U.S. Supreme Court's landmark 1898 decision defining “birthright citizenship” — that children born in the United States, even to parents not eligible to become citizens, were nonetheless citizens themselves under the 14th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. Wong successfully challenged a law designed to preserve white supremacy, and in doing so, he shaped the uniquely diverse character of our nation, by giving root to countless immigrant communities from all races and nationalities.

Other Asian immigrants also sought U.S. citizenship by challenging the definition of “free white person”. In back-to-back cases that reached the U.S. Supreme Court in the early 1920s, a Japanese immigrant (Takao Ozawa v. U.S.) and an Indian immigrant (U.S. v. Bhagat Singh Thind) respectively argued that they should be allowed to naturalize as a “free white person”. The Supreme Court ruled against both men, holding fast to the definition of “white” as both Caucasian and light-skinned (thus excluding Mr. Thind, whom the Court acknowledged was literally Caucasian by virtue of his birth in the Caucasus mountains, if not for the purposes of US citizenship), but their cases laid the groundwork for the eventual elimination in 1952 of the racial requirement to naturalize.

Challenging Anti-Miscegenation Laws

Most anti-miscegenation laws at the turn of the 20th century blocked interracial marriages between whites and African Americans, but marriage between whites and Asians (“Mongolians” and “Malays,” at the time) was also barred, starting in states with significant Asian populations such as California and Washington but expanding to 15 states across the country by 1950.

In one California case, a Filipino man argued that as a “Malay” and not a “Mongolian”, the state law barring marriage between whites and Mongolians did not apply to him. The court agreed, but not surprisingly the state immediately amended the statute to explicitly bar “Malays” as well, preserving the white supremacy that gave rise to anti-miscegenation laws in the first place. But the fight against anti-miscegenation was a matter of survival in that era. Asian men comprised the vast majority of the low-wage laborers brought from Asia to the U.S. during this time, and with Asian women largely barred from legally entering the country, Asian men pushed back against anti-miscegenation restrictions as they sought to build families and communities.

Fighting for Access to Education

Although new immigrants were barred by the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882, by that time cities like San Francisco had developed a small Chinese community, despite virulently anti-Chinese political leadership. In 1884, a Chinese immigrant mother tried to enroll her daughter, Mamie Tape, in the neighborhood elementary school, but the little girl was denied entry. The family sued, alleging violations of state and federal law. The California Supreme Court agreed with the Tapes, giving Chinese immigrants a right to public education in California, although it was a “flawed victory” in that racist education and political leaders created segregated schools for Chinese children that lasted for decades.

Nearly 100 years later, the San Francisco school system was desegregated by court order, and Chinese immigrant families fought a new legal battle over public education. After desegregation, thousands of Chinese immigrant students not fluent in English found themselves shut out of a meaningful education because the school district failed to provide them appropriate assistance, and instead placed some students in special education classes while forcing others to repeat the same grade for years. The families of Kinney Kinmon Lau and other Chinese students filed a civil rights lawsuit against the San Francisco school district. In 1974, the U.S. Supreme Court held in *Lau v. Nichols* that the school district had violated the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The *Lau* decision had a significant legacy, both in shaping bilingual education in the U.S. for many years as well as clarifying that disparate impact discrimination (discriminatory in impact) violated the Civil Rights Act.

Challenging Constitutionality of “Japanese American Internment”

Perhaps the best-known, explicitly anti-Asian act by the U.S. government was the mass incarceration during World War II of 120,000 Japanese Americans, mostly U.S. citizens. A number of Japanese Americans — notably Minoru Yasui, Gordon Hirabayashi, Mitsuye Endo, and Fred Korematsu — challenged the incarceration as

unconstitutional. Although the U.S. Supreme Court ruled against them at the time, individual convictions against Hirabayashi and Korematsu were later thrown out in the 1980s. While the Supreme Court has not yet explicitly overruled the broad power of the federal government during times of war, the legal challenges by Yasui, Hirabayashi, Endo, and Korematsu have led over time to acknowledgment by the federal government that it committed a grave civil liberties error in imprisoning Japanese Americans en masse and these cases continue to have deep implications today during an era of rampant profiling of Arab, Middle Eastern, Muslim and South Asian communities.

* * *

Ours is a history of resistance, and we can learn from earlier Asian Americans who defiantly “rocked the boat” and succeeded against all odds. But we must also deepen the battle we as Asian Americans wage against those that hold political and social power in this country.

As we face a current administration that prizes blind obedience to those in power and embraces white nativism, we must not only fight back against racism that impacts our communities, we must fight the battles that loom ahead — over family immigration, border enforcement, affirmative action — with a goal of dismantling the very white supremacy that drives those policies in the first place.

We Will Not Be Used

By Mari Matsuda

Tags: Model minority, racism, activism

Summary: An analysis of how Asian Americans are used and mobilized in conversations about race.

It is a special honor to address supporters of the Asian Law Caucus. Here, before this audience, I am willing to speak in the tradition of our women warriors, to go beyond the platitudes of fundraiser formalism, and to talk of something that’s been bothering me and that I need your help on. I want to speak of my fear that Asian-Americans are in danger of becoming the racial bourgeoisie, and of my resolve to resist that path.

Marx wrote of the economic bourgeoisie — the small merchants, the middle class, the baby capitalists — who were deeply confused about their self-interest. The bourgeoisie, he said, often emulate the manners and the ideology of the big-time capitalists. They are the wannabes of capitalism. Struggling for riches, often failing, confused about the reasons why, the economic wannabes go to their graves thinking that the big hit is right around the corner.

Living in 19th century Europe, Marx thought mostly in terms of class. Living in 20th century America, in the land where racism found a home, I am thinking about race. Is there a racial equivalent of the economic bourgeoisie? I fear there may be, and I fear it may be us.

If white, historically, is the top of the racial hierarchy in America, and black, historically, is the bottom, will yellow assume the place of the racial middle? The role of the racial middle is a critical one. It can reinforce white supremacy if the middle deludes itself into thinking it can be just like white if it tries hard enough. Conversely, the middle can dismantle white supremacy if it refuses to be the middle, if it refuses to buy into racial hierarchy, if it refuses to abandon communities of Black and Brown people, choosing instead to form alliances with them.

The theme of the unconventional fundraiser talk you are listening to is, “we will not be used.” It is a plea to Asian-Americans to think about the ways in which our communities are particularly susceptible to playing the worst version of the racial bourgeoisie role.

In thinking this, I remember my mother’s stories of growing up on a sugar plantation on Kauai. She tells of the Portuguese luna or overseer. The luna rode on a big horse and ordered the Japanese and Filipino workers around. The luna in my mother’s stories is a tragic-comic figure. He thinks he is better than the other workers, but he doesn’t realize that the plantation owner considers the luna sub-human, just like the other workers. The stereotype of the dumb portagee persists in Hawaii today, a holdover from the days of the luna parading around the big house, cloaked in self-delusion and false pride.

The double tragedy for the plantation nisei who hated the luna is that the sansei in Hawaii are becoming the new luna. Nice Japanese girls from Manoa Valley are going through four years of college to get degrees in Travel Industry Management, in order to sit behind a small desk in a big hotel, to dole out marching orders to brown-skinned workers and to take orders from a white man with a bigger desk and a bigger paycheck who never has to complicate his life by dealing with the brown people who make the beds and serve the food. He need only

deal with the Nice Japanese Girl, ex-Cherry Blossom Queen, eager to please, who doesn't know she will never make it to the bigger desk.

The portagee luna now has the last laugh with this new unfunny portagee joke: when the portagee was the luna, he didn't have to pay college tuition to ride that horse.

I'd like to say to my sister behind the small desk, "remember where you came from and take this pledge: we will not be used."

There are one hundred ways to use the racial bourgeoisie. Here are some examples:

When Asian-Americans manage to do well, their success is used against others. Internally, it is used to erase the continuing poverty and social dislocation within Asian-American communities. The media is full of stories of Asian-American whiz kids. Their successes are used to erase our problems and to disavow any responsibility for them. The dominant culture doesn't know about drug abuse in our communities, about our high school dropouts, our AIDS victims.

Suggestions that some segments of the Asian-American community need special help are greeted with suspicion and disbelief. External to our communities, our successes are used to deny racism and to put down other groups. African-Americans and Latinos and poor whites are told, "look at those Asians — anyone can make it in this country if they really try." The cruelty of telling this to crack babies, to workers displaced by runaway shops, and to families waiting in line at homeless shelters, is not something I want associated with my genealogy.

Yes, my ancestors made it in this country, but they made it against the odds. In my genealogy and probably in yours, are people who went to bed hungry, who lost land to the tax collector, who worked to exhaustion and ill-health, who faced pain and relocation with the bitter stoicism we call, in Japanese, "gaman." Many who came the hard road of our ancestors didn't make it. Their bones are still in the mountains by the tunnels they blasted for the railroad, still in the fields where they stooped over the short-handled hoe, still in the graveyards of Europe, where they fought for a democracy that didn't include them. Asian success was success with a dark, painful price.

To use that success to discount the hardship facing poor and working people in this country today is a sacrilege to the memory of our ancestors. It is an insult to today's Asian-American immigrants, who work the double-triple shift, who know no leisure, who crowd two and three families to a home, who put children and old-folks alike to work at struggling family businesses or at home doing piece-work until midnight. Yes, we take pride in our success, but we should also remember the cost. The success that is our pride is not to be given over as a weapon to use against other struggling communities. I hope we will not be used to blame the poor for their poverty.

Nor should we be used to deny employment or educational opportunities to others. A recent exchange of editorials and letters in the Asian-American press reveals confusion over affirmative action. Racist anti-Asian quotas at the universities can give quotas a bad name in our community. At the same time, quotas have been the only way we've been able to walk through the door of persistently discriminatory institutions like the San Francisco fire department.

Interested in hearing some perspectives on the Asian American identity and the affirmative action debate? Look up the "Supporting Affirmative Action as Asian Americans" by Brenadette Lim and (FUP-alum) Ivy Yan! Don't ever feel like you have to agree with anything presented, though!

We need affirmative action because there are still employers who see an Asian face and see a person unfit for a leadership position. In every field where we have attained a measure of success, we are underrepresented in the real power positions. And yet, we are in danger of being manipulated into opposing affirmative action by those who say affirmative action hurts Asian-Americans.

What's really going on here? When university administrators have secret quotas to keep down Asian admissions, this is because Asians are seen as destroying the predominantly white character of the university. Under this mentality, we can't let in all those Asian over-achievers and maintain affirmative action for other minority groups. We can't do both because that will mean either that our universities lose their predominantly white character, or that we have to fund more and better universities. To either of those prospects, I say, "why not?" And I condemn the voices from our own community that are translating legitimate anger at ceilings on Asian admissions into unthinking opposition to affirmative action floors needed to fight racism.

In a period when rates of educational attainment for minorities and working class Americans are going down, in a period when America is lagging behind other developed nations in literacy and learning, I hope we will not be used to deny educational opportunities to the disadvantaged and to preserve success only for the privileged.

Another classic way to use the racial bourgeoisie is as America's punching bag. There is a lot of rage in this country, and for good reason. Our economy is in shambles. Persistent unemployment is creating new ghost towns, new soup kitchens, from coast to coast. The symptoms of decay—the drugs, the homelessness, the violence—are everywhere. From out of this decay comes a rage looking for a scapegoat, and a traditional American scapegoat is the oriental menace. From the Workingman's Party that organized white laborers around an anti-Chinese campaign in California in 1877, to the World War II internment fueled by resentment of the success of issei farmers, to the murder of Vincent Chin, to the terrorizing of Korean merchants in ghetto communities today, there is an unbroken line of poor and working Americans turning their anger and frustration into hatred of Asian-Americans.

Every time this happens, the real villains—the corporations and politicians who put profits before human needs—are allowed to go about their business free from public scrutiny. And the anger that could go to organizing for positive social change goes instead to Asian-bashing.

Will we be used as America's punching bag? We can prevent this by organizing to publicize and to fight racist speech and racist violence wherever we find it. More importantly, however, Asian-Americans must take a prominent role in advocating economic justice. We must show that Asian-Americans are allies of the working poor, of the unemployed, of the ghetto teenager. If we can show our commitment to ending the economic upheaval that feeds anti-Asian sentiment, the displaced rage that terrorizes Asian-Americans will turn upon more deserving targets. If we can show sensitivity to the culture and needs of other people of color when we do business in their communities, we will maintain our welcome there, as we have in the past. I hope we can do this so we can put an end to being used as America's punching bag.

The problem of displaced anger is also an internal problem for Asian-Americans. You know the story: the Japanese pick on the Okinawans; the Chinese pick on the Filipinos; the Samoans pick on the Laotians. On the plantations we scabbed on each other's strikes. In Chinatown, we've competed over space. There are Asian men who batter Asian women, Asian parents who batter their children. There is homophobia in our communities—tied to a deep fear that we are already so marginalized by white society that any additional difference is intolerable. I've heard of straight Asian men say they feel so emasculated by white society, that they cannot tolerate assertive women or sexually ambiguous men. This is a victim's mentality; the tragic symptom of a community so devoid of self respect that it brings its anger home.

I love my Asian brothers, but I've lost my patience with malingered homophobia and sexism, and especially with using white racism as an excuse to resist change. You know, the "I have to be Bruce Lee because the white man wants me to be Tonto" line. Yes, the J-town boys with their black leather jackets are adorable, but the pathetic need to put down straight women, gays, and lesbians is not. To anyone in our communities who wants to bring their anger home, let's say, "cut it out." We will not be used against each other.

If you know Hawaiian music, you know of the ha'ina line that tells of a song about to end. This speech is about to end. It will end by recalling echoes of Asian-American resistance.

In anti-eviction struggles in Chinatowns from coast to coast and in Hawaii we heard the song, "We Shall Not Be Moved." For the 90's, I want to sing, "We Shall Not Be Used." I want to remember the times when Asian-Americans stood side-by-side with African-Americans, Latinos, and progressive whites to demand social justice. I want to remember the multi-racial ILWU (International Longshoremen and Warehousemen's Workers' Union) that ended the plantation system in Hawaii. I want to remember the multi-racial sugar beet strikes in California that brought together Japanese, Filipino and Chicano workers to fulfill their dreams of a better life. I want to remember the American Committee for the Protection of the Foreign Born that brought together progressive Okinawan, Korean, Japanese, Chinese, and European immigrants to fight McCarthyism and deportation of political activists. I want to remember the San Francisco State College strike, and the Asian-American students who stood their ground in a multi-racial coalition to bring about ethnic studies and lasting changes in American academic life, changes that make it possible for me, as a scholar, to tell the truth as I see it.

In remembering the San Francisco State strike, I also want to remember Dr. Hayakawa and ask what he represented. For a variety of historical and cultural reasons, Asian-Americans are particularly susceptible to being used by the dominant society. Nonetheless, we have resisted being used; we have joined time and again in the struggle for democracy in America. The Asian Law Caucus represents that tradition. The Caucus is a concrete manifestation of the pledge to seek a better life for the least advantaged and to work in coalition with other groups. All of you who support the Caucus help keep alive a utopian vision of a world free from racism and poverty. You honor the proudest moments in our collective histories.

When I told a friend about this speech, he sent me a news clipping from the Chronicle about Asian-Americans as the retailer's dream. It starts out, "[t]hey're young, [t]hey're single, [t]hey're college educated and on

the whitecollar track. And they like to shop for fun.” Does that describe you? Well, it may describe me, too. But I hope there is more to Asian-American identity than that. I hope we will be known to history as a people who remembered the hard road of their ancestors, and who shared, therefore, a special commitment to social justice.

This song is now at an end, a song of my hope that we will not be used.

Migrants at the Border Feel They Have No Choice But to Enter the U.S. Illegally

By Vox

Tags: Immigration Reform, Separation of Families, Border patrol

Summary: A short documentary detailing the issues at the border.



To watch online, visit: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=altfxSRG-rU>

A Personal History of Islamophobia

By Lamya H

Tags: Islamophobia, Discrimination, Racism

Summary: A series of instances of Islamophobia experienced by one person.

To read online, visit: <https://www.vox.com/2016/1/15/10767904/islamophobia-immigrant-america>

I.

Don't stay out past sunset.

Don't talk to people you don't know.

Speak only English when you're outdoors.

Don't talk about politics.

Don't talk about religion.

Study hard, and come back.

I'm 17 when I move to this country, anointed with a scholarship to a prestigious college.

I'm 17, and out of the arrogance of being 17 I am dismissive of my parents' advice. What do they know, my mother and father who live across an ocean? I'm in the liberal Northeast. It's been a whole two years since 9/11, and this can't be the America we talk about back home. This America isn't scary. This America is Doritos and discussion sections in which I'm still figuring out how to speak up. Fall colors and libraries galore, my first time seeing snow.

This America is also smiling white faces who want to be friends when they hear where I'm from. Tell us what it's really like back home, they say. What do you call that thing on your head? Do you sleep with it on? Do you really have to pray five times a day? Are your parents going to arrange your marriage? Are you sure you don't want to try beer just once? I laugh at these questions, indulge their curiosity, and move on. There is too much else to experience, too much novelty to drink in.

II.

My freshman spring, I take a psychology class meant for juniors. I'm a good student, and in a class of more than 200 students, the professor — a bearded ex-hippie partial to flannels that stretch tight across his belly — knows me by name. I ask questions and score high on the tests, but I still get the feeling he doesn't like me.

This professor is supervising our lab one week. We've split up into groups of six and are doing electroencephalograms, attaching electrodes to each other's scalps and recording the data. The professor comes by to talk to my group, and as he's walking off he says, "I'll let you get back to your last reading."

"Oh, we're done," we say. "Just cleaning up here."

He stops, backtracks. "But there are only five readings?"

Everyone in my group looks at me.

"I didn't do one."

His mouth becomes noticeably small, stern. "You need a reading for your lab participation grade."

"I can't put the electrodes on my head because of my hijab. Religious reasons."

I can see his mental calculations, his frustration mounting. What comes out is perhaps a little louder, a little more forceful than he intends.

"You need to stop using religion to make your own and everyone else's lives so hard."

The entire room goes silent, and I'm grateful for brown skin that hides my bone-deep flush.

III.

"Hey!"

The referee stops me as I'm about to be subbed into a soccer game. "Hold on a second. You can't play like that."

I'm halfway onto the pitch, but I turn around, thoroughly confused. I've been playing club soccer at my college for almost a year now and have never had any problems wearing a hijab and sweatpants during games before.

"Division rules," he says.

But it's a friendly tournament. The scores aren't being reported. The extra clothing I'm wearing won't affect anyone but myself. Still, he stops the game. Calls over my coach and my captain, who argue with him loudly. Calls over the opposing team's captain to ask her if it's okay if I play dressed like this. She wants to get back to the game too, but spends a few moments looking me up and down, trying to be intimidating.

"Yeah, yeah, I guess it's fine."

The game restarts, and there are cheers of relief.

"Fucking Ay-rab," someone yells from the sideline. It sounds as if it came from a group of hooting men in the crowd. My teammate is standing closest to them on the pitch. She chews them out and they continue to laugh, but I don't remember very much through the fog of my embarrassment.

Later, I convince myself I must have heard wrong.

IV.

There are [3.3 million](#) Muslims living in the United States.

[Forty-eight percent](#) report personally experiencing discrimination.

On average, [12.6](#) hate crimes against Muslims and those perceived to be Muslim are reported per month. After the Paris attacks, this number triples.

[Sixty-three](#) mosques are vandalized in 2015 alone.

There are as many as [15,000](#) paid FBI informants in the Muslim community, up to [one in 94](#) agents for every Muslim in the United States. There are [counterterrorism initiatives](#) that turn communities [against each other](#). [No-fly lists](#) and [death threats](#) as consequences for refusing to spy on your neighbors.

[Fourteen](#) Muslim-majority countries have been bombed or invaded by the United States since 1980; [23,144](#) bombs dropped in 2015 alone.

V.

I'm walking down the street one evening, on the way back from an old roommate's new apartment. It's still fairly early in spring, but the weather is beautiful, and I'm suffused with the kind of happy that comes from a lovely time with friends.

I pass by an older man, shaggy-looking and some shade of brown. "Hello," he says and I nod and smile at him because he's wearing a cap that reminds me of my grandfather.

Suddenly he's in step beside me. What's your name, honey? Where are you going? Can I come with you? Will you wear that thing on your head when we fuck?

I'm on a crowded street. I'm not worried, not really. I ignore him and walk faster to the beat of my heart in my head. But he doesn't stop. Are you Islamic? Where are you from, honey? Does your man make you wear that on your head? Why won't you answer me?

He gets louder. Don't you know that I could buy you? Isn't that what they do in your country? They sell women. I could just buy you if I wanted to. It's that easy.

No one around me intervenes; no one even slows down. I walk faster and slip between people until I'm sure I've lost him. I will myself not to look back until it's been a couple of blocks. When I check, he is standing at a corner, still yelling and waving his arms. I tell myself it was my mistake for smiling at him.

VI.

I take up running. I do it to be fitter and faster and more disciplined in general, but in the back of my mind I think it would be a good skill to have. In case.

People like to yell things at runners, perhaps because the interactions are iterant. I've been warned about this particular absurdity by a friend. "Run, Forrest, run!" I hear a few times. It never fails to make me laugh.

What I'm less prepared for is the "God Bless America" that a lady in a fur coat hisses at me as I pass her one day. Or, "Take off your hijab! Be free!" courtesy of a graying grandmother parked on a bench.

I shout the first response that comes to mind: "I am free! Don't tell me what to wear!"

I feel terrible afterward. For not stopping to have a conversation, for not changing her mind. For yelling at a lonely old woman.

VII.

Two bombs go off during the Boston Marathon.

I've spent a summer in Boston, run stretches of the marathon route, and I hurt as if I'm there. A friend's sister disappears near the finish line. She isn't heard from for a few tense hours, but she's safe. An acquaintance of my cousin loses his leg. My friend recognizes Tamerlan Tsarnaev from his mosque. And an international student who was watching the marathon, whose only crime was running away from the vicinity of the finish line, has his house searched while he is recovering from injuries in the hospital and immediately becomes [the Saudi Suspect](#).

Everything hits hard, and I find myself in the embarrassing position of crying at my desk at work. My work best friend notices, brings me water and tissues, and offers to run down to the vending machine for a pack of M&Ms. He sits with me and asks gently: "Are you okay? Are your Boston friends okay?"

I find myself blubbering. About the victims, the connections, the blowback the already marginalized Muslim community will face, the innocent international student caught in the crossfire.

"But that makes sense, though," he says. "About the international student. They have to follow all possible leads."

I am aghast. That's the point. There were no leads. Can he not see this? Can he not see that this could have been me? I could have been working in Boston. I could have been watching the marathon near the finish line.

I want to say these things, but all that comes out are angry tears. Everyone leaves me alone for the rest of the day.

VIII.

"Um, you might want to change your shirt," she tells me, right before we're leaving for the airport.

"What's wrong with my shirt?" I say. It's a nice shirt, button-down with small skulls on it, loose and soft and perfect for traveling.

"You don't want to wear anything antagonistic while flying."

I remember my friend's friend who [wasn't allowed to board his flight](#) because he was wearing a sarcastic T-shirt about terrorists. The two imams who were [escorted off a plane](#) because they were wearing traditional clothes. I hate that she's right, but I change.

My plain T-shirt doesn't stop me from being singled out at the airport. Ma'am, may I see your passport? What's the purpose of your trip? What's your final destination? Can I see your boarding pass, please? We round the corner en route to the bathroom and the process begins anew, blatantly directed at me while my bareheaded travel companion — who doesn't present as visibly Muslim — stands by and fiddles nonchalantly.

I am seething, and throw myself into a seat. "Did you see that?" I say. "Did you see that back there? It's like he was testing me." "We finally make it to our gate, and, anticipating a "random" search, I let her go ahead. The security guard stops me right before the metal detectors, gestures to my head, and asks me to take off my scarf.

I feign ignorance at first. "What?" I say. "I don't understand."

"That," he says loudly, pointing to my hijab. "You can't wear that through security. Please take it off."

The line is growing exasperated behind me.

"No."

"All right." And just like that, waves me through.

I am seething, and throw myself into a seat. "Did you see that?" I say. "Did you see that back there? It's like he was testing me."

"He's just doing his job," she says, this woman I have made the mistake of traveling with while we're rapidly falling out of love. "Why do you have to make everything about Islam? It's exhausting."

We never acknowledge it, but this is the moment that breaks us.

IX.

My parents come to visit, and we drive up to Canada to see my cousins. It's a tense trip: a lot of time spent in each other's company in confined spaces.

We finally pull up to the border after an hour-long wait in line. We're exhausted. In general, and of each other.

The border agent flips through our foreign passports, looks at all of us in turn, and then spends some time looking hard at my brother. My brother, who is in the driver's seat: a male in his mid-20s with messy black curls and a hint of stubble. In a voice both polite and urgent, the border agent asks my brother to pull up to the side, to parking spot 3.

We know what that means. Secondary questioning; this is going to take a while. We collectively sigh and bust out snacks in anticipation of a long wait.

We drive up to the spot, and as soon as my brother kills the engine, we are surrounded by uniformed cops with drawn guns. One cop is telling my brother to get out of the driver's seat with his hands up. My brother complies calmly. He gets out of the car and is whisked away by two cops with guns still drawn. My brother is taken into the secondary questioning building, and only then, after he is inside the building, do the other cops who are still surrounding us lower their weapons.

You'll have to wait a little while, they tell us. You can lock up the car and wait inside if you want; we just need to ask your son a few more questions.

We get out of the car and walk into the low, prefab border building. We wait in hard chairs in a room with shiny linoleum floors and cheery "Information about Canada" signs, tense until they return my brother to us. An administrative mix-up, they say. There's a rule that all men on visas need to register before they exit the US, and my brother didn't know to do that. Everything's fine now, they say. He's filled out the right form, and you're all free to go on your way. Welcome to Canada. Hope you enjoy your stay.

X.

The Fort Hood shooting happens, Chattanooga happens; the Times Square bomb doesn't go off. My work colleagues want to know how come so many of these instances are connected to Muslims and not other minorities.

Meanwhile, three Muslim students are shot in Chapel Hill, and the FBI is revealed to be infiltrating Muslim clubs in college campuses. There are anti-Islam ads in the subway and suspicious fires at mosques. Tarek Mehanna is [tried for thought crimes](#), and there are [disappearances](#) and [entrapments](#) and drone strikes and no one asks me how come it is my people who seem to be targeted.

Dylann Roof opens fire in a church in Charleston, and I'm relieved, so relieved, to find out that it's a white man, and then immediately mortified at my joy.

The Paris attacks happen, San Bernardino happens, Donald Trump calls for banning people like me. Suddenly there are stories in the mainstream media: a woman in a hijab who gets pushed in front of a train. A Sikh man who is beaten and hit by a car. Anti-Islam signs in front yards, people not being able to board their flights because they made the mistake of praying in the airport or carrying white stringed boxes filled with baklava.

Suddenly people want to know if I'm okay; they tell me that they're worried about me, ask if I'm experiencing any Islamophobia now.

"Don't worry about me," I say, but what I want to say is that this is not recent, this is not a trend, this is not going away because these incidents are being counted. Twelve years in this country, and I've switched to

walking quickly down the middle of the subway platform, I've started pulling a hoodie up over my hijab and looking for exits when I enter a room. I've stopped being surprised, even stopped telling stories.

I was sitting at a museum with a highlighted map to make sure I saw everything important, and a security guard came up and asked to see my ID. "Where are you from?" he asked, "What are you doing with that map?"

I've started pulling a hoodie up over my hijab and looking for exits when I enter a room. I helped my friend move one fall evening with her distinctly Muslim-looking father. We clambered onto their car to wind rope around the mattress we affixed to the top. We were loading the rest of her stuff when the cops came by. What are you doing? Where are you going with that stuff? We silently raged, me and my friend, as her father put on a soothing voice to answer their unending questions.

Some punk kid yelled, "Allahu akbar," as I passed by him, a block away from my home. It was a school night and he couldn't have been more than 15.

"Fuck you," I said quietly, in a rare slip.

"What was that?" He turned back. "Fuck *you*, you terrorist motherfucker. Fuck you."

XI.

I'm flirting with a cute girl restacking shelves in a bookstore.

I'm not good at this flirting thing usually, but somehow I've found myself in a playful, easy conversation about books. What we're reading now. Her favorites and my favorites. Hoping for a laugh, I admit that I always overpack my bag because I'm afraid of being caught having just finished a book and without another. "I would have guessed you had a bomb in there," she quips.

She's trying to be funny back; I get it. But how does she not grasp the gravity of her statement? Is anyone close enough to have overheard? Misunderstood? Are they calling the cops right now? I'm done. I just want to leave, and I do. Leave her a little confused with my quick goodbye and walk out with my friend who has overheard the tail end of the conversation.

"That is so fucked up," my friend says. "It was going so well, too. Who says that? Can you believe she said that?"

"It's fine," I say, and change the topic. But my friend, who is not visibly Muslim, is enthralled. She tells everyone this story. She repeats it over and over to everyone we meet that day. She makes them agree loudly and repeatedly that it was fucked up. Until, embarrassed, I pull her aside. And ask her to stop making such a big deal out of such a small, commonplace occurrence.

Gender & Sexuality

Interested in Queer Issues on Campus?

Check out the QuOffice! Look out for it on the AWESOME tour of Harvard your FUP leaders will give you! It, along with the Women's Center, are two awesome spaces on campus.

Who Does Marriage Leave Behind?

By Drew Ambrogi

Tags: BGLTQA+ Rights, Intersectionality

Summary: Examines the ways in which the "LGBT rights" movement's response to DOMA and Prop 8 failed to consider racism, classism, and sexism in the movement.

To read online, visit: <http://www.washingtonblade.com/2013/04/19/who-does-marriage-leave-behind-getequal-opinio/>

Last month at rallies outside of the Supreme Court, the Human Rights Campaign asked protesters to move their trans pride flag from behind the podium and censored a speech given by the Queer Undocumented Immigrant Project (QUIP) so as not to reveal the immigration status of the speaker.

Later, HRC, GetEQUAL and United for Marriage issued public apologies for "offending" those groups, and reminded them that they are committed to their issues. But this is more than a matter of unintentional "offensive" incidents. These are people being told that they must conform or get out of the way. These are people being told that their needs and experiences aren't relevant to those making decisions in their communities. Yet this is nothing new for the mainstream gay rights movement.

Our most effective arguments for marriage equality have been ones that mirror the values of those who are in a position to give us access to the rights we seek. We seem overjoyed to explain time and time again that, just like them, we too believe in the supreme value of marriage and the nuclear family. In order to support this argument and present ourselves as a non-threatening community of good citizens, we've actively excluded and suppressed those of us who depart from the values of the heterosexual majority, leaving our most marginalized brothers and sisters behind.

The actions of HRC, GetEQUAL, and United for Marriage at the rallies last month reflect these strategies, and remind us that in selecting marriage as its priority, the gay rights movement has also told us what issues should take a back seat.

Talking about marriage as if it is the most important issue for the LGBT community silences those of us with needs that access to marriage will not address. Marriage won't provide adequate health care to those of us who are without it. Marriage won't address the domestic violence many of us face in our relationships. It won't save the one in four LGBT youth who are homeless, and it won't help those of us living with HIV as crucial assistance programs face budget cuts. It won't address the routine violence faced by trans people and it will do little for LGBT people who are undocumented. And it will probably make things more difficult for those of us living outside of nuclear family formations.

As non-heterosexual people, our existence is a fundamental threat to the organization of society. For decades we've lived in the margins where we've drawn strength from our difference and from our diversity as a community. As we built families on our own terms, we recognized the necessity of fighting oppression in all of its manifestations, and we envisioned radical alternatives to a society that wanted nothing to do with us. How have we come to see our uniqueness and our diversity as blemishes we must cover up while we try to win the respect of our oppressors?

As a goal, marriage equality reflects the needs of the members of our community with the most power and privilege — those who have access to resources that allow them to emulate the heterosexual lifestyle. As HRC, GetEQUAL and United for Marriage demonstrated, the rest of our concerns are merely distractions.

The priorities of our movement's self-appointed leaders reveal their self-interested motivations. You can't help but wonder whether they'll still be around to help the rest of us out when marriage equality becomes a reality. In their apologies, all three groups promised that they are committed to issues beyond marriage. In the weeks, months, and years to come, we must hold them accountable to this claim.

Trans Basics: Glossary of Terms *From the Gender Identity Project*

Tags: Trans Awareness, Gender, Gender Identity

Summary: Some useful definitions for discussing gender identity.



To read and watch online, visit:

<https://lgbtlatestscience.wordpress.com/2009/12/20/transgender-basics-video-and-vocabulary/>

“Call Me Caitlyn” Blog Post Response

By Laverne Cox

Tags: Trans Awareness, Gender, Gender Identity, Media

Summary: A blog post, taken from Laverne Cox's tumblr, detailing the need for diverse media portrayals of the trans community and its excellence.

To read online, visit:

<http://lavernecox.tumblr.com/post/120503412651/on-may-29-2014-the-issue-of-timemagazine>

On May 29, 2014, the issue of timemagazine magazine which proclaimed the “Transgender Tipping Point” was revealed with me on the cover. June 1, 2015 a year and 3 days later, Caitlyn Jenner’s vanityfair cover was revealed proclaiming #CallMeCaitlyn I am so moved by all the love and support Caitlyn is receiving. It feels like a new day, indeed, when a trans person can present her authentic self to the world for the first time and be celebrated for it so universally. Many have commented on how gorgeous Caitlyn looks in her photos, how she is “slaying for the Gods.” I must echo these comments in the vernacular, “Yasss Gawd! Werk Caitlyn! Get it!” But this has made me reflect critically on my own desires to ‘work a photo shoot’, to serve up various forms of glamour, power, sexiness, body affirming, racially empowering images of the various sides of my black, trans womanhood. I love working a photo shoot and creating inspiring images for my fans, for the world and above all for myself. But I also hope that it is my talent, my intelligence, my heart and spirit that most captivate, inspire, move and encourage folks to think more critically about the world around them. Yes, Caitlyn looks amazing and is beautiful but what I think is most beautiful about her is her heart and soul, the ways she has allowed the world into her vulnerabilities. The love and devotion she has for her family and that they have for her. Her courage to move past denial into her truth so publicly. These things are beyond beautiful to me. A year ago when my Time magazine cover came out I saw posts from many trans folks saying that I am “drop dead gorgeous” and that that doesn’t represent most trans people. (It was news to be that I am drop dead gorgeous but I’ll certainly take it). But what I think they meant is that in certain lighting, at certain angles I am able to embody certain cisnormative beauty standards. Now, there are many trans folks because of genetics and/or lack of material access who will never be able to embody these standards. More importantly many trans folks don’t want to embody them and we shouldn’t have to to be seen as ourselves and respected as ourselves. It is important to note that these standards are also informed by race, class and ability among other intersections. I have always been aware that I can never represent all trans people. No one or two or three trans people can. This is why we need diverse media representations of trans folks to multiply trans narratives in the media and depict our beautiful diversities. I started #TransIsBeautiful as a way to celebrate all those things that make trans folks uniquely trans, those things that don’t necessarily align with cisnormative beauty standards. For me it is necessary everyday to celebrate every aspect of myself especially those things about myself that don’t align with other people’s ideas about what is beautiful. #TransIsBeautiful is about, whether you’re trans or not, celebrating all those things that make us uniquely ourselves. Most trans folks don’t have the privileges Caitlyn and I have now have. It is those trans folks we must continue to lift up, get them access to healthcare, jobs, housing, safe streets, safe schools and homes for our young people. We must lift up the stories of those most at risk, statistically trans people of color who are poor and working class. I have hoped over the past few years that the incredible love I have received from the public can translate to the lives of all trans folks. Trans folks of all races, gender expressions, ability, sexual orientations, classes, immigration status, employment status, transition status, genital status etc.. I hope, as I know Caitlyn does, that the love she is receiving can translate into changing hearts and minds about who all trans people are as well as shifting public policies to fully support the lives and well being of all of us. The struggle continues...

Perfect Victims, Perfect Narratives

By s. e. smith

Tags: Media, Rhetoric, Victimization, Rape, Black Lives Matter

Summary: How do the media and the public focus on only certain cases of injustice?

To read online, visit: http://meloukhia.net/2012/05/perfect_victims_perfect_narratives/

People involved in any sort of service, community, or activism work that involves interaction with the court system are well aware of the need for ‘perfect victims,’ people who can serve as adequate test cases in the legal environment because their narratives are flawless and beyond reproach. An attorney working with victims of domestic violence, for example, knows that it will be hard to get a conviction if the client fought back or has a criminal record. Rape victims are only good on the stand if they can tell the right kind of story, the one where they were innocently minding their own business and weren’t trans, or poor, or sex workers, or people with any sort of history. Young men who are murdered by police or overzealous vigilantes are only public causes to rally around if they, too, were pure and innocent, with nothing to besmirch their reputations.

The need for victims to be perfect is an awful bind to be caught in; even people who hate the perfect victim narrative may need to play by the rules in the interest of what they think of as the greater good. An attorney won’t bring a case to court if the outcome is predetermined, or if it’s likely to be traumatic and pointless for the client, for example, because it serves no function. People laying the groundwork for a precedent want to find the best possible representative to create a rock-solid foundation, so that the precedent will be unassailable. This narrative is advanced by the media, and reinforced by the media, in the way it reports on these issues, and conservatives are quick to take advantage of it. In any case where an unfairness and a wrongness is in the public eye, there is a rush to find something ‘wrong’ with the victim, some reason the case doesn’t matter and can’t be taken seriously. She was asking for it. He shouldn’t have behaved suspiciously. She was a drug user. He was a rent boy. She had a history, you know. He shouldn’t have been out in that neighbourhood.

An awareness of the perfect victim narrative is important, and it’s critical to acknowledge that sometimes people are forced to sacrifice or make bad choices because of the predominance of this narrative in the system. We are doing no one any good if we pretend that it doesn’t exist and isn’t a problem. At the same time, though, it is important to avoid being consumed by it, and to prevent the tendency to play into it when it’s not necessary; pushing back against the perfect victim narrative is the only way to abolish it.

In the Trayvon Martin case that burst into the public eye in March, many people reacted with outrage and horror to the initial story, of a young man shot to death while walking home with a pack of Skittles for his brother. The shooter’s defense team quickly turned to smearing him, attempting to make the case out as an act of self-defense, but also specifically casting aspersions on Mr. Martin’s character, making him seem like a suspicious kid with a bad history. This was deliberate, not just because they wanted to win their case, but because they know that by undermining Mr. Martin’s character, they could weaken the outrage.

By turning him from a perfect victim into someone more nebulous, or at least creating the illusion of doing so, or suggesting that there might be more to Mr. Martin’s life than was originally discussed, they created a ripple effect that slowly spread out. Questioning started to spread. They turned the victim into one of those boys people don’t care about, the ones who don’t provoke anger across race and class barriers because they die every day. They didn’t just build a case for themselves; they reminded people about the perfect victim narrative and the need for all victims to be spotless if they want justice.

In the United States, there is a claim that justice is blind, and people can access it without prejudice if they have been mistreated or are victims of inequality. This is not upheld with the actual enforcement of justice in the United States, and the way justice really works on the ground, rather than in the halls of theory. One reason for this is social attitudes about perfect victims, and the responsibility of victims to society to meet their expectations about what a victim should look like, how victims should behave, and how a victim should testify about the experience of violence or abuse.

Progressives play into this by taking up the cause of perfect victims, rallying around them with their petitions and outcry while ignoring the less perfect victims. There are all sorts of excuses for this; some advocates, like people working directly in institutions to change them, argue that they want to create a precedent, a stepping stone or foundation block that can be used to progress to more systemic change in the long term. Others are ignorant of other cases, because they don’t take the time to look, or they ignore these cases when they are presented, since they don’t match their impression of what a victim should look like; they claim to be advocating

for communities, but don't work with the people in those communities who are working full time for justice and a better chance at equality.

For every *cause celebre*, every perfect victim who captures media and political attention, scores of people go unremarked and are lost to the flow of time, remembered only by their families and a handful of community members. Because they weren't perfect victims, and only perfect victims garner attention. *All* of these cases represent a horrible wrongness, and *all* victims deserve justice.

I Want a 24-Hour Truce During Which There Is No Rape

By Andrea Dworkin

Tags: Rape, Sexual Assault, Feminism, Activism

Summary: The anti-rape activist and feminist demands that men end rape immediately.

It is astonishing that in all our worlds of feminism and antisexism we never talk seriously about ending rape. Ending it. Stopping it. No more. No more rape.

This was a speech given at the Midwest Regional Conference of the National Organization for Changing Men in the fall of 1983 in St. Paul, Minnesota. One of the organizers kindly sent me a tape and a transcript of my speech. The magazine of the men's movement, *M.*, published it. I was teaching in Minneapolis. This was before Catharine MacKinnon and I had proposed or developed the civil rights approach to pornography as a legislative strategy. Lots of people were in the audience who later became key players in the fight for the civil rights bill. I didn't know them. It was an audience of about 500 men, with scattered women. I spoke from notes and was actually on my way to Idaho – an eight-hour trip each way (because of bad air connection) to give a one-hour speech on Art – fly out Saturday, come back Sunday, can't talk more than one hour or you'll miss the only plane leaving that day, you have to run from the podium to the car for the two-hour drive to the plane. Why would a militant feminist under this kind of pressure stop off on her way to the airport to say hi to 500 men? In a sense, this was a feminist dream-come-true. What would you say to 500 men if you could? This is what I said, how I used my chance. The men reacted with considerable love and support and also with considerable anger. Both. I hurried out to get my plane, the first hurdle for getting to Idaho. Only one man in the 500 threatened me physically. He was stopped by a woman bodyguard (and friend) who had accompanied me. I have thought a great deal about how a feminist, like myself, addresses an audience primarily of political men who say that they are antisexist. And I thought a lot about whether there should be a qualitative difference in the kind of speech I address to you. And then I found myself incapable of pretending that I really believe that that qualitative difference exists. I have watched the men's movement for many years. I am close with some of the people who participate in it. I can't come here as a friend even though I might very much want to. What I would like to do is to scream: and in that scream I would have the screams of the raped, and the sobs of the battered; and even worse, in the center of that scream I would have the deafening sound of women's silence, that silence into which we are born because we are women and in which most of us die.

And if there would be a plea or a question or a human address in that scream, it would be this: why are you so slow? Why are you so slow to understand the simplest things; not the complicated ideological things, you understand those. The simple things. The clichés. Simply that women are human to precisely the degree and quality that you are.

And also: that we do not have time. We women. We don't have forever. Some of us don't have another week or another day to take time for you to discuss whatever it is that will enable you to go out into those streets and do something. We are very close to death. All women are. And we are very close to rape and we are very close to beating.

And we are inside a system of humiliation from which there is no escape for us. We use statistics not to try to quantify the injuries, but to convince the world that those injuries even exist. Those statistics are not abstractions. It is easy to say, "Ah, the statistics, somebody writes them up one way and somebody writes them up another way." That's true. But I hear about the rapes one by one by one by one by one, which is also how they happen. Those statistics are not abstract to me. Every three minutes a woman is being raped. Every eighteen seconds a woman is being beaten. There is nothing abstract about it. It is happening right now as I am speaking.

And it is happening for a simple reason. There is nothing complex and difficult about the reason. Men are doing it, because of the kind of power that men have over women. The power is real, concrete, exercised from one

body to another body, exercised by someone who feels he has a right to exercise it, exercised in public and exercised in private. It is the sum and substance of women's oppression.

It is not done 5,000 miles away or 3,000 miles away. It is done here and it is done now and it is done by the people in this room as well as by other contemporaries: our friends, our neighbors, people that we know. Women don't have to go to school to learn about power. We just have to be women, walking down the street or trying to get the housework done after having given one's body in marriage and then having no rights over it.

The power exercised by men day-to-day in life is power that is institutionalized. It is protected by law. It is protected by religion and religious practice. It is protected by universities, which are strongholds of male supremacy. It is protected by a police force.

It is protected by those whom Shelley called "the unacknowledged legislators of the world": the poets, the artists. Against that power, we have silence.

It is an extraordinary thing to try to understand and confront why it is that men believe – and men do believe – that they have the right to rape. Men may not believe it when asked. Everybody raise your hand who believes you have the right to rape. Not too many hands will go up. It's in life that men believe they have the right to force sex, which they don't call rape. And it is an extraordinary thing to try to understand that men really believe that they have the right to hit and to hurt. And it is an equally extraordinary thing to try to understand that men really believe that they have the right to buy a woman's body for the purpose of having sex: that that is a right. And it is very amazing to try to understand that men believe that the seven-billion-dollar-a-year industry that provides men with cunts is something that men have a right to.

That is the way the power of men is manifest in real life. That is what theory about male supremacy means. It means you can rape. It means you can hit. It means you can hurt. It means you can buy and sell women. It means that there is a class of people there to provide you with what you need. You stay richer than they are, so that they have to sell you sex. Not just on street corners, but in the workplace. That's another right that you can presume to have: sexual access to any woman in your environment, when you want.

Now, the men's movement suggests that men don't want the kind of power I have just described. I've actually heard explicit whole sentences to that effect. And yet, everything is a reason not to do something about changing the fact that you do have that power.

Hiding behind guilt, that's my favorite. I love that one. Oh, it's horrible, yes, and I'm so sorry. You have the time to feel guilty. We don't have the time for you to feel guilty. Your guilt is a form of acquiescence in what continues to occur. Your guilt helps keep things the way they are.

I have heard in the last several years a great deal about the suffering of men over sexism. Of course, I have heard a great deal about the suffering of men all my life. Needless to say, I have read Hamlet. I have read King Lear. I am an educated woman. I know that men suffer. This is a new wrinkle. Implicit in the idea that this is a different kind of suffering is the claim, I think, that in part you are actually suffering because of something that you know happens to someone else. That would indeed be new.

But mostly your guilt, your suffering, reduces to: gee, we really feel so bad. Everything makes men feel so bad: what you do, what you don't do, what you want to do, what you don't want to want to do but are going to do anyway. I think most of your distress is: gee, we really feel so bad. And I'm sorry that you feel so bad – so uselessly and stupidly bad – because there is a way in which this really is your tragedy. And I don't mean because you can't cry. And I don't mean because there is no real intimacy in your lives. And I don't mean because the armor that you have to live with as men is stultifying; and I don't doubt that it is. But I don't mean any of that. I mean that there is a relationship between the way that women are raped and your socialization to rape and the war machine that grinds you up and spits you out: the war machine that you go through just like that woman went through Larry Flynt's meat grinder on the cover of Hustler. You dick well better believe that you're involved in this tragedy and that it's your tragedy too. Because you're turned into little soldier boys from the day that you are born and everything that you learn about how to avoid the humanity of women becomes part of the militarism of the country in which you live and the world in which you live. It is also part of the economy that you frequently claim to protest.

And the problem is that you think it's out there: and it's not out there. It's in you.

The pimps and the warmongers speak for you. Rape and war are not so different. And what the pimps and the warmongers do is that they make you so proud of being men who can get it up and give in hard. And they take that acculturated sexuality and they put you in little uniforms and they send you out to kill and to die. Now, I am not going to suggest to you that I think that's more important than what you do to women, because I don't.

But I think that if you want to look at what this system does to you, then that is where you should start looking: the sexual politics of aggression; the sexual politics of militarism. I think that men are very afraid of other

men. That is something that you sometimes try to address in your small groups, as if if [sic] you changed your attitudes towards each other, you wouldn't be afraid of each other.

But as long as your sexuality has to do with aggression and your sense of entitlement to humanity has to do with being superior to other people, and there is so much contempt and hostility in your attitudes towards women and children, how could you not be afraid of each other? I think that you rightly perceive – without being willing to face it politically – that men are very dangerous: because you are.

The solution of the men's movement to make men less dangerous to each other by changing the way you touch and feel each other is not a solution. It's a recreational break.

These conferences are also concerned with homophobia. Homophobia is very important: it is very important to the way male supremacy works. In my opinion, the prohibitions against male homosexuality exist in order to protect male power. Do it to her. That is to say: as long as men rape, it is very important that men be directed to rape women. As long as sex is full of hostility and expresses both power over and contempt for the other person, it is very important that men not be declassified, stigmatized as female, used similarly. The power of men as a class depends on keeping men sexually inviolate and women sexually used by men. Homophobia helps maintain that class power: it also helps keep you as individuals safe from each other, safe from rape. If you want to do something about homophobia, you are going to have to do something about the fact that men rape, and that forced sex is not incidental to male sexuality but is in practice paradigmatic. Some of you are very concerned about the rise of the Right in this country, as if that is something separate from the issues of feminism or the men's movement. There is a cartoon I saw that brought it all together nicely. It was a big picture of Ronald Reagan as a cowboy with a big hat and a gun. And it said: "A gun in every holster; a pregnant woman in every home. Make America a man again." Those are the politics of the Right.

If you are afraid of the ascendancy of fascism in this country – and you would be very foolish not to be right now – then you had better understand that the root issue here has to do with male supremacy and the control of women; sexual access to women; women as reproductive slaves; private ownership of women. That is the program of the Right. That is the morality they talk about. That is what they mean. That is what they want. And the only opposition to them that matters is an opposition to men owning women.

What's involved in doing something about all of this? The men's movement seems to stay stuck on two points. The first is that men don't really feel very good about themselves. How could you? The second is that men come to me or other feminists and say: "What you're saying about men isn't true. It isn't true of me. I don't feel that way. I'm opposed to all of this."

And I say: don't tell me. Tell the pornographers. Tell the pimps. Tell the warmakers. Tell the rape apologists and the rape celebrationists and the pro-rape ideologues. Tell the novelists who think that rape is wonderful. Tell Larry Flynt. Tell Hugh Hefner. There's no point in telling me. I'm only a woman. There's nothing I can do about it. These men presume to speak for you. They are in the public arena saying that they represent you. If they don't, then you had better let them know.

Then there is the private world of misogyny: what you now about each other; what you say in private life; the exploitation that you see in the private sphere; the relationships called love, based on exploitation. It's not enough to find some traveling feminist on the road and go up to her and say: "Gee, I hate it."

Say it to your friends who are doing it. And there are streets out there on which you can say these things loud and clear, so as to affect the actual institutions that maintain these abuses. You don't like pornography? I wish I could believe it's true. I will believe it when I see you on the streets. I will believe it when I see an organized political opposition. I will believe it when pimps go out of business because there are no more male consumers.

You want to organize men. You don't have to search for issues. The issues are part of the fabric of your everyday lives. I want to talk to you about equality, what equality is and what it means. It isn't just an idea. It's not some insipid word that ends up being bullshit. It doesn't have anything at all to do with all those statements like: "Oh, that happens to men too." I name an abuse and I hear: "Oh, it happens to men too." That is not the equality we are struggling for. We could change our strategy and say: well, okay, we want equality; we'll stick something up the ass of a man every three minutes.

You've never heard that from the feminist movement, because for us equality has real dignity and importance – it's not some dumb word that can be twisted and made to look stupid as if it had no real meaning.

As a way of practicing equality, some vague idea about giving up power is useless. Some men have vague thoughts about a future in which men are going to give up power or an individual man is going to give up some kind of privilege that he has.

That is not what equality means either.

Equality is a practice. It is an action. It is a way of life. It is a social practice. It is an economic practice. It is a sexual practice. It can't exist in a vacuum. You can't have it in your home if, when the people leave the home, he is in a world of his supremacy based on the existence of his cock and she is in a world of humiliation and degradation because she is perceived to be inferior and because her sexuality is a curse.

This is not to say that the attempt to practice equality in the home doesn't matter. It matters, but it is not enough. If you love equality, if you believe in it, if it is the way you want to live – not just men and women together in a home, but men and men together in a home and women and women together in a home – if equality is what you want and what you care about, then you have to fight for the institutions that will make it socially real.

It is not just a matter of your attitude. You can't think it and make it exist. You can't try sometimes, when it works to your advantage, and throw it out the rest of the time. Equality is a discipline. It is a way of life. It is a political necessity to create equality in institutions. And another thing about equality is that it cannot coexist with rape. It cannot. And it cannot coexist with pornography or with prostitution or with the economic degradation of women on any level, in any way. It cannot coexist, because implicit in all those things is the inferiority of women.

I want to see this men's movement make a commitment to ending rape because that is the only meaningful commitment to equality. It is astonishing that in all our worlds of feminism and antisexism we never talk seriously about ending rape. Ending it. Stopping it. No more. No more rape. In the back of our minds, are we holding on to its inevitability as the last preserve of the biological? Do we think that it is always going to exist no matter what we do? All of our political actions are lies if we don't make a commitment to ending the practice of rape. This commitment has to be political. It has to be serious. It has to be systematic. It has to be public. It can't be self-indulgent.

The things the men's movement has wanted are things worth having. Intimacy is worth having. Tenderness is worth having. Cooperation is worth having. A real emotional life is worth having. But you can't have them in a world with rape. Ending homophobia is worth doing. But you can't do it in a world with rape. Rape stands in the way of each and every one of those things you say you want. And by rape you know what I mean. A judge does not have to walk into this room and say that according to statute such and such these are the elements of proof. We're talking about any kind of coerced sex, including sex coerced by poverty.

You can't have equality or tenderness or intimacy as long as there is rape, because rape means terror. It means that part of the population lives in a state of terror and pretends – to please and pacify you – that it doesn't. So there is no honesty. How can there be? Can you imagine what it is like to live as a woman day in and day out with the threat of rape? Or what it is to live with the reality? I want to see you use those legendary bodies and that legendary strength and that legendary courage and the tenderness that you say you have in behalf of women; and that means against the rapists, against the pimps, and against the pornographers. It means something more than a personal renunciation. It means a systematic, political, active, public attack. And there has been very little of that.

I came here today because I don't believe that rape is inevitable or natural. If I did, I would have no reason to be here. If I did, my political practice would be different than it is. Have you ever wondered why we are not just in armed combat against you?

It's not because there's a shortage of kitchen knives in this country. It is because we believe in your humanity, against all the evidence. We do not want to do the work of helping you to believe in your humanity. We cannot do it anymore. We have always tried. We have been repaid with systematic exploitation and systematic abuse. You are going to have to do this yourselves from now on and you know it.

The shame of men in front of women is, I think, an appropriate response both to what men do do and to what men do not do. I think you should be ashamed. But what you do with that shame is to use it as an excuse to keep doing what you want and to keep not doing anything else: and you've got to stop. You've got to stop. Your psychology doesn't matter. How much you hurt doesn't matter in the end any more than how much we hurt matters. If we sat around and only talked about how much rape hurt us, do you think there would have been one of the changes that you have seen in this country in the last fifteen years? There wouldn't have been.

It is true that we had to talk to each other. How else, after all, were we supposed to find out that each of us was not the only woman in the world not asking for it to whom rape or battery had ever happened? We couldn't read it in the newspapers, not then.

We couldn't find a book about it. But you do know and now the question is what you are going to do: and so your shame and your guilt are very much beside the point. They don't matter to us at all, in any way. They're not good enough. They don't do anything.

As a feminist, I carry the rape of all the women I've talked to over the past ten years personally with me. As a woman, I carry my own rape with me. Do you remember pictures that you've seen of European cities during

the plague, when there were wheelbarrows that would go along and people would just pick up corpses and throw them in? Well, that is what it is like knowing about rape. Piles and piles and piles of bodies that have whole lives and human names and human faces.

I speak for many feminists, not only myself, when I tell you that I am tired of what I know and sad beyond any words I have about what has already been done to women up to this point, now, up to 2:24 P.M. on this day, here in this place. And I want one day of respite, one day off, one day in which no new bodies are piled up, one day in which no new agony is added to the old, and I am asking you to give it to me. And how could I ask you for less – it is so little. And how could you offer me less: it is so little. Even in wars, there are days of truce. Go and organize a truce.

Stop your side for one day. I want a twenty-four-hour truce during which there is no rape.

I dare you to try it. I demand that you try it. I don't mind begging you to try it.

What else could you possibly be here to do? What else could this movement possibly mean? What else could matter so much?

And on that day, that day of truce, that day when not one woman is raped, we will begin the real practice of equality, because we can't begin it before that day. Before that day it means nothing because it is nothing: it is not real; it is not true. But on that day it becomes real. And then, instead of rape we will for the first time in our lives – both men and women – begin to experience freedom.

If you have a conception of freedom that includes the existence of rape, you are wrong. You cannot change what you say you want to change. For myself, I want to experience just one day of real freedom before I die. I leave you here to do that for me and for the women whom you say you love.

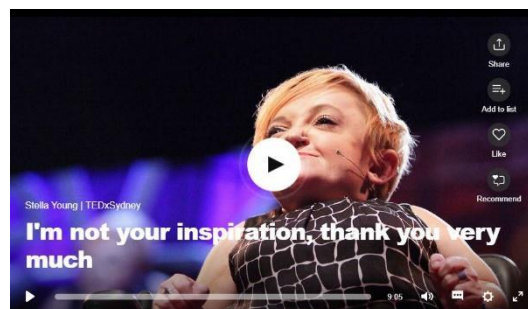
Health and Ableism

I'm Not Your Inspiration, Thank You Very Much

By Stella Young

Tags: Ableism, Sensationalism

Summary: In this video, Stella Young describes how society uses disabled people as "inspiration porn."



To watch online, visit:

https://www.ted.com/talks/stella_young_i_m_not_your_inspiration_thank_you_very_much?language=en

The Hidden Challenges of Invisible Disabilities from BBC

By Jessica Holland

Tags: Ableism, health

Summary: A collection of profiles of people living with hidden disabilities.

To read online, visit: <http://www.bbc.com/capital/story/20170605-the-hidden-challenges-of-invisible-disabilities>

Fighting to make it as an actor can be tough.

"It's a cut-throat profession," says Isabella McGough. "You need to look physically strong, and show that you've got the strength of mind, body and soul."

The 23-year-old Londoner is up for the challenge, though, juggling rehearsals with a job at a pub to pay the bills and teaching work on the side. "I've always tried to live my life to the fullest and not miss out on anything," she says.

This is why she hesitates to tell people that she has epilepsy. It's not the type that's sensitive to flashing lights, but she's at risk of seizures if she overexerts herself or doesn't get enough sleep.

"I'm fortunate," she says. "I've never had a seizure at work, but there are times when I've had to call in sick because I have to stay in bed and sleep."

She doesn't feel she can always be upfront about the reasons why she might need to take a break. "There have been times when I've said I had flu symptoms because, as an employee, I don't feel that [needing to rest] is a good enough excuse to have a sick day. That's when you feel almost guilty for it."

It's a dilemma that will be familiar to hundreds of millions of people worldwide who have physical or mental health conditions that affect their day-to-day life, but which are not apparent to the outside world.

A billion people worldwide live with some kind of disability, according to the World Health Organization, and one US survey found that 74% of those with disabilities don't use a wheelchair or anything else that might visually signal their impairment to the outside world.

If someone uses a wheelchair, or is visually impaired, it can be easier to understand the difficulties they might face and to support them. For those with so-called invisible impairments, such as depression, chronic pain or myalgic encephalomyelitis (ME, or chronic fatigue syndrome), it's often a different story. Colleagues may not spot the challenges they are experiencing, and may find it hard to comprehend or believe someone with a "hidden" impairment genuinely needs help.

A Silent Challenge

There are also internal barriers to be surmounted. A 2011 Canadian survey found that 88% of people with invisible disabilities had a negative view of disclosing their disability. "People worry about being labelled," says Guy Chaudoir, a service manager for the disability charity Scope. "One of the hardest things is putting pressure on yourself to achieve, and being afraid to ask for help, to say 'I can't do this today.'"

Jimmy Isaacs has direct experience of the negative impact that disclosing an invisible illness can have. He was diagnosed as HIV positive four years ago, while he was working for a sunglasses company in the UK, and says that as a consequence of sharing that information, he was pushed into accepting a cut to his hours, pay and responsibilities. Unable to pay rent on reduced wages, he quit, and says that recruiters disappeared as soon as he explained why he'd spent time between jobs.

Stigmatisation and discrimination of HIV-positive people persists, and it can affect work life. HIV/Aids organisations estimate that, globally, people with HIV have unemployment rates three times higher than national rates.

Isaacs has HIV-positive friends working in finance who feel unable to share their diagnosis with employers. Despite his own ordeal, Isaacs encourages those with invisible illnesses to disclose their condition early, where possible.

"First, if you need to take time off later, you're covered," he says. "And, if [employers] react badly, you can educate them. Then, bit by bit, we can all move forward as a society."

Isaacs now works as a store manager at a company called Rolling Luggage, who he describes as having been "fantastic" about his illness. They even gave him time off to go on a speaking tour with the campaign group Youth Stop AIDS.

Loaded Term

HIV and epilepsy are two conditions that can have varying levels of impact on a person's day-to-day working life, but they both automatically qualify as disabilities in many countries. In the UK, for example, they are covered by the 2010 Equality Act, which ensures various protections, and requires employers to make "reasonable adjustments" in order to remove barriers to work.

This might mean changing work hours so the employee can avoid rush hour, or allowing leave for appointments. Those who don't legally qualify as disabled are still entitled to statutory sick pay in the UK, and to ask for flexible working hours.

Even for those who legally qualify as disabled, the word is a loaded one. Many feel that the term does not really apply to them, especially if their condition is not visible to outsiders.

"I really struggle to know whether to tick that box," says Emmeline May, who works as an administrator for a local authority in London. She is affected by several chronic conditions – anxiety, depression, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and benign hypermobility syndrome, which causes joint and muscle pain. They can all be managed with the right support, but can also flare up unexpectedly.

"I worked somewhere quite corporate for a few months and it nearly broke me," she says. Rather than being supported at work, she felt as though she had to prove her ailments were real. When applying for her new job, she was "very open" about her conditions, and the company gave her a specialised keyboard and chair along with extra time off for therapy. She has now been in the same job for nine years.

Her employers "are very understanding when I say I need to go home today or work different hours this week," explains May. "But I work very hard, I've been there a long time and I've built up a lot of trust."

Tapping the Talent Pool

Smart employers should take note, according to Scope's Guy Chaudoir. Disabled people are four times as likely to be unemployed as others in the UK, with modified working hours being among the most commonly stated needs, while transport is one of the biggest problems. Inclusivity can allow employers to tap this pool of talented candidates and helping people do their jobs better can inspire loyalty.

"There's definitely a movement towards flexibility, whether it's because of childcare, disability or work-life balance," says Chaudoir. But he warns there is still a lot of work to be done in raising awareness, especially in competitive fields. "It's society's barriers that are disabling people."

Danny Clarke is the operations director for the ELAS Group, which provides training to companies in occupational health and employment law. He says companies should try to develop a culture where staff feel safe confiding in their employer. He recommends they have a mental health and well-being policy in place so that employees know how to access support. "The best piece of advice we can offer [to those with invisible illnesses] is not to suffer in silence," he says.

Isabella McGough says she doesn't want "special privileges" as she pursues her acting dreams, but a more widespread understanding of invisible illnesses might help.

"You want to feel that bit of care," she says. "You're not a number. You're someone who works hard, but you need to balance your life as well."

"Head Stuck in a Cycle I Look Off and I Stare" A Personal Letter from Gaga

By Lady Gaga

Tags: Ableism, PTSD, Mental health, Fibromyalgia

Summary: A letter taken from the Born This Way Foundation detailing Lady Gaga's experience with mental health and how she has reconciled with her diagnosis.

To read online, visit: <https://bornthisway.foundation/personal-letter-gaga/>

I have wrestled for some time about when, how and if I should reveal my diagnosis of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). After five years of searching for the answers to my chronic pain and the change I have felt in my brain, I am finally well enough to tell you. There is a lot of shame attached to mental illness, but it's important that you know that there is hope and a chance for recovery.

It is a daily effort for me, even during this album cycle, to regulate my nervous system so that I don't panic over circumstances that to many would seem like normal life situations. Examples are leaving the house or being touched by strangers who simply want to share their enthusiasm for my music.

I also struggle with triggers from the memories I carry from my feelings of past years on tour when my needs and requests for balance were being ignored. I was overworked and not taken seriously when I shared my pain and concern that something was wrong. I ultimately ended up injured on the Born This Way Ball. That moment and the memory of it has changed my life forever. The experience of performing night after night in mental and physical pain ingrained in me a trauma that I relive when I see or hear things that remind me of those days.

I also experience something called dissociation which means that my mind doesn't want to relive the pain so "I look off and I stare" in a glazed over state. As my doctors have taught me, I cannot express my feelings

because my pre-frontal cortex (the part of the brain that controls logical, orderly thought) is overridden by the amygdala (which stores emotional memory) and sends me into a fight or flight response. My body is in one place and my mind in another. It's like the panic accelerator in my mind gets stuck and I am paralyzed with fear.

When this happens I can't talk. When this happens repeatedly, it makes me have a common PTSD reaction which is that I feel depressed and unable to function like I used to. It's harder to do my job. It's harder to do simple things like take a shower. Everything has become harder. Additionally, when I am unable to regulate my anxiety, it can result in somatization, which is pain in the body caused by an inability to express my emotional pain in words.

But I am a strong and powerful woman who is aware of the love I have around me from my team, my family and friends, my doctors and from my incredible fans who I know will never give up on me. I will never give up on my dreams of art and music. I am continuing to learn how to transcend this because I know I can. If you relate to what I am sharing, please know that you can too.

Traditionally, many associate PTSD as a condition faced by brave men and women that serve countries all over the world. While this is true, I seek to raise awareness that this mental illness affects all kinds of people, including our youth. I pledge not only to help our youth not feel ashamed of their own conditions, but also to lend support to those servicemen and women who suffer from PTSD. No one's invisible pain should go unnoticed.

I am doing various modalities of psychotherapy and am on medicine prescribed by my psychiatrist. However, I believe that the most inexpensive and perhaps the best medicine in the world is words. Kind words...positive words...words that help people who feel ashamed of an invisible illness to overcome their shame and feel free. This is how I and we can begin to heal. I am starting today, because secrets keep you sick. And I don't want to keep this secret anymore.

A note from my psychologist, drnancy;

If you think you might have PTSD, please seek professional help. There is so much hope for recovery. Many people think that the event that stimulated PTSD needs to be the focus. Yet often, people will experience the same event and have completely different reactions to it. It is my opinion that trauma occurs in an environment where your feelings and emotional experience are not valued, heard and understood. The specific event is not the cause of traumatic experience. This lack of a "relational home" for feelings is the true cause of traumatic experience. Finding support is key.

Unwell and Unashamed

By Colby Itkowitz

Tags: Ableism, Mental health, stigma

Summary: A feature story details ways people have broken through stigma.

To read online, visit: https://www.washingtonpost.com/sf/local/2016/06/01/unwell-and-unashamed/?utm_term=.6ff58bcc1db4

For several years, she wrote about her bipolar disorder under a pseudonym. She described how she'd been hospitalized four times, twice since her first child was born. She explained how she went off her medication during both of her pregnancies and how each time — once as the mother of a newborn and then again weeks into her second pregnancy — she was escorted from her home in police handcuffs, defiant.

She blogged to connect and reach other mothers grappling with mental illness. Ultimately, however, she decided that hiding her identity was actually perpetuating the shame long associated with mental disorders.

So even as her parents urged her not to, Jennifer Marshall in 2013 typed her real name on a blog post, hit publish and waited for the reaction.

With those keystrokes, Marshall, who lives in Ashburn, Va., joined a growing community of people with mental illness who have chosen to out themselves.

Marshall describes a surge of strength as she shared her story. "It's human connection," she said. "When you find someone who has been able to overcome something that you're struggling with, it's really powerful."

Likened by some to the gay rights movement, with its beginnings in personal revelation, the groundswell to lift the stigma connected with mental illness has had a multiplying effect accelerated by social media. The more people who "come out" about their mental illness and are met with acceptance, the more others feel it's safe to do the same.

Since the beginning of this year, millions have tweeted about their mental illness, many using established hashtags. For example, the campaigns #imnotashamed and #sicknotweak were tweeted 75,000 times and 139,000 times, respectively, since Jan. 1, according to an analysis from Twitter. The movement #BellLetsTalk, which began in Canada to “start breaking down the barriers associated with mental illness,” received 6.8 million tweets in January from all over the world.

While U.S. mental-health experts said there is not yet scientific data tracking the increase in voluntary disclosures of mental illness, social media has been employed so much to that end that a former Johns Hopkins professor is studying behavioral trends by mining tweets in which people talk explicitly about their mental illnesses.

Glen Coppersmith said that he was initially surprised by how many people disclose that information online. Coppersmith’s Twitter analysis shows that since 2014, hundreds of people a day have tweeted that they have received diagnoses of mental illness.

“Some of it is to end the stigma; some is an explanation of past behavior,” said Coppersmith, who recently started a company, Qntfy, to analyze mental-health data. He added that he “wholeheartedly” believes such disclosures have risen to the level of a movement.

The trend has been buoyed, experts say, by advancements in neuroscience that have enabled people to cast off stereotypes of mental illness as a personal failing and view it instead as the result of physiological changes in the brain that can be treated much like physical illnesses.

“We’ve become a much more sophisticated society about mental health,” said Bernice Pescosolido, a professor at Indiana University and an expert in mental-health stigma. “As people, we are opening up more about issues of race, issues of gender, issues of health generally. This is intertwined with the fabric of life.”

But prejudice persists, particularly in the workplace, and Pescosolido and other experts say it remains to be seen whether the outpouring that is contained largely to social media will translate into advocacy and less discrimination in daily life.

The stigma “is still out there,” Pescosolido said. “I think it’s an opportunity. We’ve had a resurgence in the science; we’ve had a resurgence of people coming forward.”

The Stigma Fighters

Sarah Fader did not want her children to grow up thinking they had to be ashamed of their feelings, as she had been her entire life. So she decided to open up about the panic disorder from which she had suffered since she was a teenager.

In early 2014, she penned “Fighting Against the Stigma of Mental Illness” for the Huffington Post to describe her struggles. She described how others had belittled her for her illness, telling her that she was merely being “dramatic” or disparaging her use of antidepressants. Hundreds of people from all over the world sent her messages relating their own experiences with shame.

Then Fader met Allie Burke, who lives with schizophrenia, through a mental-health advocacy community on Facebook. The two women teamed up to launch Stigma Fighters, a blog and nonprofit dedicated to giving other people a platform to share their stories.

Since its launch in March 2014, hundreds of people have written pieces for the blog. Fader originally let contributors write anonymously or under first names, but then Marshall reached out to Fader through social media to share her own epiphany about not hiding behind a fake name.

So now Fader requires almost everyone contributing to the blog to write under their full names. Those who overcome their fears of being judged and do so start to view themselves as survivors.

Amy Bleuel, who was depressed and plagued with suicidal thoughts most of her life, noticed the same phenomenon when she launched Project Semicolon in 2013. Her father died by suicide when she was 18, and she knew that he, like she, had felt alone in his illness.

In April 2013, after a conversation with a friend yielded the idea, Bleuel tweeted a request for people to draw a semicolon on their wrists.

People with mental illness often think their lives are over. But the semicolon signifies that there’s more to your story, Bleuel said; it’s used by authors when they’re not ready to end a sentence. Since then, thousands of people around the world have posted pictures of themselves on social media with real semicolon tattoos.

The tattoos serve as permanent reminders that life does go on.

“People want to know they’re not suffering in silence,” Bleuel said. “We want to have that discussion. We’re done losing people to suicide; we’re done not knowing what to do.”

The movement to lift the stigma is also changing how mental illness is portrayed in popular culture and the arts.

In the FX Network show “You’re the Worst,” the audience came to know one of the main characters as a gregarious party girl with, yes, questionable morals. Then, in the second season, it is revealed that Gretchen Cutler’s lifestyle is a diversion from recurrent depression. When it comes roaring back, she fears telling her boyfriend that “my brain is broken.”

The portrayal was widely acclaimed.

“I continually run into people who suffer from depression, and it was something very secretive, and we’re just seemingly starting to come into the light a little more,” said Stephen Falk, the show’s creator. “I thought if we could help that process along at all, then we’d be doing a service.”

That’s what Rachel Griffin, a singer-songwriter in New York, had in mind when she embarked on writing a musical about life in a psychiatric ward. The main character, Jane, is a young woman with severe panic disorder and depression. Throughout the show, another character portrays Depression — always hovering, sometimes controlling the conversation. Jane’s symptoms worsen until she checks herself into a mental hospital.

Griffin sees her show as doing for mental illness what “Rent” did for HIV/AIDs by presenting complex characters who are more than just their illnesses.

She started writing the show while riding the subway as an outlet for her depression and anxiety. “It’s about empowerment,” she said.

Coming Out on the Air

“The stigma is most damaging not when others see it in a certain way, but when we see it that way ourselves,” said Michael Landsberg, a successful Canadian sportscaster who has a diagnosis of depression. “I tell people all the time . . . when you believe the stigma, that it’s a reflection of weakness, you tell it in a way that sounds weak: ‘I’m sorry; I don’t know why I do this; I’m so ungrateful.’ ”

The alternative, Landsberg says, is this: “I suffer from a mental-health problem; I have depression; this has taken a lot from my life.”

Before suffering a breakdown at age 39, Landsberg said, he was among those who thought someone with depression should just buck up and get over it. Then his illness descended.

It didn’t knock him down at first, he said. Rather, it tapped at him incessantly. He was on and off medication until November 2008, when the pain became too much to bear and he had his final relapse.

“With severe depression, one of the symptoms is loss of being able to feel joy,” said Landsberg, 58. “You know with 100 percent certainty you won’t be able to feel joy that day. That’s the most profoundly damaging aspect of depression.”

In 2009, Landsberg was set to interview hockey player Stéphane Richer on his show when in his research he learned that Richer had also battled depression.

Landsberg asked Richer whether it was okay for them to share their experiences on the air.

During the interview, Richer confided that he tried to kill himself in 1995, four days after winning the Stanley Cup with the New Jersey Devils. Emails poured in, some from viewers who said that hearing the two men talking about depression openly and with no shame was life-changing.

Just a few months ago, Landsberg started a social-media campaign, #sicknotweak. The international response — a lot of it from the United States — was overwhelming, he said. The catharsis and sense of community that followed emboldened him, Landsberg said.

“The best way to show someone you’re not weak is to show it with strength,” he said.

Such boldness is contagious.

Paolo del Vecchio, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration’s director for mental health services, said he suffered with depression and anxiety since he was a child but was reluctant to talk about it openly. Then, through his work, he began meeting people who were willing to open up.

“That made all the difference; that made it safe for me to be able to share,” he said. “When people disclose, it is the most effective way of reducing negative attitudes, what we’ve called stigma. And that’s the power.”

‘This Is My Brave’

Helen Dennis was preparing to stand alone on a stage in front of an audience on May 15 and describe how what was dismissed as moodiness when she was a child was actually the first sign of bipolar disorder. Dennis’s

illness later manifested itself as deep depression. In 2007, when she was 27, she became so desperate to escape the pain that she called in sick to work, ready to take her own life.

"I would have these periods when I couldn't think straight. The suicidal thoughts were rampant. . . . Nothing I could say or do could make me feel better," she said. "It's that sense of loss of control over your very personhood that really made me feel like I was weak. I said I'm the worst person; I'm not strong enough to live this life."

She called her now-husband, and he knew by her voice that something was very wrong. He came home and, for the first time, she shared everything with him. He took her to a hospital, where she was finally received a diagnosis of bipolar disorder.

But for the most part, Dennis was too ashamed to speak about her illness.

Then she heard about Jennifer Marshall.

Marshall experienced her first manic episode at 26. She was forced to give up a high-pressure job at a recruitment agency in Washington after two back-to-back hospital stays. She had been able to keep her symptoms at bay until she went off her medication several years later for her pregnancies.

Once she told her story, revealing her identity on her blog as a mother with bipolar disorder, no one judged her, Marshall said. Instead, she received a flood of supportive emails. Whatever residual shame she felt about her illness dissipated.

In 2013, Marshall started "This Is My Brave," a stage show appearing around the country this spring in which cast members tell their stories of mental illness, some for the first time. Dennis was to be among those to stand at center stage under a spotlight, sharing their stories of mental illness.

Dennis isn't sure what compelled her to audition for Marshall. But on that day, she said, the words poured out.

"I'm a touch terrified because there is still such a strong stigma around it; there's a lot of misinformation about it," she said. "But I truly believe as people see co-workers and friends come out of the woodwork and be honest about this . . . it shows it can happen to anyone. . . . You feel so alone when you're going through the worst of it; to hear you're not alone for me is revolutionary." The world, as imperfect as it is, it is not built for the disabled community," Neal Carter said over the phone one late November morning.

Ableism – A form of discrimination or social prejudice against people with disabilities.

#SolidarityIsForTheAbleBodied and Feminism's **Ableism**
Problem

By Annamarya Scacci

Tags: Ableism, Intersectionality

Summary: A look at ableism in feminist movements and other activist spaces.

To read online, click [here](#) or visit:

<http://rhrealitycheck.org/article/2013/12/19/solidarityisfortheablebodied-and-feminisms-ableism-problem/>

"The world, as imperfect as it is, it is not built for the disabled community," Neal Carter said over the phone one late November morning.

At the time, it had been a few weeks since #SolidarityIsForTheAbleBodied trended on Twitter, and [Carter](#), who was born with spina bifida, was explaining the motivation behind the hashtag he created. Both an extension of his #Ableism101 tag and a play on [Mikki Kendall's](#) work starting #SolidarityIsForWhiteWomen, #SolidarityIsForTheAbleBodied aimed to spark a conversation among people with disabilities who "have to fight, and *hard*, to adapt ... to fit into the world," Carter, a political consultant who lives in Maryland, said.

More so, it was meant to uncover the ableism experienced daily by the [one in five people in the United States who has a disability](#). Just [take a quick scan](#) of the hashtag on Twitter, and you'll [read tweet after tweet](#) of inequitable treatment. Denied government benefits because you're not "disabled enough"? [Check](#). Confronted by a "take the stairs" campaign when you use a wheelchair? [Check](#). Avoided visiting the doctor's because it's inaccessible? [Check](#). Told your depression is nothing but temporary sadness and that you should "just smile"? [Check](#).

While #SolidarityIsForTheAbleBodied shined a light on incidents of able-bodied privilege from across the globe, showing how ableism is a systemic issue in all political and societal respects, it also revealed something that has long been known by some, but that has been unrecognized by others: that [feminism has an ableism problem](#).

Plenty of well-known feminists have been known to use [ableist speech](#)—language invoking disability as a metaphor, typically in the pejorative. For instance, Caitlin Moran [described her teenage self](#) in her 2011 memoir, *How to Be a Woman*, as having “all the joyful ebullience of a retard.” On December 14, Lizz Winstead [tweeted that](#) President Obama is “surrounded by so many wildly gesturing loonies” in his day-to-day life, in response to the [controversy surrounding the sign language interpreter](#) at Nelson Mandela’s memorial. And last year Jezebel editor Jessica Coen defended against [allegations](#) that the blog is ableist by [tweeting](#), “[T]he word ‘ableist’ is crazy and lame.”

[In an article](#) published earlier this year, Indiana University gender studies grad student Sami Schalk found that indirect ableism is “problematically habitual and historically consistent” in feminist texts, with feminists and women’s rights activists often invoking disability metaphors (such as “crippled,” “handicapped,” “lame,” “crazy,” and “insane”) to “represent inability, loss, and lack in a simplistic and uncritical way” for over a century.

“The continued use of mental health ableism, especially by progressives, is my personal bugbear,” [Amadi Lovelace](#), an active participant in #SolidarityIsForTheAbleBodied, said earlier this month. She said she’s unfollowed “many major noted feminists” on social media because of it. “We’re acculturated to consider disability as always a negative. We’re acculturated to think [of] disability as conferring inferiority. We haven’t come to a place yet where we are accepting the equality of disabled people,” she said.

Ableist rhetoric is only an overt measure of feminism’s ableism problem, though. For many activists and feminists with disabilities, like Lovelace, able-bodied privilege within the feminist movement is more [defined by disregard](#)—a dearth of conversations happening in the most prominent feminist outlets and among some of the more well-known feminists.

[Disregard](#) for the barriers [women with disabilities face accessing reproductive health care](#), especially in places like Texas, Arizona, Iowa, Michigan, and Ohio, where the number of reproductive health clinics has shrunk [due to restrictive legislation](#).

Disregard for the [higher rates of poverty](#), which both exacerbates and is exacerbated by disability. The U.S. Census Bureau reports that [21 percent of people with disabilities](#) are living below the poverty level, which is 10 percent more than those who are able-bodied. And, according to the U.S. Department of Justice’s Bureau of Labor Statistics, [13.7 percent of women with disabilities were unemployed](#) in 2012, nearly [7 percent more than able-bodied women](#).

Disregard for how sexuality, relationships, and caregiving [take shape for people with disabilities](#), continuing the [ubiquitous belief](#) that people with disabilities are asexual.

Disregard for the intersection of race and disability—[disabilities are most prevalent](#) among American Indians and Alaska Natives (29.9 percent), followed by Black and African-Americans (21.2 percent), whites (20.3 percent), Hispanics (16.9 percent), Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders (16. percent), and Asians (11.6 percent).

[Disregard](#) for how feminist and social justice spheres are too often [exclusive of or inaccessible to people with disabilities](#).

As [Lovelace noted](#), there’s disregard for the [higher rates of sexual violence](#) experienced by people with disabilities.

And then there’s the fact that, [as predicted by Twitter user @RobinsToyNet](#), the [most prominent feminist blogs](#) and [news sites](#) have given #SolidarityIsForTheAbleBodied little—if any—attention even a month after the topic trended.

“We have seen in some place[s] the rate of being victims of sexual violence is doubled for women with profound physical, and especially mental, disabilities,” Lovelace said. “If you aren’t verbal, and you can’t tell what happened to you, I don’t think we even know. I don’t think we would know how many people are in those situations, especially ones being cared for in institutional care [who] have been victimized.”

The Bureau of Justice Statistics found that, in 2011 alone, serious violence (including rape and sexual assault) accounted for [43 percent of non-fatal violent crimes](#) committed against people with disabilities; of that, 57 percent occurred against people with multiple disabilities. The bureau also found, from 2009 to 2011, the average annual percent of rape and sexual assault, robbery, and simple assault increased against persons with multiple disabilities.

Meanwhile, data collected by the Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs (WCSAP) reveals that [83 percent of women with disabilities](#) will experience sexual assault in their lifetime; only 3 percent of cases are ever reported. WCSAP also found that women with disabilities are more susceptible to having a history of

intimate partner sexual violence, with a rate that is nearly two-and-a-half times higher than for women without disabilities.

Population-based studies examining rates of sexual violence against men with disabilities are limited, but a [2011 report](#) published in the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* (the first of its kind) found that, in Massachusetts, 13.9 percent of men with disabilities reported lifetime sexual violence—a rate nearly four times higher than for men without disabilities.

And, according to the World Health Organization, children with disabilities [are nearly three times more likely to experience sexual violence](#) than children without disabilities, with children living with mental or intellectual disabilities at nearly five times the risk. WCSAP also found that 54 percent of boys who are deaf and 50 percent of girls who are deaf experienced sexual abuse.

“There’s a knowledge gap because we find young kids—especially [those] who have profound disabilities, especially intellectual disabilities—aren’t taught about being safe in their own bodies, and that people can’t touch them or shouldn’t touch them,” Lovelace said. “We act like this isn’t something that’s possible, that people with profound disabilities have no sexuality. Also, there’s that mindset of innocence. People ascribe innocence to people with profound disabilities and they expect everybody will see them that way.”

But those are just the statistics. The stories are even more traumatic. Early this month, a 30-year-old woman with a mental disability filed a federal lawsuit [against a West Sacramento police officer](#) for reportedly sexually assaulting her in two separate 2012 incidents. In an unrelated case, Sacramento police [arrested a veteran cop in December 2012](#) for the reported rape of a 76-year-old woman who experienced communication issues after suffering a stroke—a disability the defense [hoped would discredit the victim](#). And in August of this year, another Sacramento man was [sentenced to 11 years in prison](#) for raping his 14-year-old stepdaughter, who has cerebral palsy.

That’s just one city. In July, a 55-year-old Philadelphia man [confessed to raping a 15-year-old girl](#) with severe mental and physical disabilities. In 2012, a 33-year-old man [was charged with](#) sexually molesting two young girls and raping an 18-year-old woman with a developmental disability at a care facility in Los Gatos, California. In 2011, a Des Moines, Iowa, woman who has an intellectual disability reported being [raped several times over five days by fellow residents](#) at a state-licensed facility. And, going back 13 years, Cobb County, Georgia, police arrested 20 suspects in [the repeated gang rape of a 13-year-old girl with a mental disability](#), which happened over two days at two apartments.

Yet, these occurrences of sexual violence against people with disabilities are rarely discussed in the majority of well-established feminists outlets and blogs—statistics living in the shadows of the “intersectional understanding of feminism,” said Lovelace—despite [the large network of disability activists and feminists with disabilities](#) doing the work. It’s this exclusion that triggered disability rights activist Rachel Cohen-Rottenberg to [disassociate from the feminist movement](#).

But feminists have the opportunity to change this tide. As with the intersections of race, class, gender, and sexuality, the feminist movement still has an opportunity to be more inclusive of people with disabilities, both in addressing these sweeping issues more frequently and actively making spaces, materials, websites and other methods of outreach accessible. If #SolidarityIsForTheAbleBodied has taught us anything, achieving this inclusivity is just a matter of listening and broadening your horizons, Lovelace said.

Or, as African activist Agness Chindimba, the founder of the Zimbabwe Deaf Media Trust (and is herself deaf), [so eloquently put it](#): “Disability and issues affecting disabled women do belong to the feminist movement. ... We cannot afford to leave out other women because they are different from us. At the end of the day, whatever gains the movement may make will not be real and sustainable if millions of other women are still oppressed.”

Harvard on Campus & in Community

Excerpts from Harvard’s Womanless History

By Lauren Ulrich

Tags: Feminism, Representation, Harvard

Summary: A look at how women have been overlooked throughout Harvard’s history

To read online, visit: <https://harvardmagazine.com/1999/11/womanless.html>

In the opening pages of *A Room of One's Own*, Virginia Woolf imagines her fictional self walking across the grass at a college she calls Oxbridge when a stern beadle in a cutaway coat intercepts her. His outraged face reminds her that only the "Fellows and Scholars" are allowed on the grass. A few minutes later, inspired by her reverie on a passage from Milton, she ascends the steps to the library. "Instantly there issued, like a guardian angel barring the way with a flutter of black gown instead of white wings, a deprecating, silvery, kindly gentleman, who regretted in a low voice as he waved me back that ladies are only admitted to the library if accompanied by a Fellow of the College or furnished with a letter of introduction."

I thought of these passages late on a summer day in 1997, when I walked into the newly renovated Barker Center for the Humanities at Harvard. There was no living person to be seen in the grand public rooms, but everywhere I turned the eyes of long-dead men looked down at me from their portraits. "What are you doing here?" they seemed to be saying. "Have you a letter of down at me from their portraits. "What are you doing here?" they seemed to be saying. "Have you a letter of introduction?" There was no room on these walls for ladies. Nine eminences, bewhiskered and stiff-collared, asserted the power of Harvard past.

At the gala dedication a few weeks later, the ghosts were less formidable. There were as many women as men in the crowd, and some of them were faculty members. Porter University Professor Helen Vendler gave a graceful dedicatory reading that included lines from Elizabeth Bishop and Adrienne Rich '51, LL.D. '90, as well as Lord Tennyson and Seamus Heaney, Litt.D. '98. Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences Jeremy Knowles said how pleased he was that both the chief architect and the project manager for the new Barker Center were women. The tone was light, but both speakers knew that something in the room needed exorcising.

I should have been reconciled, but as I started to leave the building, I felt a tug of something like responsibility. I was going to lecture on *A Room of One's Own* the following week, and I wanted to make sure I could come to terms with my own disquiet on my first visit to Barker Center. Seeing two young women with "Staff" badges near the entrance, I asked if there was someone who might be able to answer a question about the portraits. They pointed to a woman standing in a nearby doorway.

I approached her awkwardly, concerned about raising what might be perceived as a negative question on a day designed for celebration. The renovation was lovely, I told her, but I was puzzled by the portraits. Had the absence of women been discussed?

"Of course, it was discussed," she said briskly. "This is Harvard. Everything gets discussed."

Was she annoyed at me? At the question? Or at a situation that forced her to explain a decision she did not control?

I pushed on. If the issue had been discussed, I asked, what was said? She told me that there had been so much controversy about turning the old Freshman Union into the Barker Center that some people thought it was a good idea to keep some things just as they had been before.

"Besides," she continued, "Harvard doesn't have any portraits of women."

I was stunned by her certainty. "No portraits of women! Not even at Radcliffe?"

"No," she said firmly. "Nothing we could use."

As she walked away, she turned and said, over her shoulder, "*You can't rewrite history.*"

Maybe you can't, I thought, but that's my job description. You can blame the woman in Barker Center--and Virginia Woolf--for this essay. If I hadn't been preparing to teach *A Room of One's Own*, I might not have been so attuned to the subtle discriminations around me. If the woman in Barker Center hadn't tossed off her quip about history, I wouldn't have been provoked into learning more about Harvard's past.

Most people assume that history is "what happened" in the long ago. Historians know that history is an account of what happened based on surviving evidence, and that it is shaped by the interests, inclinations, and skills of those who write it. Historians constantly rewrite history not only because we discover new sources of information, but because changing circumstances invite us to bring new questions to old documents. History is limited not only by what we *can* know about the past, but by what we *care* to know.

When I came here in 1995, I naively assumed that female students had been fully integrated into the University. I soon discovered ivy-covered partitions that divided the imaginative as well as the administrative life of the institution. My encounter with the woman in Barker Center epitomized the problem. Obviously, if Harvard had no portraits of women, it couldn't integrate women into a vision of the past that required portraits. But the woman's allusion to history told me that the real problem was not missing artifacts but a curiously constricted

sense of what belonged to Harvard's past. In the weeks that followed, I found the same narrow vision everywhere I turned.

The standard assumption was that female students were recent arrivals. Yet by any historical standard, that notion is absurd. Women were studying with Harvard faculty members at the "Harvard Annex" in 1879, 20 years before Henry Lee Higginson donated the money to build what was then called the Harvard Union (later to be transformed into Barker Center). Radcliffe College, chartered in 1894, predated the House system, the tutorial system, and most of the departments now resident in Barker Center. Because it never had its own faculty, its instructors--and sometimes its presidents--were drawn from the Harvard faculty. Radcliffe's history always has been an essential part of Harvard's history, yet few of our custodians of the past have acknowledged that.

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Part of the problem is that the history of women at Harvard is both extraordinarily long and exasperatingly complex. Does the history of undergraduate women at Harvard begin with the Women's Education Association in 1872, the establishment of the Harvard Annex in 1879, the chartering of Radcliffe College in 1894, the merging of classroom instruction in 1943, the awarding of Harvard degrees to Radcliffe students in 1963, or some time earlier or later?

Not long after the Barker Center dedication, Boston newspapers were full of plans for a gala event commemorating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the integration of women into the Harvard freshman dormitories in 1972. Under the direction of Harry Lewis, dean of Harvard College, the College organized seminars for undergraduates, published an expensive picture book honoring recent alumnae, students, and faculty members, and--in a moving ceremony--dedicated a new gate into the Yard to women. Yet where was Radcliffe, some wondered, in this celebration of Harvard's past? The inscriptions on the new gate added to the puzzlement. To the right was a cryptic quotation from the Puritan poet Anne Bradstreet, who died in 1672, to the left a statement, beautifully engraved in gold, explaining that the gate "was dedicated twenty-five years after women students first moved into Harvard Yard in September of 1972." Intentionally or not, the organizers left a gaping hole between Bradstreet's death and the integration of Harvard dormitories 300 years later.

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There is no conspiracy here, just collective complacency and an ignorance compounded by separatism. Writers and publicists at Harvard have never considered Radcliffe their responsibility. Radcliffe has been too busy negotiating its own status to promote its history.

Fortunately, in the past two years, some people have begun to think more creatively. Rather than take the "great man" approach to its past, the Afro-American studies department, housed on the second floor of Barker Center, embellished one wall with a roster of student photographs dating from the late nineteenth century to 1920. "I wanted our current students to know who came before them," explained Henry Louis Gates Jr., Du Bois professor of the humanities and chairman of the department. By including African-American students who attended Radcliffe as well as those at Harvard, Gates acknowledged the joint histories of the two institutions. He also offered an instructive history in interlocking discrimination. Not only are there fewer female than male students in the gallery, but more of them are represented by blank ovals where photographs are supposed to be.

In an exhibit mounted in November 1998 in conjunction with the conference "Gender at the Gates: New Perspectives on Harvard and Radcliffe History," Harvard archivists Patrice Donaghue, Robin McElheny, and Brian Sullivan took an even more innovative approach. Their introduction offers an expansive view of women's history:

Q: Since when have there been women at Harvard?

A: From the establishment of the "College at Newtowne" in 1636 to the present, the Harvard community has included women.

Q: Then where can we find them?

A: Everywhere--from the Yard dormitories, where they swept the halls and made the beds, to the library, where they cataloged the books and dusted the shelves--and nowhere, their documentary traces hidden between the entries in directories that include only faculty and officers, or missing from the folders of correspondence that they typed and filed.

Despite the obvious problem with sources, the archivists were astonished at how much they *could* document once they put their minds to it. "From our initial fear that an exhibition on women at Harvard

would barely fill one display case," they wrote, "we found that we could amass enough evidence to fill twice as many cases as we have at our disposal." Vivid examples of such material turned up in the booklet *Women in Lamont* published last May by the Faculty of Arts and Sciences' Task Force on Women and Leadership. Using old *Crimson* articles, photographs, and "Cliffe" songs, the designers vividly recreated the controversy in the 1960s over admitting female students to Lamont Library.

Meanwhile, the difficulties of integrating women into an already established and overflowing narrative were strikingly displayed in the timelines published in 1998 in *Harvard Magazine's* centennial-year issues. Among the 45 historical events featured, nine mention women, clear evidence of a desire for a more inclusive history. Yet a close look at the actual entries is disappointing. In brief textual references we learn that the library named for *Titanic* victim Harry Elkins Widener was given "by his mother," that the Biological Laboratories built in 1931 are "guarded by Katharine Lane Weems's rhinos," and that Professor Howard Mumford Jones once described Memorial Church as "Emily Dickinson above, but pure Mae West below." Six entries include pictures of women, but in only one case--the photograph of Radcliffe president Matina Horner signing a "nonmerger merger" agreement with Harvard president Derek Bok in 1971--are women portrayed as actually doing anything. Harvard men build buildings, conquer disease, play football, appoint cabinets, give speeches, and confront the press, but the women pictured are apparently distinguished only because they were the "first" of something. In 1904, "Helen Keller became Radcliffe's first blind graduate."* In 1920, the appearance of women in a photograph of students from the new Graduate School of Education underlines the fact that the school was "the first Harvard department to admit men and women on equal terms." In 1948, Helen Maud Cam "becomes the University's first tenured woman."

In the two other entries, there is a subtle--and no doubt unintentional--washing out of female activism. Here the contrast between the descriptions of women and related entries about men is striking. The "era of angry political activism" between 1966 and 1971 is symbolized in a photograph of Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara trapped near Quincy House, but when the timeline pictures female students moving into Winthrop House in 1970, the prose turns cute. "The times, they are a-changing," it says, as though feminist agitation had nothing to do with this radical transformation in undergraduate life.

Most telling is the treatment of two incidents of labor conflict, one involving men, the other women. The male story from 1919 is all action. The verbs convey the drama: "Boston policemen strike. Lecturer Harold Laski, a political theorist, supports them. The Board of Overseers interrogates Laski. President A. Lawrence Lowell...defends him, but Laski departs for the London School of Economics." In contrast, the description of a 1954 labor conflict at Harvard is playful: "Biddies, more politely 'goodies,' cease making the beds of undergraduates. Their future has looked cloudy since 1950, when they mentioned a raise in pay. Former head cheerleader Roger L. Butler '51 had described daily maid service as Harvard's 'one last remnant of gracious living.'" Astonishingly, the illustration accompanying this entry appears to be from the nineteenth century. By the time we get to 1988 and the successful organization of the Harvard Union of Clerical and Technical Workers, women have disappeared entirely. The union is represented by its campaign button, reading "We Can't Eat Prestige." There is no clue in the text that the leader of the union, Kris Rondeau, and most of the members were female.

Still, the decision to include Radcliffe students and female workers in the Harvard timeline is significant. *Harvard Observed* is also a great improvement on other recent Harvard histories. Bethell is best at pointing out the ironies in Harvard's treatment of women. Summarizing the achievements of Alice Hamilton, appointed to the medical-school faculty in 1919, he observes: "Hamilton's appointment did not entitle her to use the Faculty Club, sit on the Commencement platform, or apply for football tickets." His juicy tidbits from the old alumni magazines remind us that Harvard men, too, participated in the emancipation of women--though usually not with the support of the University administration. In 1911, when the Harvard Men's League for Woman Suffrage invited British suffragist Emmeline Pankhurst to speak in Sanders Theatre, the Corporation refused them the use of the hall. In 1963, undergraduate columnist Edward Grossman reported in the *Alumni Bulletin* that a reverse panty raid by

Radcliffe students on John Winthrop House had "focused a cold, hard light on the most compelling problem in this community: the integration of Radcliffe into the academic and social company of Harvard, on equal terms and no eyebrows raised." The quote from Grossman is intriguing, but unfortunately we learn nothing at all about the Radcliffe

If you get the chance, check out the portrait in Winthrop House's (upperclassmen house) Junior Common Room! Treasurer of the US, Rosie Rios, recently became the first Latina to have her portrait unveiled in the college!

women.

When Universities Swallow Cities

By Davarian Baldwin

Tags: Universities, Gentrification, SES/Class

Summary: A discussion of universities in cities and their impact on local communities.

In March 2016, as New Haven struggled to balance its shrinking budget, Mayor Toni Harp joined alders and local unions calling for a State Senate bill to help fine-tune Yale University's property-tax-exempt status. Universities and their medical centers are registered with the Internal Revenue Service as 501(c)(3) charitable nonprofit groups. Because of the public services that higher-education institutions provide to surrounding communities, their property holdings are exempt from taxation in all 50 states. The Connecticut bill, SB 414, would allow the state to tax university properties that generate \$6,000 or more in annual income. Another bill, SB 413, which died in committee, sought to tax unspent returns on Yale's endowment.

Over the past 40 years, Yale had become the single largest commercial power in New Haven, as part of a national urban economy largely driven by universities and hospitals. Harp celebrated Yale's central role "in the city's transformation," but she warned that while cities rely "more and more on eds and meds," New Haven leaders must "be clear as a policy matter about the fiscal impact of this transition." New Haven felt the need to adjust its relationship with Yale University, which had gone from an influential urban stakeholder to a tax-exempt municipal powerhouse.

SB 414 did not pass, however, and New Haven continues to struggle with Connecticut's multibillion-dollar budget deficit while its largest local economic entity remains tax-exempt. (Yale does pay tax on some properties deemed "clearly commercial," such as stores on campus, and offers "payment in lieu of taxes," voluntary contributions that make up a small fraction of the estimated taxes it would pay based on the assessed value of its properties.)

Municipalities across the country face a similar tension: They attempt to patch budget holes while watching the endowments and urban footprints of tax-exempt colleges and universities grow. These problems necessitate a sober look at the inflated role of higher-education institutions in shaping urban policy, planning, and economic development — at the rise of what I call "UniverCities." The quaint notion of the ivory tower is dead, as city schools take on a baronlike stewardship over surrounding neighborhoods to help shore up their fiscal stability in times of economic change. Collectively, these institutions have taken a leading role in shaping the future of urban America. Indeed, urban universities and their attendant medical centers ("meds and eds") stand as perhaps the most central, and yet profoundly underexamined, social force in today's cities. The presumption that higher education is implicitly a public good has for too long distracted critics and scholars from getting to the heart of the matter: What makes universities good for our cities?

The enlarged influence of "meds and eds" over city life dates at least to the end of World War II. We are familiar with universities that supplied academic research for military application during the Cold War. The Massachusetts Institute of Technology has generally been the biggest university defense contractor in the country. Stanford used the defense-contract system to propel itself from a regional school into a science-and-technology powerhouse. Research for the Manhattan Project was conducted at the University of Chicago's Met Lab. But in 1959 a group of city universities lobbied for the "Section 112 credits program" in federal housing legislation that helped make higher education the friendly face of urban-renewal projects across the country. These efforts demolished black neighborhoods and established white residential islands around urban campuses. In 1967 the University of Pennsylvania used the credits program to start displacing approximately 600 low-income and African-American families to build its University City Science Center, the nation's first inner-city urban research park.

How are flourishing colleges acting in the public good when that public is paying for their economic competitive advantage? Today, higher education's tides of influence have spread far beyond the campus. Universities are now the dominant employers, real-estate holders, policing agents, and education and health-care providers in many major cities. The University of Southern California, for instance, is the largest private-sector employer in Los Angeles. Columbia University and New York University are two of the largest private landowners in New York City. The University of Chicago fields one of the largest private security forces in the country, with jurisdiction over 65,000 nonstudent residents on Chicago's South Side. What happened?

In the middle of the 20th century, there was large-scale economic divestment from urban areas, followed by the flight of largely white urbanites. But starting in the 1990s, municipal leaders began competing to create an

attractive "urban experience" to capture the consumer dollars of young professionals and empty nesters venturing back inside their borders. With the decline in manufacturing, the "bell towers" of higher education have become the new "smokestacks" — the signals of a thriving urban economy. In the process, city colleges and universities have recast themselves as institutions that can parcel and repackage "blighted" areas into "destinations" for a safe and profitable urban experience.

After Columbia announced its plans to build a new campus in West Harlem in 2003, President Lee Bollinger acknowledged the university's fraught history with the neighborhood. He proclaimed, "Columbia is a different neighbor now," publicly emphasizing the themes of partnership and collaboration. However, students and residents discovered that, starting in 2004, Columbia began working with the city's Economic Development Corporation, an environmental-consulting firm, and the Empire State Development Corporation to manufacture a "neighborhood conditions" report. This report labeled the West Harlem/Manhattanville area "blighted," which justified the use of eminent domain to take over and demolish properties on 17 acres of the neighborhood for a \$6-billion research campus. In 2009 a court found the use of eminent domain unconstitutional and characterized the evidence for blight as "preposterous" and "egregious." But the following year, New York State's highest court upheld Columbia's use of eminent domain and its plans forge ahead.

The university has gone from one small, noble part of the city to serving as a model for the city itself. It is precisely the commercial amenities historically associated with "university life" — concerts, coffee shops, foot-traffic congestion, fully wired networking, high-tech research — that are being sold as a desirable urban experience. Residents have flocked back into cities looking for these university-styled urban experiences at the same time that rapidly shrinking state budgets have led universities to seek new ways to generate capital in the for-profit realms of labor, health care, and land control.

It may be the case that urban universities have been saved by gentrification, or are even the drivers of gentrification. Readers can draw their own conclusions. But what we can say with certainty is that at the same time universities were looking for new revenue, municipal leaders were seeking to remake their cities in the high-tech and high-density model of the university. UniverCities emerged when the interests of higher-education administrators, government officials, business leaders, and young professionals converged in the new service-and-information economy.

In the past, urban-renewal schemes attempted to push poor and nonwhite residents away from campus neighborhoods through primarily residential development. The irony, today, is that colleges and universities are left with few amenities to sell and little commercial development — a problem when it came to attracting what a University of Chicago student called higher education's most "precious set of imported individuals," its students. Now the urban development of impoverished neighborhoods has been handed over to the for-profit arm of higher education. This convergence between money-hungry colleges and the attractiveness of "university life" for new urbanites has given rise to UniverCities.

The urban-planning model of UniverCities provides needed capital to institutions of higher education. University-based urban planning is also celebrated for creating a vibrant kind of public life that attracts wealth-creating entrepreneurs and the workers they employ. In 2009 promotional material in an airline magazine championing economic development in Ithaca, N.Y., went so far as to tout colleges and universities as key weapons for counteracting what it called, with no racial irony, the "bright flight" of the creative class from America's biggest cities. Everyone wants to build a UniverCity.

In 2006, Phoenix passed a \$223-million bond to build Arizona State University a downtown campus, with the hopes of converting undergraduates into a ready-made consumer base to energize urban retail and nightlife. Cornell University collaborated with Technion-Israel Institute of Technology and won a 2011 international competition to build a campus in New York City, hoping to spark a boom in the local high-tech sector. Furthermore, the growing faith in higher education as an urban growth engine has gone global. Consider the audaciously named Education City, in Doha, Qatar, or the controversies surrounding NYU's franchising of its university brand in Shanghai and Abu Dhabi.

Many, like the "prosperity expert" Richard Florida, celebrate colleges' and universities' capacity to spark neighborhood vitality by providing museums, lectures, and public-safety protections while also creating new economic opportunities. The University of Pittsburgh, Carnegie Mellon University, and the city government came together to transform an abandoned steel mill into the Pittsburgh Technology Center, a site for advanced academic and corporate research. Saint Louis University instituted the Hometown SLU mortgage-loan-forgiveness program for employees and opened the boutique Hotel Ignacio in the newly revitalized Midtown Alley district. Even during the Great Recession, urban leaders all over the country rushed to pay Richard Florida's consulting firm up to \$250,000 for tactics hoping to transform their location into a potentially lucrative "Creative City."

Despite all the triumphalist rhetoric surrounding higher education's expansive reach across American cities, black and Latino communities that surround campuses are left especially vulnerable. These neighboring communities of color frequently sit in zones of relatively cheap and sometimes abandoned land, and hold little political influence. Richard Florida, for instance, has since pulled back on his grand claims, after facing vigorous critiques that an increased creative class can, in fact, increase inequalities.

To be sure, higher-education institutions can deliver positive urban outcomes, but a central question remains: What are the costs when colleges and universities exercise significant power over a city's financial resources, policing, employment, and real estate?

Higher education's noneducational investments in real estate, policing, and labor can carry negative consequences for neighborhoods of color. Urban schools have become islands of wealth amid a sea of poverty. And this uneven geography rapidly gives way to an extension of the campus as a planning model for larger swaths of the city. The result? Poorer neighbors are pushed to the periphery of "meds and eds" prosperity. Large-scale university acquisitions of prime real estate (such as in New Haven, Philadelphia, New York City, and Chicago) lead to housing and land values that skyrocket beyond the reach of community members. The University of Southern California pushes ahead to replace the ancient University Village shopping center with a \$900-million complex of stores and dormitories. As related changes quickly follow, including a nearby Expo train line, residents watch landlords convert family-friendly dwellings into student-oriented rentals with rates increased by almost 50 percent.

Many of these same residents may be shunted into the low-wage sectors of higher-education labor: janitors, cooks, groundskeepers, and other kinds of support staff. Harvard wields its \$38-billion endowment to continue rapid campus growth into the Allston-Brighton neighborhood, while its food-service workers recently went on strike to protest low wages and rising health-care costs. South Side Chicago residents championed the extension of campus-police jurisdictions into their embattled neighborhoods, but "security," it turned out, largely meant protecting white students amid increased complaints of racial profiling and harassment. Black students at USC have alleged excessive force and racial profiling by the LAPD.

Univercities are taking over, and yet we fail to examine the consequences of their embracing an increasingly for-profit approach to their urban surroundings. A growing body of work, including Derek Bok's *Universities in the Marketplace* (Princeton University Press, 2003), Henry A. Giroux's *University in Chains* (Routledge, 2007), and Jeffrey J. Selinger's *College (Un)Bound* (New Harvest, 2013) has examined the state of universities today. Soaring tuition costs, staggering student debt, and the inroads of business interests and the defense industries seem to confirm fears of a "corporate university." While insightful, few of these works turn their eyes beyond the campus walls to scrutinize higher education's nationwide expansion across our cities. Our blind spot to the rise of UniverCities comes largely from the assumption that higher education, while hypnotized by corporate power, is still an inherent public good, most clearly marked by its tax-exempt status for providing services that would otherwise come from the government.

A public-good paradox arises: Nonprofit status is precisely what allows for an easier transfer of public dollars into higher education's urban developments with little public oversight or scrutiny. Colleges and universities pay virtually no taxes on their increasingly prominent downtown footprints. They also reap the benefits of police and fire protections, snow and trash removal, road maintenance, and other municipal services while shouldering little financial burden. Homeowners and small-business owners ultimately carry the weight of inflated property taxes caused by urban campuses, and the cost of rental properties skyrockets.

Such unfair taxing rates caused residents in the historically black neighborhood of Witherspoon-Jackson to sue and win an \$18-million settlement from Princeton University in 2016. Residents argued that while local property taxes increased, the university maintained its exemption for buildings where research had generated millions of dollars in commercial royalties. The public-good paradox creates a lucrative higher-education "shelter economy," in which tax-exempt status helps generate significant private profits with little public benefit. Donors' gifts to endowments are tax-deductible, the investment income earned by endowments is tax-free, and so higher education has a competitive edge over businesses that pay taxes in, say, biotech or property management.

One plaintiff in the Princeton case described the university as "a hedge fund that conducts classes." We must no longer evaluate colleges and universities simply by their stated aim of knowledge production and dissemination. They have become rapacious pro-growth behemoths that discuss students as consumers, alumni as shareholders, and the world beyond the campus walls as either prime real estate or a dangerous threat to their brand.

They also oversee a vast payroll of white-collar and low-wage contingent workers. They maintain cheap workshops where exploited graduate students secure lucrative patents for corporate research. Campuses expand

across cities, often choosing to bank land, awaiting its appreciation, rather than invest in services and infrastructure that would aid the local community. Higher education is a key growth machine in today's cities because it has been given the keys to drive the urban economy forward by reorganizing urban space to serve its institutional desires as much as or more than its educational interests.

Caricatures of colleges as ivory-tower bastions of tenured radicals and young "snowflakes," out of touch with reality, abound. But higher education's footprint across the nation's cities tells a different story. How are flourishing colleges acting in the public good when that public is paying for their economic competitive advantage? Has the very notion of the public good been perverted when it is used to justify multimillion-dollar tax-exempt endowments, an enormous contingent and low-wage labor force, the elimination of affordable housing in campus neighborhoods, and increased racial profiling?

Colleges and universities are where we should be able to pose and begin to answer those tough questions. Yet while universities set themselves the task of solving humanity's most difficult problems, they have failed to question their own impact right outside their gates.

There is reason to hope for a better ending to this story. Activism against higher education's urban expansion goes back at least to the 1960s, when residents and students in New York City led protests with the shout "Gym Crow!" after they learned that Columbia University planned to build a gymnasium in Morningside Park that would serve as a physical barrier between the campus and Harlem. More recently, students, workers, neighborhood residents, and even municipal leaders have found innovative ways to rally against higher education's growing hunger for control over today's cities. In 2012 the college-heavy city of Boston asked nonprofit groups with more than \$15 million in tax-exempt property to volunteer 25 percent of the property taxes they would owe if not exempt (though many of the institutions involved, including Harvard, have fallen short in their contributions).

At the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the University of California, and many places in between, students have joined forces with campus workers to demand union recognition, living wages, and better health care. Since 2013 the Campaign for Equitable Policing has been fighting to ensure just treatment and end racial profiling in the expanding jurisdiction of the University of Chicago Police Department. Students continue to fight alongside residents against Columbia's use of eminent domain and NYU's rewriting of zoning laws to control large sections of West Harlem and Greenwich Village, respectively.

A new city is emerging before our eyes. City campuses sit at a critical crossroads between their educational mandate and their economic footprint. If colleges and universities are going to be the new company in our "company towns," then campus stakeholders, neighborhood residents, and city leaders must be at the table, in an equal way, for transparent discussions about how higher-education institutions can best serve as a public good.

"I Am Fine"

By Anonymous, a Crimson Staff Writer

Tags: Mental Health, Harvard, Support

Summary: One Harvard student's reflections on mental health at Harvard.

To read online, visit: <http://www.thecrimson.com/article/2011/2/17/harvard-many-feel-out/>

I feel like I should remember the first time I came close to committing suicide, as if it's something along the lines of a first kiss. I guess it should be one of those things that produces a rush of sensory imagery with the slightest trigger. You're meant to remember some soft noise humming in your ear, a faint trembling of the body, a detailed image of what was around you—even though your eyes were closed. It should be one of those moments, the kind that remains vivid even as the rest of your past blurs and fades away; it's the kind that you're supposed to remember, right? I don't.

I can only talk in generalities, what it was like every time I felt like this. There were always tears—lots of them—my shirt wet as they seeped down my cheeks, paused at my chin, dropped to my chest. I would be sitting on my bed, fixated on a single point in the room, my eyesight transitioning in and out of focus. At times I saw everything—my face smiling back at me from glossy pictures on the walls, the days on my hanging calendar, days I never wanted to face—at others, only my thoughts. There was always some reason to feel meaningless. Most importantly, it was always night.

I played out scenarios in my head. My knife was on the top shelf of my bookcase, my fourth-floor window could be easily opened, my roommate wouldn't be back for another hour or so.

Eventually, I would begin to turn the knife over in my hand. It provided no guarantee. What if I didn't do it properly? I wasn't looking for a cry for help, I was looking for a way out. I would open my window, delicately balancing so that my torso leaned precariously near the tipping point. Then came the painful deliberation.

"All I would have to do is tilt a little farther forward."

"The fall would feel nice."

"But it's only the fourth floor, what if it doesn't work?"

"Am I really that worried about the pain?"

"What if I regret my decision just before it ends?"

It was this last question that saved me. Somehow, my lack of confidence in the future both made me desire to end my life and prevented me from doing so. Feeling all the more inadequate, I would turn on the shower, remove my damp clothes, and sit on the cold tiled floor. A thousand more water droplets washed away my own.

There were many nights like this. No matter how many times I reasoned my way out of it, the darkness always washed over me once more. I could not prevent night from falling. Tears, glossy pictures, misery—these are the things that consumed me. Without any faith in life beyond death, I saw no point in prolonging the inevitable. Why continue to exist?

For a number of reasons, returning to campus at the beginning of this year was very difficult for me. The end of freshman year had left me feeling abandoned by those I had considered to be my closest friends. I filled my schedule with clubs, activities, and classes to avoid the isolation I felt when I was idle. When you're running from one meeting to the next, it becomes easy to forget how alone you really are.

But while I could fill my days with meetings and work, I had little control over my nights. It's hard to escape the truth when you are left alone with it. It was a reality I continued to run from.

Terrified of being by myself, I spent all my time with my boyfriend. We ate meals together, took classes together, did the same activities. He was there for me every single night as I cried for no reason other than sadness. He gave things up, knowing that I would break down at the mere mention of most social events. He took the knife out of my hand. He picked me up off the shower floor. He was the one constant in my life.

I can only describe the feeling as physical, all-consuming. Any moment my mind began to idle, thoughts of suicide would consume me. Looking out of a window, I tried to feel the fall. Swimming laps, I would imagine fluid filling my lungs.

The worst part? I felt guilty.

You're not supposed to attend Harvard and get depressed. You're supposed to attend Harvard and take advantage of opportunities. Opportunities. "Isn't it amazing being there? There are so many things you can do!" "You go to Harvard? That's so wonderful, you must have so many options." "There are just so many things to take advantage of there." You're not supposed to complain about the fact that you go to Harvard. It's the dream. You are supposed to go to Harvard and do things, make the most of it.

"Yeah, it's a great place. There are so many possibilities," I would usually say.

But it wasn't just the outsiders who made me feel ashamed. Even at school I was surrounded by thousands of other students—all of them able to manage the same difficulties that had rendered me hopeless. They wrote papers, chaired activities, networked, partied, all with an air of ease.

"Hey, how's it going?"

"OhmygodlamsoooobusyIhavethreepsetsandtwopaperstowritetonightbutitistotallyfine."

Effortless perfection. I was the exception. I was the one who was incapable of handling all the wonderful opportunities that Harvard presented me with.

At least that's what I thought.

One day, I decided to talk to someone. Not as in talking to a professional, I had tried that already. I mean, I had an actual conversation with another student at work. Instead of joking about lack of sleep and 20-page papers, I opened up. For the first time, I discussed what was really going wrong in my life. I told her about what had happened, the constant physical pressure that I felt on every inch of my body, the apathy with which I now looked at every aspect of my life. I told her I wanted to die.

In turn, she opened up to me.

Here was someone with whom I sat in an office every single week yet knew very little about. Who else might be feeling what I was feeling? Who else might feel like they are the only one? I started talking to more people. I started to ask questions and I stopped accepting "psetclubactivitypaperNOSLEEP" as a response. The

things I learned both allowed me to share what I was going through and helped me to realize that what I was experiencing did not warrant feelings of shame. By the time finals period came, my nights didn't seem so daunting. J-Term provided me with the time necessary to complete the process; leaving Harvard allowed me to reevaluate what I wanted out of my four years here. I strengthened ties with friends who were positive influences on my life and cut ties with those who weren't. I built the support system I needed to face the veneer of effortless perfection once more. The pressure was finally starting to fade.

But returning to campus wasn't easy. There are still days when I feel trapped by emotion. There are still days when I'm not sure if I can face other people. But there aren't still days when I pick up the knife.

Harvard isn't always the glossy ivy-covered utopia that many conceive it to be. There are moments of that place, yes. Walking past Memorial Church in the fall with reds and oranges on the ground around you, the first warm day in the spring when students on blankets adorn the Yard. Brochure Harvard does exist. The reality of the situation, however, is that this is not the Harvard that many students must wake up to and battle every single day. It is not always a place where conversations about mental health are necessarily encouraged. On a campus where the need for assistance is too often perceived as a flaw, the student body has a tendency to rely on variations of "I'm fine." And, at a college where so many students already have far too much on their plate, it's understandable that most don't press the question further.

I've learned the importance of doing just that. I have also learned to cut back—on friendships, on extracurriculars, on classes. By concentrating my energy on the people and activities that I care most about, I have gradually begun to get past all Harvard has taken and realized just how much it can give. The most important opportunity I've found here is the opportunity for happiness, though the place that lies between night and Brochure Harvard holds a happiness that can be hard to find.

Primal Scream 2015 Coverage from the *Harvard Political Review*

From the Harvard Political Review

Tags: Race, Activism, Harvard, Protests, Black Lives Matter

Summary: A collection of opinions over a Primal Scream protest.

To read the full version online, visit: <http://harvardpolitics.com/harvard/hprgument-primal-scream-blacklivesmatter-protest/>

A few short minutes before midnight on December 10, hundreds of Harvard undergraduates gathered in the center of Harvard's campus to partake in a semiannual tradition called Primal Scream. This year the tradition, which involves students taking a naked lap through campus in order to relieve end-of-semester stress, was interrupted by a much smaller group of undergraduates who asked for four a half minutes of silence from their peers to demonstrate Harvard's solidarity with Michael Brown. In this HPRgument, four students voice their opinions on the efficacy of the demonstration, and the meaning of the conversation that followed.

"There is No More Convenient Season"

By Sasanka Jindasa

We asked for four and a half minutes of silence to symbolize the four and a half hours that an unarmed, facedown, dead Michael Brown was left in the streets of Ferguson, MO. A police officer had shot him six times. And we asked for four and a half minutes of respect, four and a half minutes of silence. Often, white silence is deafening. Last night, I could have only wished for it.

Trust me, I understand if people were confused and expected to go to Primal Scream, get drunk, and have a good time running naked around the Yard. It sounds liberating and it sounds fun. People want to have fun, and I get that.

The day after the protest people tell me: well, we would have supported you if we had known. Or, why can't we have our fun and protest too? Protest later? Protest anywhere but here? Why didn't you tell me? If you had told me nicely, maybe I would have joined you.

To that I say: it's cute that black lives matter when it doesn't inconvenience you. I find it fascinating that people are willing to march around Boston, through Back Bay and Roxbury, shut down the T, shut down the highways, shut down intersections, make society stop working for a night. It's fine when it's not us. Tell me, is

Primal Scream more valuable than someone's commute home? For parents, for children, for taxi drivers, for people with real jobs? It is the ultimate in elitist snobbery to say that inconveniencing the Boston working class is more useful than inconveniencing Harvard "fun."

"Over the past few years I have been gravely disappointed with the white moderate. I have almost reached the regrettable conclusion that the Negro's great stumbling block in his stride toward freedom is not the White Citizen's Council or the Ku Klux Klanner, but the white moderate, who is more devoted to "order" than to justice; who prefers a negative peace which is the absence of tension to a positive peace which is the presence of justice; who constantly says: "I agree with you in the goal you seek, but I cannot agree with your methods of direct action"; who paternalistically believes he can set the timetable for another man's freedom; who lives by a mythical concept of time and who constantly advises the Negro to wait for a "more convenient season."

-Martin Luther King, Jr. "Letter from a Birmingham Jail"

Let me tell you something about Primal Scream: it is a symbol of all the glorious decadence we get to enjoy by being Harvard students. Break as many laws as you want on Harvard's campus. Administration will ignore you, the police will shut down the Yard for you, and everyone will get to bathe in each other's hedonism. It is a night of debauchery that we get to enjoy with all the privilege that we have.

So for everyone who said, "I didn't know about it"—would all of you have protested with us had you known? Would you have given up your privilege to run wild that night to have a die-in with us? Or would you have then said, "it is not the right time or place"? Would you have then said, how is this my fault, and why should I have to give anything up? Why me? Why sacrifice?

I am angry that you are having fun. I am angry that we get to have fun while every 28 hours another black person is shot by the police. And I'm so angry that we don't see it that way.

The truth is, it's giving things up that upsets people. To get justice, it might take the interruption of their own lives. True allies actually give things up. They give up money, they give up time, and they give themselves. They bail protestors out of jail, they go to jail, they get an arrest record, they refuse to work for racists, they call out their racist friends, they don't let anyone get away with anything in front of them. They work.

It's too easy to say #BlackLivesMatter. Of course they matter. But if the only time you talked about it this week was when we delayed your fun for a full five minutes, this protest did more than its job. It shamed you. And if it didn't shame you, you're not an ally—you're part of the problem.

The thing is, Harvard is part of the problem. I'm part of the problem because all non-black students are. We enjoy privilege more than we can imagine, we feed off the decadence the Harvard name gives us, and we revel in the whiteness this institution is steeped in. Harvard [could not exist without slavery](#), yet almost no black people are celebrated throughout this University's [halls and portraits](#). For hundreds of years, black students have experienced [harassment](#), [discrimination](#), [violence](#), [profiling](#), [disgust](#), [ignorance](#), [dismissal](#) and so much more. So I, frankly, don't care if you had to wait five minutes longer for your Primal Scream. We only asked for four and a half.

Being drunk is not an excuse.

Being unaware is not an excuse.

It's never been an excuse.

It's time for all of us to do better.

Students for Fair Admissions and Harvard Both Got It Wrong

By Julie Chung Lee and Alexander Zhang

Tags: Bamboo ceiling, model minority

Summary: A commentary by the co-chairs of Harvard's Pan-Asian Council on the Students for Fair Admissions v. Harvard lawsuit.

To read online, visit: <https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2018/7/18/chung-zhang-sffa-harvard-wrong/>

In November 2014, anti-affirmative action group Students for Fair Admissions filed its ongoing and contentious lawsuit against Harvard, claiming that the school's admissions policies employ race-based discrimination against Asian Americans. SFFA seeks to remove all consideration of race and ethnicity from the college admissions process. In recent weeks, coverage of the lawsuit has spiked as new revelations about Harvard's admissions practices have been made public, and with affirmative action now under attack from the Trump

administration, the future of race-conscious admissions policies has become increasingly uncertain for educational institutions across the country.

As members of Asian-American organizations at Harvard, we denounce SFFA's attempts to undermine policies that seek to remediate the long history of racial inequalities in this country's education system. In addition, we stand in solidarity with other communities of color to defend the need for diversity on college campuses. According to multiple surveys, our opinions align with the majority of Asian Americans in this country, who support affirmative action programs.

SFFA's claim to fight for fairness on behalf of Asian Americans must not distract the public from its leaders' pursuit of a policy agenda that is ultimately a zero-sum game for communities of color. In the past, SFFA president and conservative activist Edward Blum has filed several lawsuits against the Voting Rights Act and worked as the legal strategist for the *Fisher v. University of Texas* case. SFFA has also filed lawsuits against the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the University of Texas at Austin, arguing that admissions policies disfavor white students at those colleges. While the present complaint mentions the negative impact of Harvard's legacy preference—which disproportionately favors white students and has an admit rate of over 33 percent—on racial minorities, it ironically does so only to argue in favor of race-neutral admissions. In arguing wholesale against any policy that takes race into account, SFFA seeks to undermine a program that has played a direct role in improving educational outcomes for disadvantaged minorities. As Asian Americans, we must realize that dismantling affirmative action only perpetuates a system stacked against non-whites, immigrants, and low-income communities.

However, our firm support of affirmative action does not negate our disappointment with the College's admissions office for failing to address potential systematic prejudices against Asian Americans. Recent analysis of admissions documents suggests that College admissions officers may carry implicit racial biases when subjectively rating Asian-American applicants for "personal traits," consistently scoring them lower on traits such as "likability," "kindness," and "positive personality." Current information is ultimately inconclusive about whether this systematic depression results from the admissions review process or from other aspects of the application process, like teacher and counselor recommendations (or both). Regardless, SFFA's filings also allege that the College has not yet taken corrective measures to dismantle these invalid stereotypes. While admissions officers receive cultural sensitivity training for certain racial groups, instruction regarding racial bias is noticeably absent for Asian-Americans. Therefore, we call on Harvard to provide stronger diversity training for admissions officers to identify and challenge such biases, whether they originate from the application materials or from the review process itself. An institution which seeks to support historically marginalized minorities should also dismantle negative biases towards Asian Americans. After all, supporting affirmative action programs and incorporating more nuanced approaches towards Asian-American applicants are not mutually exclusive endeavors.

Widespread assumptions about Asian-American personalities also have implications beyond school. The view that Asian-Americans lack the ability to lead persists throughout professional spheres. Asian-American white-collar professionals are the least likely group to become managers and executives, despite, for instance, comprising the largest racial population of Bay Area tech professionals. While high Asian-American representation at any level should be applauded, such generalizations about Asian Americans prevent individuals from fully realizing their potential. The implicit racial biases in the college admissions process suggested by recent reports thus represent a larger issue of Asian-American stereotyping that depict the diverse group as too academically focused, one-dimensional, and impersonable. But personality is just one facet of diversity within the Asian-American community.

Problems with the current system of affirmative action are also largely influenced by the tendency to view all Asian Americans as a monolithic entity, which has erased the complexity of the Asian-American experience. In reality, different immigration histories and profiles have led to markedly disparate levels of resources for different Asian-American ethnic groups, making Asian Americans the most economically unequal racial group in the United States. For example, the persistent evocation of the model minority myth conceals pressing issues of educational access and economic mobility within the Asian-American community itself. While Asian-American educational attainment is in general higher than that of the average American, Southeast Asian groups have among the highest levels of high school dropout rates (among the 281,000 Hmong in the U.S., 38 percent have less than a high school degree), leading Southeast Asian students to demand targeted educational interventions across the nation. Yet their efforts are regularly thwarted by assumptions that, as Asian Americans, they already possess sufficient resources for educational success. Such a simplistic and constrained understanding of Asian-American identity also erases the particular obstacles faced by other communities, such as the alienation of mixed-race Asian Americans,

the hardships of undocumented Asian immigrants, and the intersectional struggles of queer Asians. The public narrative surrounding the Asian-American experience needs to acknowledge these distinctions.

The 20 million Asian Americans in this country are engineers, doctors, politicians, lawyers, and computer scientists. They are gardeners, business owners, refugees, and cooks. They are musicians, writers, and artists. They are Harvard students and high school dropouts. They are leaders, followers, jokesters, athletes, and free spirits. No admissions officer, teacher, or guidance counselor should ever gloss over the diversity of these experiences. But SFFA and Edward Blum should take note: Asian Americans are not a tool to uphold white institutional privilege and divide communities of color. Let us oppose discrimination and lift each other up at the same time.

We Are Educators, Not Prosecutors

By Jason Beckfield, Joyce Chaplin, & Khalil Gibran Muhammad

Tags: Activism, Black Lives Matter, Prison Reform, Anti-War

Summary: An op-ed signed by 100+ faculty members addressing criminal justice and the way it affects who is honored and received at Harvard.

To read online, visit: <https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2017/9/20/we-are-educators/>

We, the undersigned faculty, write to protest the University's decisions to overturn Michelle Jones's admission to the Ph.D. program in History and to rescind a fellowship offer to Chelsea Manning at the Kennedy School. With both decisions, Harvard has prioritized political expediency over scholarly values. Rather than stand on principle and procedure, Harvard has undermined the pursuit of its core academic mission by acting out of fear of negative publicity.

From what we have been able to glean from the public record, the decisions in these cases have been made not by following standardized procedure, but by reacting in an ad hoc manner to a climate of anxiety and intimidation. With Michelle Jones, the administration took the highly unusual step of overturning the History Department's decision to admit Jones to its doctoral program. In doing so, it not only violated departmental autonomy in evaluating and admitting students, it disregarded the labor and expertise of its faculty. Faculty of Arts and Sciences administrators appear to have arrived at this decision not because they questioned the Department's judgment of Jones's scholarly merits, but out of concern over a potential backlash for admitting a formerly incarcerated student to the University. This comes at a time when mass incarceration and criminal justice reform are of utmost scholarly importance in a number of academic disciplines, including history.

In the case of Chelsea Manning, there was more overt intimidation by the federal government. Central Intelligence Agency director Mike Pompeo cancelled an appearance at Harvard and former deputy director Mike Morell resigned his own visiting fellowship, both in protest at what the two men described as the honoring of a "traitor." The same day, Dean of the Kennedy School Douglas W. Elmendorf rescinded Manning's offer while retaining former Trump administration press secretary Sean Spicer, notorious for his mendacity and attacks on the press, and former Trump campaign manager Corey Lewandowski, captured on film assaulting a female reporter, as visiting fellows.

Each of these cases posed the question of how to address the lasting stigma following Jones and Manning due to their convictions on charges of murder and espionage, respectively. In each case, the administration appears to have allowed the fear of public opinion and political interference to determine its actions. But we are educators committed to the open, critical exchange of ideas. Rather than allowing these women to come to campus and speak for themselves, the administration accepted as true the account of events provided by the prosecuting attorneys and acted at their behest.

Universities should set an example to follow. Instead of bowing to pressure, they should have the courage to take principled stances, especially when it is politically impractical to do so. This is particularly the case for institutions like Harvard that have the standing and resources to withstand public and political backlash.

Ironically, the administration's choice to play it safe has only augmented the public outcry. Nathan J. Heller '06, a former Crimson editor, argued in the New Yorker that, in rejecting Jones and Manning, Harvard has shown itself to be more in the "image business" than the "ideas business." James Forman, a Yale law professor, went further, arguing that Harvard's stance on Jones aligns it with a societal mainstream that pays mere lip service to rehabilitation. "Mass incarceration and its never-ending human toll will be with us," Forman wrote in the New York Times, until we choose a just society over "permanent civic death." "N.Y.U.'s acceptance of Michelle Jones is

an example of an institution leading the way toward a more forgiving nation,” he continued, while “Harvard’s rejection of her shows just how far we still have to go.”

These sentiments are echoed within the University. A group of History Ph.D. students who would have been Jones’s peers [condemned](#), in The New York Times, the University’s “hypocrisy and cowardice” in “reinforc[ing] the institutional barriers and social stigmas that sustain mass incarceration in the United States and that disproportionately affect communities of color.” Such reactions speak to how starkly these decisions contradict Harvard’s own expressed support for socially vulnerable populations, be they minorities, Dreamers, the poor, or the formerly incarcerated.

These are contentious and fearful times. At times such as these, our institution must adhere to its research and teaching mission and stand by its own stated values of intellectual excellence, equal opportunity, open debate, and non-discrimination. Accordingly, we ask that the administration immediately do the following:

First, cooperate with the faculties of the various divisions to add “criminal history” to the University’s existing non-discrimination policies, including those governing financial aid.

Second, support Harvard faculty interested in prison education. This could involve giving faculty teaching credit for participating in programs such as the one that Emerson College conducts at the Massachusetts Correctional Institution in Concord, or supporting faculty in an initiative to offer for-credit courses in nearby prisons.

Finally, invite Chelsea Manning to a public forum to discuss her work and advocacy for LGBTQ rights.

These steps will go some distance towards ensuring that, in the future, our University does not allow a misguided and moralistic notion of indelible stigma—or a fear of media controversy—to divert us from our core values.

A New Day for Divestment

By Alexandra A. Chaidez and Luke W. Vrotsos, *The Crimson*

Tags: Protests, Activism, Divestment, Incarceration, Prison, Climate Change

Summary: A feature article on the rise of the two campaigns for fossil fuels and prison divestment.

Just moments after University President Lawrence S. Bacow took the stage in the John F. Kennedy Jr. Forum at the Harvard Kennedy School at an event in early April, student protesters emerged from the crowd with signs demanding divestment.

Six activists joined Bacow on the stage, sitting silently with their signs aloft as the Kennedy School’s dean implored them to leave the stage and allow the event to continue. Following his request, the students and roughly 20 counterparts scattered throughout the room began their signature chant: “Disclose, divest, or this movement will not rest.”

Addressing the protesters, Bacow questioned their methods.

“You’re not being helpful to your cause and I suspect you’re also not gaining many friends or many allies in the audience by virtue in the way in which you choose to express your point of view,” Bacow said.

After a few minutes, he left the stage to continue the event in another room, while students remained chanting a while longer before leaving together and returning to Harvard Yard ecstatic.

The demonstration represented the first time that activists from Divest Harvard and the Harvard Prison Divestment Campaign had joined together publicly to advocate for their cause. Over the past several months, the two groups have ramped up their demands for the University to divest its nearly \$40 billion endowment from companies related to the fossil fuel and prison industries.

While Harvard is no stranger to divestment activism, this year has seen the revitalization and creation of movements demanding the withdrawal of investments activists believe to be destructive and immoral.

At the same time, Bacow has maintained a longstanding precedent that the endowment should not be used toward political ends.

As climate change and the United States prison system continue to garner national attention, Harvard’s divestment movements have sought to bring these conversations to Cambridge. Their history, newfound collaboration, and tactics have forced the University to confront a distinctly divestment-focused campus discourse, raising questions about the role of Harvard’s endowment in the world.

Movement Roots

Calls for divestment may be in vogue at Harvard today, but are not new in the scope of University history. Harvard Management Company — which oversees the endowment — has a sustainable investment policy, which states that the University does, “on very rare occasions,” divest from companies whose activities are “deeply repugnant and ethically unjustifiable.”

Harvard has divested three times in recent history — partially from South African apartheid in 1986, fully from tobacco in 1990, and from one company tied to the genocide in the Darfur region of Sudan in 2005.

After divesting in 2005, the Harvard Corporation — the University’s highest governing body — reiterated its policy of a “strong presumption” against divestment, unless in “exceptional circumstances.”

Divest Dismissal

Fossil fuel divestment, the University’s largest and longest-running campaign active today, did not start at Harvard. The movement has its roots at Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania, where students founded Swarthmore Mountain Justice in October 2010.

Patrick Walsh, a member of the group who graduated from Swarthmore in 2014, said mountaintop removal mining in West Virginia inspired the group to call for Swarthmore’s divestment from coal and other fossil fuels. He said the student activists settled on divestment after considering past movements against apartheid at the school.

Swarthmore has not divested from fossil fuels, but more than a dozen universities nationwide have since partially or fully divested, including Stanford.

Calls for divestment from prison-related companies, while new to Harvard this year, also have a history elsewhere. Columbia became the first American university to divest from private prisons in August 2015 following student sit-ins and other protests.

The movement spread throughout the Ivy League, first picking up steam at Princeton.

After students made a list of 11 private prison companies from which to divest, a university committee’s 2018 report stated that Princeton did not hold stock in any of them.

Micah Herskind, a prison divestment activist at Princeton, said the school still contracts with companies like Aramark that work with private prisons. Over the past year, Herskind said activists have wound down their protests because it has appeared unlikely that Princeton will heed their calls for full divestment.

“This is a place where... Princeton has all the power and has made it clear that it’s not willing to make a moral decision,” he said.

A Princeton spokesperson declined to comment on further calls for divestment.

At Harvard, however, divestment movements including those opposed to prison-related holdings have gained momentum throughout the year.

The Divestment Landscape

Two core movements dominate Harvard’s divestment landscape — students opposed to fossil fuel investments, and students opposed to investments in companies related to the prison industry.

The fossil fuel divestment campaign first began in 2012. Activism reached a boiling point in 2015 with Heat Week, during which Divest Harvard members occupied Massachusetts Hall for days in an effort to persuade then-University President Drew G. Faust to back their cause. Earlier this spring, students held another Heat Week, this time focused on demonstrations rather than blockading buildings.

Prison divestment activists with HPDC held their first public event in November 2018, but had discussed the issue privately during the months prior. Since its inception, the group has hosted rallies, circulated petitions, and met with Bacow several times to personally advocate their cause.

A fledgling movement to divest Harvard from Baupost, a company that holds Puerto Rican debt, also sprang up in fall 2018, but has not pursued public activism on the same scale as Divest Harvard and HPDC.

While Divest Harvard and HPDC share a preferred mechanism for change, each group is distinct in mission and tactics.

Isa Flores-Jones ’19 credited fossil fuel divestment’s resurgence to a rising tide of climate activism around the world. In 2018, students in countries including Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States walked out of schools to demand solutions to the worsening climate crisis.

“Divest Harvard is a very young campaign, following and considering ourselves a part of a global youth-led climate movement,” Flores-Jones said. “I think that’s also a big difference in the way that students are thinking about fossil fuel divestment at this particular moment, is that they see themselves as part of this national and international effort to really center young voices and also voices of frontline community members.”

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change also released a report in October 2018 that forecasted a continued rise in global average temperature, worsening food shortages and wildfires, and the destruction of coral reefs by 2040.

Divest Harvard organizer Ilana A. Cohen '22 said that Harvard's financial support of the fossil fuel industry is "morally unjustifiable" given recent climate research.

"There is a point in time at which it will be so socially unacceptable for Harvard to be continuing to prop up an industry at the heart of this injustice that they will divest," Cohen said. "The question is when, and that depends upon public pressure."

Faculty and alumni have also contributed to calls for fossil fuel divestment.

Philosophy professor Edward J. Hall is among a group of faculty who have encouraged Bacow to discuss divestment with faculty, raising the issue at a faculty meeting.

"For us, in some ways, one of the things that's most important is that there be a kind of comprehensive, sophisticated discussion of the pros and cons of divestment," he said.

In January, several alumni and faculty members — led by Timothy E. Wirth '61, a former member of Harvard's Board of Overseers and former United States senator from Colorado — met with Bacow and Harvard Corporation Senior Fellow William F. Lee '72 to advocate for fossil fuel divestment.

The group, which also included former Environmental Protection Agency administrator Gina McCarthy and former Securities and Exchange commissioner Bevis Longstreth, recently wrote to Bacow and Lee asking them to meet again over the summer and clarify the school's engagement strategies.

"As you know, advocacy for divesting from fossil fuels reaches far beyond any political agenda, into profound existential issues related to the globe's environment and mankind's survival, issues that the University's teaching and research recognize," the group wrote in their letter. "It would be great if you could modify the University's statements about divesting to better reflect the depth of the climate issue, which every institution should attack with all available tools."

University spokesperson Jonathan L. Swain said Bacow and Lee have received the letter and plan to respond but have not done so yet. He declined to comment further on calls for divestment, directing The Crimson to previous statements he has offered on the subject.

"The University's position, as it has stated previously, is that it should not use the endowment to achieve political ends, or particular policy ends," Swain previously wrote. "As President Larry Bacow has said, the University agrees with the urgent need to tackle climate change and has valued the opportunity to discuss the issues with members of the community. Harvard is committed to influencing public policy on climate change through scholarship and research."

Prison divestment activists have also employed a number of strategies, including a specific focus on educating Harvard affiliates about the U.S. prison system.

HPDC, which comprises both undergraduate and graduate students, has hosted six Abolition Action Assemblies — discussions about eliminating prisons that touch on issues like gentrification and homelessness.

Harvard Law School student and HPDC organizer Amanda T. Chan said the assemblies were a part of the campaign's attempt to build a base on campus through "political education."

"Connecting the carceral state to your role as a student, and to the role of your university and the world is actually really enlightening for people who, at first glance, might not give too much thought to why investing in prisons is bad," Chan said.

Graduate School of Design alumnus Samuel A. J. Matthew co-founded the campaign along with Anthropology department graduate student Jarrett M. Drake as part of a project for a class on incarceration.

Initially, the two envisioned the project as a way to better inform school affiliates about Harvard's investments in the "prison industrial complex." After the class ended, the duo eventually brought on several organizers to implement a broader initiative.

"The team has been amazing and has taken it to... whole levels, above which we could kind of barely imagined when we started," Matthew said.

Since the beginning of the campaign, Bacow has met several times with members of HPDC during his designated office hours. During a meeting with activists in February, Bacow said he does not respond to "demands."

"One thing you have to understand about me is that I don't respond to demands, I respond to reason," Bacow told students at the time.

In another meeting with two HPDC organizers, Bacow disclosed that Harvard's total financial holdings in companies tied to the prison industry amounts to roughly \$18,000. Bacow also said the University does not have direct holdings in businesses that operate private prisons.

The group said their research indicates that the University has \$3 million invested in the "prison-industrial complex" as of February. HPDC said their number accounts for Harvard's holdings in banks and companies like Bank of America and Amazon.

'Building in Solidarity'

Unlike in previous years when divest campaigns have operated largely solo, the existence of two major campaigns has provided an opportunity for collaboration. Still, members of the two groups recognize that there are differences in how they've been received on campus.

Flores-Jones said one of Divest Harvard's organizing principles this semester has been pursuing a partnership with HPDC.

"I think that the organizing tactic on campus this semester has really been towards base building, has really been towards building in solidarity with the other major divestment campaign on the campus, building solidarity with other students, activists, and trying to create hope and possibility, not just in terms of fossil fuel divestment on campus, but also in terms of the way that we are all working on and against the climate crisis," Flores-Jones said.

The April Kennedy School protest also served as a key moment for bringing the two campaigns together.

HPDC organizer Zoe L. Hopkins '22 said the April action at the Forum "launched" the group's relationship with its fossil fuel counterpart.

"We're really hoping that we can continue to grow our relationship with the fossil fuel divestment campaign," Hopkins said. "We can discuss how we can continue to facilitate this collective power, and how we can work together to achieve our asks."

In addition to the joint protest, Salma Abdelrahman '20 — a member of HPDC — also spoke at Heat Week's closing rally this year. Abdelrahman said that the groups are in "direct partnership and collaboration."

Despite these shared moments, however, organizers also identified distinct challenges each group faces, especially HPDC.

In an April 12 interview, Bacow said that prison and fossil fuel divestment are "obviously" different issues, but that they can both be solved through scholarship, rather than divestment.

"What they share in common is that in both cases, I believe the way the University can respond to the challenges of climate change, as well as the challenges represented or issues represented by mass incarceration, are the same," Bacow said. "And that is our principal way that we influence the world — is through our scholarship and through our teaching."

Divest Harvard benefits from being long established on campus. Its age has allowed it to build a more substantial faculty and alumni base.

Wirth said that while he's not resistant to prison divestment, he believes fossil fuels are a more salient issue.

"People do what they want to do and what they think is the most effective avenue, and we have chosen fossil fuel as the process to target because of the extraordinary overhanging load of the climate crisis," Wirth said. "That just is overwhelming everything else."

Members of the two divestment movements have also identified instances in which administrators have responded differently to shared activism.

Following the Kennedy School protest, resident deans at the College and deans in the Law School were asked to identify students who were involved in the protest, according to Hopkins. No students are known to have been punished for their participation, but Abdelrahman said some HPDC members were informally told that they could face disciplinary action in the future if they were to act similarly.

"We were able to thankfully navigate through that and circumvent the fear that they were trying to fester up within our group to prevent us from pursuing future action," Hopkins said.

Flores-Jones said members of Divest Harvard were not threatened with similar disciplinary action, despite their involvement in the same protest.

"None of our members were disciplined or were threatened with discipline directly," Flores-Jones said. "I think that is a huge difference, especially considering that we use many of the same tactics as HPDC."

"It is something that we feel necessary to call out as we work towards real solidarity and real coalition work on campus," she added.

College spokesperson Rachael Dane declined to comment on disciplinary processes or procedures, citing a policy not to discuss the Administrative Board's activities.

'A Very, Very Long Process'

Divest Harvard and HPDC have fully embraced divestment as their method of choice for advancing their causes. While campaigns to withdraw Harvard's endowment from different companies have seen varying degrees of success over the years, experts are divided on the strategy's efficacy for creating lasting change.

Fossil fuel divestment in particular has gained popularity around the world in recent years, not just at Harvard. New York City and Ireland are among city and national governments that have sought to legislatively cut their ties with the fossil fuel industry.

Robert Pollin, an economics professor at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, said divestment would have little economic effect on fossil fuel companies because other investors would simply buy the shares that universities sell.

"When somebody else buys [the shares], the fossil fuel companies don't take any kind of economic hit," he said. "The fact of the matter is there's virtually no impact whatsoever on the direct economic status of the fuel companies as it affects their stock prices. It hasn't affected their investment activities. It hasn't affected their profits."

Pollin said it may be more effective for students to push for reductions in carbon emissions at their universities.

Former University President Drew G. Faust announced in early 2018 Harvard plans to be "fossil fuel neutral" by 2026 and "fossil fuel free" by 2050. The University set a 10-year goal in 2006 to reduce its emissions by 30 percent, which it said it met in 2016.

Pollin conceded, however, that divestment could offer symbolic value that may advance activists' goals.

"I know that's part of what divestment activists have been focused on. And they've been successful, and I want to give them credit for that. I'm certainly not hostile to all of it," he said.

Others say that if Harvard were to divest, it might inspire others to do the same, influencing the market.

Paula J. Caplan '69, a research associate at the DuBois Institute who has long worked to reduce compensation at Harvard Management Company, said she supports both major divestment movements.

"It's certainly inspiring to see that this is going on," Caplan, a former Crimson editor, said. "I think it needs to be done. It's so clear it needs to be done. If Harvard does it, then probably a lot of other places will follow. And so it's wonderful that these students are leading the way."

Divest Harvard organizer Carl F. Denton '19, a Crimson Magazine editor, said the divestment movement is effective because it stigmatizes the fossil fuel industry and creates public pressure to withdraw Harvard's holdings.

Bacow and Protestors
"The one thing that divestment does is makes a very strong public statement that the people at large are not okay with that activity, and that it should not be allowed to continue," Denton said.

Some acknowledged that the value of divestment lies in its symbolic importance, not its economic impacts.

"For those who are supportive of fossil fuel divestment, they acknowledge that this is largely a symbolic thing. But symbolism in this point in human history, can be very powerful, and maybe more so than the exact causal relationship," said Northeastern University Professor Jennie C. Stephens '97, who studies energy policy and divestment

Tyler Hansen, a University of Massachusetts Amherst Ph.D. student who has worked with Pollin, said divestment could shift public discourse, but realistically will have little effect by itself on the fossil fuel and prison industries.

"Since the divestment movement started, the movement has had an impact on public consciousness, bringing liberal climate change concepts into the mainstream and more radical concepts closer to the mainstream," Hansen said. "It's had a very important impact in that sense."

"However, the actual strategy of divesting — of moving the money itself — hasn't been affecting share prices and we don't expect it to do so anytime soon," he added.

Hansen pointed to other strategies, such as encouraging universities to go fossil fuel free or passing the Green New Deal — a progressive economic plan geared toward sustainability — as necessary supplements to divestment-focused activism.

Abdelrahman said that divestment is vital because it advocates concrete actions Harvard can take. Like Hansen, however, she said she sees divestment as a “small step in a very, very long process” of reforming the U.S. prison system.

“We say that we care about these issues. What is the thing that we have control over that is causing direct harm to communities that we can change? And how do we change it?” Abdelrahman said. “Money talks at this place. And it's important to recognize that, and recognize the power of divestment as a tool to send a message.”

“The reality is this is a really messed up system,” she added. “And we have a part to play in changing that.”

The Local 26 Strike at Harvard University

Tags: Healthcare, living wage, worker's rights, Harvard, Activism

Summary: YouTube video covering dining hall worker strike in Harvard, a university-wide protest.



After 22 days on strike, Harvard University Dining Hall workers won a big victory in October 2016, having all their demands met.

To watch online, visit: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gaw8ztrOhys>

Bacow, Stand with TPS

By the Crimson Editorial Board

Tags: TPS, Immigration

Summary: An editorial to the President asking him to support TPS employees.

To read online, visit: <https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2019/2/14/editorial-bacow-stand-with-tps/>

This past Tuesday, Harvard workers and students went to Washington D.C. to join a rally marching to protect Temporary Protected Status, a program that grants temporary refuge in the United States to residents of countries ravaged by conflict or natural disasters. In the rain, they gathered to fight for the basic right to stay in the United States, where many of them have spent years building new lives.

We recognize the urgency of these protests, and we admire the efforts of those involved in the Harvard TPS Coalition as part of the larger fight to protect people living in the U.S. under the TPS program. Workers and students alike have rallied repeatedly on campus, pushing for increased legal support in light of the very real danger posed to their livelihoods in the U.S. given the current political climate.

Over the course of the current administration, the TPS program and those who benefit from it have faced growing uncertainty. Though a court order has stalled the Trump administration's terminations of TPS for individuals from El Salvador, Honduras, Haiti, Nicaragua, Nepal, and Sudan, their status still remains uncertain for the foreseeable future.

In light of these dangers and in justice to the people who have built new lives in the U.S., we echo our support for the continuation of TPS. Furthermore, we believe Harvard should work assiduously to support its

employees who are TPS recipients by using its political clout to lobby Congress. The individuals affected are not only valued members of the Harvard community: They are human beings, deserving of the right to feel safe in the place where they have rebuilt their lives.

If University President Lawrence S. Bacow decides to take a more public political stance, on the issue, it will not be without precedent. Former University President Drew G. Faust, in a letter to top legislators co-written with Princeton University President Christopher L. Eisgruber, offered public support for TPS shortly before her term ended. This statement, amongst others, came after a number of protests and a petition presented to her by TPS workers earlier that year.

After Faust's departure, the University must strive to maintain public support of immigrants, both under TPS and otherwise. In September, Bacow met with members of the undocumented community on campus, including TPS workers, but has not yet recently made a similar statement showing his support. Following his expression of sympathy for immigration issues and advocacy groups and references to his own immigration story, Bacow should show material support for the immigrants by committing Harvard's political sway to protecting these valued members of our community.

We appreciate that Bacow has identified support for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, an Obama-era immigration program designed to protect undocumented immigrants who arrived as children, as one of his main lobbying priorities. We call on Bacow to also make a specific, explicit statement advocating on behalf of those who might face terminations to TPS in the same way that Faust did during her tenure.

Bacow has the chance to reaffirm his commitment to justice for all members of the Harvard community, no matter their origins. We urge him to take it.

Harvard's Not-So-Quiet Embarrassment

By David Lynch

Tags: Deaf Awareness, American Sign Language

Summary: Analysis of Harvard's views on American Sign Language.

To read online, <http://www.thecrimson.com/article/2017/4/25/lynch-david-harvard-not-so-quiet-embarrassment/>.

Two Saturdays ago, [April 15](#), was National American Sign Language Day, a day that commemorates the 1817 establishment of the first school designed specifically for deaf students in the United States. This day embraces the often forgotten culture of the deaf, a people whose history—and current situation—consists of discrimination, isolation, and harassment.

Just this [past September](#), Alex Hernandez, a deaf senior high school student in Nebraska, was severely bullied; two students dumped the school supplies, debit card, and cochlear implants in his backpack into a toilet, leaving him helpless during school hours. Ultimately, fellow students and, eventually, the internet, showed compassion for Alex, but these stories are all too common—especially for the deaf community.

In order to prevent more tragedies like Alex's, the unique needs of the deaf must be recognized. Teaching American Sign Language to those who can hear is an important first step not only because it increases the hearing population's ability to communicate with deaf people, but also because it allows them to understand the often-ignored struggles that deaf people face on a daily basis.

Thankfully, [many schools](#) across the country and in the Boston area have promoted ASL's importance by legitimizing it academically. [Boston University](#) and [Northeastern](#) are among these, each offering potential degrees in deaf studies and hosting a multitude of events specifically designed for interactions between the hearing and the deaf. By recognizing deaf language and culture as a worthwhile academic pursuit, these schools have put their backing behind those who cannot hear.

Harvard has not.

Although Harvard offered introductory American Sign Language classes [for the first time this year](#), the College still refuses to recognize ASL as a real language by not permitting sign language to fulfill the mandatory language requirement. Harvard argues that, for a language to fulfill this requirement, it must have "[a written component](#)."

At its core, the purpose of language is communication and doubting a people's language merely because one cannot "write it" is fundamentally discriminatory. By instilling within students' minds that ASL is a fun elective but not a legitimate language due to its failure to have a stereotypical "written component," Harvard is essentially

claiming that those who use American Sign Language are not actually using language. Harvard is positioning itself as an institution that, on the whole, does not see ASL as a “proper” form of communication.

But in reality, [100,000 to 500,000 Americans](#) use ASL as their primary language. The argument that ASL is simply a “derivative” of English is also incorrect, as ASL is a complex language with its own unique syntactical and grammatical structures. Furthermore, deaf people have a drastically different culture from the hearing, with their own abundant literature ([as a simple YouTube search will prove](#)). ASL studies thus have the possibility to adhere to the academic norms that are often associated with other linguistic studies.

The purpose of the language requirement is to inspire students to think about the meaning of communication and to learn how to communicate in a new way. As one of the students in the new ASL class, I can confidently say that, through this course, I have challenged myself academically in an unprecedented manner. Not only have I garnered an understanding of a language that communicates in a medium like none other, I have also had the incredibly rewarding experience of learning ASL from a deaf professor. In addition, I have gained insight into a community that is largely ignored in regular academic settings. This is the true purpose of learning another language: to gain a new toolset that allows you to answer challenging problems in a new fashion and converse with those who are different from you. New languages permit you to explore your intellectual boundaries in extremely innovative ways, a feat that, no doubt, ASL allows for.

Harvard needs to end its prejudice towards the deaf community and eliminate its outdated view of language. Students who pursue ASL for a year should have the opportunity to utilize these linguistic studies to fulfill the language requirement. Any other solution is simply insulting to the deaf community and a huge embarrassment for the school. It's time for Harvard to finally listen—and not just with their ears.

Phillips Brooks House Changes Its Politics: From Social Service to Social Change

By Hope Scott in The Crimson, 1975

Tags: Service, Structural Change, History

Summary: A 1975 article detailing tensions between service and activism among Harvard students at the Phillips Brooks House.

To read online, visit: <https://www.thecrimson.com/article/1975/3/10/phillips-brooks-house-changes-its-politics/?page=single>

Doug Schmidt paused for a moment, leaned further back in his armchair, and lifted a coke bottle to his lips. When he put down the bottle, he said, "I guess what I'm saying is that this little germ got planted three or four years ago, and has spread hierarchically."

Douglas M. Schmidt '76 is the new president of Phillips Brooks House, as of March 1, and this "germ" is going to be the central concern of his presidency.

The 30-member "cabinet" of PBH has decided to shift the House's emphasis away from social service toward a commitment to social change. The members have adopted a more wary attitude to pure social service programs. They are ambivalent about oiling squeaky school systems with tutoring programs, about maintaining reading programs they believe can and should be shut down. PBH ended its tutoring program in the Brighton school system in 1972 because volunteers "saw themselves being used by the superintendent of the school as an excuse not to provide facilities," says retiring PBH president Stephen D. Cooke '75. In 1973, PBH stopped organizing dramatic productions at the Longfellow School in Cambridge, because the volunteers didn't see any long-term beneficial results from the program. A big brother/sister program at Columbia Point succumbed for similar reasons in 1972, and aspects of several other PBH programs have been dropped in recent years because the House did not see any real improvements coming from them.

Schmidt says this year is going to be "a deciding one." He says the members of PBH are going to have to take a stand on four questions:

- * "How much does PBH owe to the Cambridge community?"
- * "How much is PBH a part of Harvard?"
- * "How much is PBH adding to the problems it is trying to solve?" and,
- * "What does it mean to volunteer?"

For the past several years, the members of PBH's cabinet have been meeting every two or three weeks in a wood-paneled room on the second floor of PBH's ivy-covered building in the Yard; the smaller group of

executives convenes twice every week; and the entire staff has been going on two weekend retreats each year. The new cabinet already met for ten hours last week.

Since early last spring, these leaders have gradually and collectively decided the PBH needs some up-to-date answers to those four questions--questions which PBH leaders have not formally reassessed since the era of late-sixties activism.

PBH has begun to create committees and renovate existing ones to try to direct its energies from social service to social action. Joseph E. Sandler '75, retiring chairman of Prisons, one of the twelve committees now standing, says Prisons was one of the first committees to "change over." He says the committee to "change over." He says the committee really began to change direction in the summer of 1973, when he himself was working for a Massachusetts organization, the Ad Hoc Committee for Prison Reform. During that summer, John Boone, commissioner of correction, who was working for the elimination of correctional institutions, was fired after holding office for a year. Phillips Brooks House decided to join the loose coalition of people and organization in the state pressing for radical change in the penal system, particularly the completion of Boone's goals.

"Most of the movement acknowledges that teaching behind bars doesn't work. It's an artificial environment. It's destructive and dehumanizing. Yet most of the committee is still teaching in the institutions, this represents a conflict," says Sandler.

The Prisons Committee's conflict is typical of the problems of the whole House. Massachusetts penal reform groups have brought the committee more abruptly face-to-face with the inconsistencies of its programs: last summer a prison official cited the work of PBH volunteers as evidence of Bridgewater's positive correctional facilities. In a suit brought by the Prisoners' Rights Project.

Prisons has since moved into the area of political and family service for prisoners, by placing volunteers at the Families and Friends of Prisoners Center in Dorchester, and does research and mailing work pushing for legislation to standardize parole eligibility. Yet with the simultaneous continuation of teaching programs, Sandler says he believes that the Prisons committee has compromised itself.

The Community Medical Program, on the other hand, is a committee whose changes give PBH executives more cause for optimism. During the last two years, the committee has moved away from placing volunteers in clinics, and has attempted to make available medicine, health care, and nutrition to more people who need them. Last year the committee started a hot lunch program for elderly people, and it is instituting a year-off program for students who want to work in rural medicine. Volunteers now create programs where they see a need for them.

But PBH members insist they are not abandoning social service. Most committee heads emphasize that their object is not to phase out social service--the founding purpose of PBH--but rather to become aware of the effects of that service, to prevent future nightmares like the Bridgewater trial citation. They believe continued social services does not rule out social action.

"There are some committees with defined volunteer positions," says Schmidt. "There's always going to be a need for tutors, for one-to-one programs. What varies is how much emphasis we're putting on them. We're deeply committed to social service."

PBH members attribute their new focus to a variety of influences: changing attitudes among the students and in America as a whole, a development of new ideas as a reaction to executives' frustrations, and three specific events that retiring president Cooke says helped "clear away the barriers."

One of those events was the Bridgewater Prison suit. The other two were the decision that tutoring in the Brighton school system was counterproductive in the long run, and the institution of three Phillips Brooks House courses open to all undergraduates.

The courses, all new this year, are Social Sciences 171, a course that combines educational theory with actual teaching in the Cambridge school system, a Quincy House seminar on Cambridge, and an Ed School course on tutoring methodology that includes teaching reading in Boston prisons. PBH began to consider creating courses two years ago, when the House first hired an educational consultant. The idea of courses grew out of "general concern about educating volunteers," says Cooke.

The doubts created by the Brighton and Bridgewater problems and the new possibilities for educating volunteers opened up by the courses have led to volunteers' increased feelings of responsibility for their role in the Boston and Cambridge communities. Most of the executives trace their abrupt change in attitude to last spring, when they say the executive, through meetings and discussions, came to feel that PBH policy needed overhauling. Schmidt and Cooke say that all 30 cabinet members now agree on the shift to social action: it is only on the nuts and bolts of implementation that they have to continually confer and compromise.

PBH is pleased with some of its first steps, in particular with two new committees. The House set up the East Boston People's Rights Committee last year, designed to help welfare recipients get their checks from an un-

cooperative bureaucracy. The particular charm of this committee is that once it has helped educate and organize a community pressure group, it will withdraw from East Boston and the resident organization will be self-sufficient.

PBH feels its change in attitudes are parallel to a national trend. Executives now speak of a retreat from Great Society optimism. They came to Harvard from schools and towns influenced by the sixties, and since they have been here they have become repulsed by the old paternalistic patching up of community problems.

Alan Brickman '76, the incoming executive vice president and retiring chairman of the education committee, says he "used to believe that reform begins in the classroom. Not any more."

But PBH members do not feel that Harvard has helped them rethink their commitment to the community; as in the case of Prisons, they have been pressured by outside groups and people, and by frustrations they encountered while doing social service work. Doug Schmidt says his Harvard experience actually hindered his social commitment. While at high school in Evansville, Ind., Schmidt says he was dedicated to protests and community work. Schmidt and a handful of friends organized the first free lunch program in his home town.

"At Harvard," Schmidt says, "my energies were subverted. At the end of last year I realized I had compromised myself." He says he lost sight of interests and "sold out to some of the status trips that go along with Harvard. I don't feel that I'm an exceptional case. We're getting our heads together."

Schmidt says he is not an exception because he has spoken to so many students at Harvard and Radcliffe who are dissatisfied, restless, or bored, but who do not have any "outlets." He believes Harvard could be better structured to help students find those outlets. Although he says PBH is not the answer for everyone, he hopes to help make students' involvement in the community a meaningful option. Community work is "not the way Harvard is slanted." Schmidt says, but perhaps through worthwhile programs and increased publicity, PBH can help change Harvard's slant.

PBH has a strange administrative tie with the University. A 12-member faculty committee, headed as of two weeks ago by the Rev. Peter Gomes, approves the spending of the House's endowment, which makes up approximately one half of the total annual budget. "PBH is a small Harvard department," explained Woody N. Peterson, '70, the graduate secretary of the House. "The committee is responsible only for the building." Peterson explained that PBH as a student group using the building is totally separate from the department even though they share the same name.

Half of each year's budget does not come from the endowment but from contributions and gifts. Students are free to spend that half of the budget however they desire. Peterson said next year's projected budget is \$52,000, plus any additional money raised by individual committees this summer.

The budget breaks down into mainly salaries (administrative assistant, bookkeeper, secretary, graduate secretary, educational advisor, hired consultants) and automobile, telephone, and equipment expenses, basically everything except the utilities and upkeep of the building, which are paid for by the Harvard administration.

So it seems that PBH is not tied in a static position to Harvard, but can do what it wants. So if Harvard is not "slanted" toward community work, it must be possible for PBH to fill that gap.

This slant is why publicity has become a concern at PBH. There is now a member of the executive committee in charge of publicity, and this fall the House sent out its first pre-registration mailing to freshmen. Executives cite a higher turn-out at the traditional open houses at the start of the past two semesters. The almost 400 PBH volunteers received the first volunteer newsletter this December, telling them about developments in some of the other committees, about new programs, and about impending executive elections.

However, the number of actual volunteers on the PBH records has remained approximately the same as last year. The figure has hovered at just below four hundred for the past five years, after a 1967-68 peak of just under 1000 volunteers. But executives point out the faddish nature of much of late 1960's volunteering. "The numbers don't necessarily reflect a greater commitment," says Steve Cooke.

PBH leaders see the problem of recruiting as attracting the kind of people in the first place who are willing to give the extra time and energy that everyone in the House agrees is needed for social change. It's easier to sign up to tutor once or twice a week than to interview, lobby, and organize.

Sandler says his Prisons committee has problems attracting volunteers interested in the political aspects of prison reform. "We need to figure out how to get commitments out of students," Sandler says. He says students' understanding of the role of volunteers needs to be changed. "They think what they'd like to do is develop a relationship with an individual. Political change is a different story. It's somewhat more abstract, but has a hell of a lot of impact...I'm not sure the most political people come to Phillips Brooks House."

So PBH wants to fight the attitudes at Harvard and Radcliffe that stop students from doing anything that doesn't produce any immediate results. The new president feels that the University's structure fosters that student

attitude, but he and his cabinet want to recruit and educate volunteers in the hopes of making some change in a system they have unconsciously helped to perpetuate.

Columbia Point and PBH: Big Brother Is Gone *By Michael Winerip in The Crimson, 1973*

Tags: Service, Structural Change, History, Community-Based Work

Summary: A 1973 article assessing the impact of service-activism tensions on student programming in a Boston community.

To read online, visit: <https://www.thecrimson.com/article/1973/10/23/columbia-point-and-pbh-big-brother/?page=single>

Since the mid-sixties Phillips Brooks House had sponsored a Big Brother program at Columbia Point, a Boston housing project nine stops down the Red Line from Harvard Square. During each school year, about 50 big brothers--and, during the seventies, big sisters--worked with youngsters from the Point; in the summers the project continued with about a dozen volunteers serving as counselors for a Point based day camp.

But last summer there were no big brothers at the Point, and today the sole remnant of the program is a handful of big brothers and sisters who still travel to the Point to see "their" kids.

PBH's decision to terminate the program was based largely on a report written by Steven Pitts '74, its most recent--and apparently final--chairman. Pitts cited a lack of both money and experienced staff, and what he called "specific conditions at Columbia Point both in terms of the program and the housing project," as reasons for ending the volunteer work.

But the reasons go farther. They include the politics of Harvard's black radicals and white liberals, the rise and fall of the Great Society, and the social vacuum of Richard Nixon's new federalism.

The setting is New England's largest housing project--some 1500 units in 37 buildings, tall brown-orange buildings visible from Boston's Southeast Expressway and isolated from Boston by that route on one side and Dorchester Bay on the other three.

Today the Point is mostly black and Spanish-speaking; of the 5000 residents, fewer than 25 per cent are white, and about 150 of these are senior citizens. Over half of the families are headed by women.

The \$20 million, Federally funded Columbia Point project had its glamorous side when it opened in 1954. The structure was new, buildings were equipped with elevators, residents had a scenic view of the nighttime Boston skyline, and the project had its own beach. Its population, at that time, was mostly white.

Beneath the impressive exterior, however, was shoddiness. A 1957 investigation revealed a number of building violations by contractors attempting to cut corners; residents were constantly plagued by rats and cockroaches. As the years passed, the Point decayed from lack of maintenance. Crime rose disproportionately to the city.

Enter the Great Society and a slew of new programs for the Point. Family services, youth programs, tutoring, manpower training and senior citizen services appeared. Perhaps the most heralded change, in 1966, was a neighborhood health clinic, one of two in the nation, providing free health care to the residents.

Construction of the Bayside Mall, which gave the Point its own shopping center, and the founding of a Columbia Point Credit Union gave other signs that new life was being breathed into the project.

During these years PBH began its Big Brother program.

At the time, the big brothers were mostly white. Their goals were humanist and liberal, as outlined in a position paper for the 1968 program: "to make kids happy and feel good about themselves. If a person is happy and feels good about himself he can handle any problem, whether it's physical or mental."

But it was the summer program, says Bert Rosenthal '72, who worked with the project in 1970, that brought community orientation and interaction. "At the end of the 1970 summer we put on a show for the whole community, and there was a feeling of cohesiveness and belonging," he said. And then things began to change.

The next summer, for the first time, the majority of the counselors were black or Puerto Rican. The emphasis began to change--the aim was no longer to get the kids out of the Point.

"The old philosophy was to keep things cool, to show kids a good time," says Pitts, who was a summer counselor in 1971 and led the program thereafter. Before that, he said, the Big Brother Program was part of a

pacification effort--an attempt to keep the ghetto from erupting in violence, to keep the black man in his place. As director, Pitts wanted a more political program.

The new political philosophy turned into action in 1971, as the big brothers led a boycott against the shopping mall, charging that merchants were making an adequate financial contribution to neither the Big Brother Program nor the community as a whole.

"We wanted to get the kids involved in the political process by working to boycott the stores that were fucking us over," Pitts said. But the third effort at boycott was not as successful as the first two, and the tactic was stopped.

Come spring 1972, the time usually devoted to fundraising for the summer program, the Big Brother Program's chief fundraiser and half the counselors were involved in the takeover of Mass Hall and the protest against Harvard's investment in Gulf, and Gulf's involvement in Angola.

There were other problems as well. "The word got out that we were political, which cooled off the fund money," says Pitts, "and there was a general cutback in funds to poverty programs by Nixon at the time."

"As a leader I didn't put all my time into working on the program," says Pitts candidly. "I was doing more political things. But I don't think the money was out there to be got. I committed myself to the program, but I didn't go through with it.

"Our radicalism was a vulgar radicalism," he continues. "We might have done better if we had played some of the bureaucratic games. It's a question of style as well as politics."

Aid from the Area Planning Action Council (APAC), a government-funded program, was spurned, and a mutual dislike grew. APAC felt the big brothers were too radical; the big brothers felt APAC was another white pacification program.

The 1972 summer program left the big brothers deeply in debt, and the program as a whole declined rapidly. Admissions to the program were frozen, and in April 1973 Pitts recommended it be terminated, writing in his report that "it is doubtful Columbia Point is the correct battleground to fight capitalism."

At the project, the credit union folded in 1969 as too few members repaid loans, and the Bayside Mall closed last year, claiming too little business volume. APAC cut its staff of part-time help and beginning in December will be funded on a month-to-month emergency basis. The clinic, which seems to be set for the moment, must under new guidelines become self-sufficient by 1975.

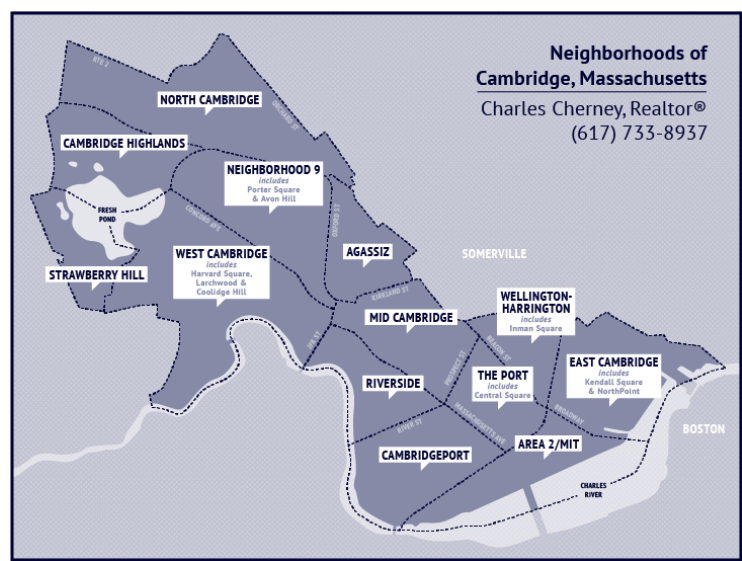
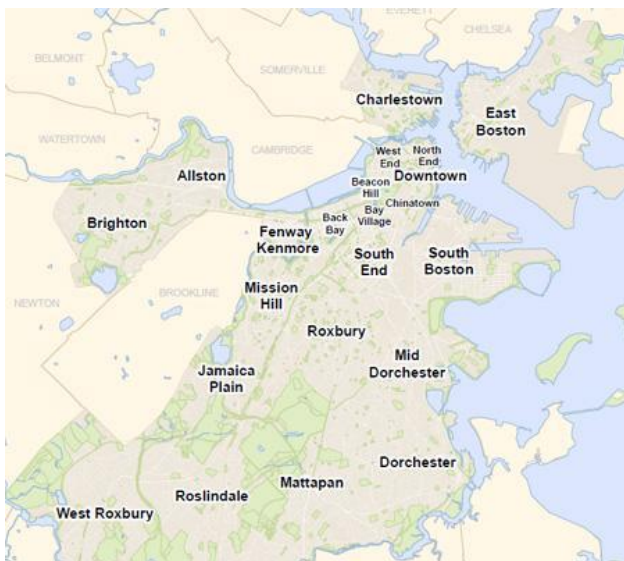
The Harvard radicals can find new battlefields, the Harvard liberals can find new causes, the college-educated social workers can find new jobs in the system. But the Columbia Point residents have no place to go.

Cambridge & Boston

Maps of Boston & Cambridge

Tags: Cambridge, Boston, Race, Class/SES, Immigration

Summary: Several maps revealing demographic information about Boston & Cambridge.

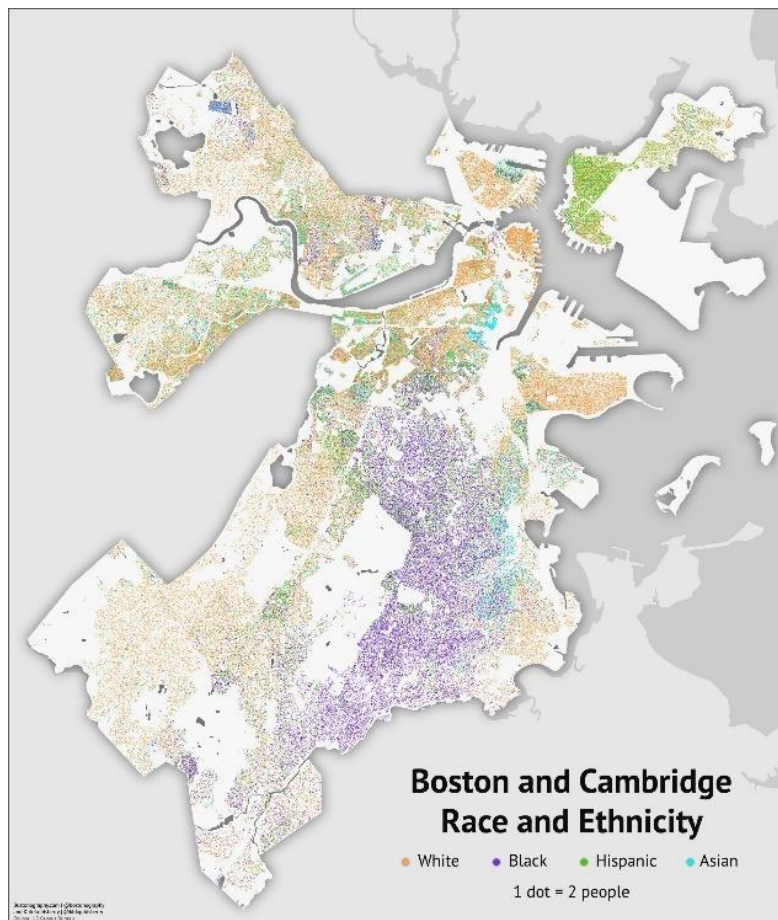
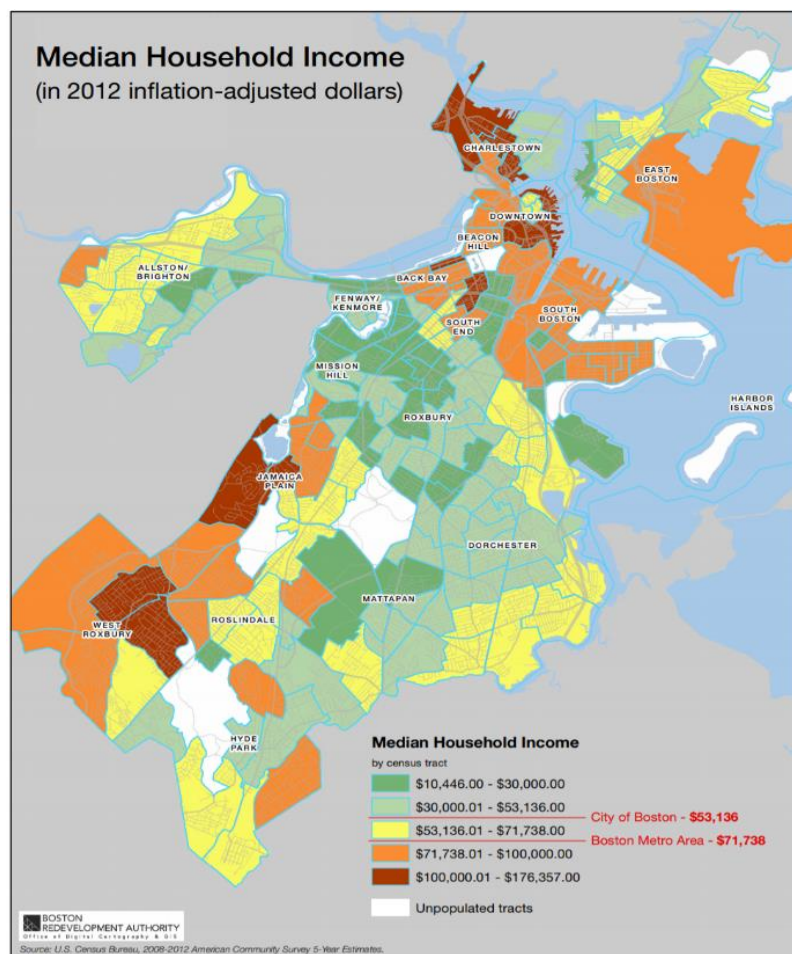


BOSTON NEIGHBORHOODS: Top 10 Countries of Birth for Foreign-Born Population

Font size is proportional to the foreign-born population within each neighborhood.



Median Household Income (in 2012 inflation-adjusted dollars)



Boston Globe Spotlight Series on Race

By Akilah Johnson, *The Boston Globe*

Tags: Racism, Discrimination, Boston, Housing, Healthcare, Universities, Politics, Class/SES

Summary: Parts from an incisive Boston Globe series on various facets of race in Boston.

Part 1: Boston. Racism. Image. Reality.

By Akilah Johnson, *The Boston Globe*

To read online, visit: <http://apps.bostonglobe.com/spotlight/boston-racism-image-reality/series/image/>

It is the hardest question hurled our way: Is this a racist city? The insult is one we want badly to reject. But a Spotlight Team investigation finds it is still far too hard to be black in Boston, with stark inequities in opportunity and power.

Google the phrase “Most racist city,” and Boston pops up more than any other place, time and time again.

It may be easy to write that off as a meaningless digital snapshot of what people say about us, and what we say about ourselves — proof of little beyond the dated (or, hopefully, outdated) memories of Boston's public and fierce school desegregation battles of the 1970s.

Except that Boston's reputation problem goes much deeper than an online search. A national survey commissioned by the Globe this fall found that among eight major cities, black people ranked Boston as least welcoming to people of color. More than half — 54 percent — rated Boston as unwelcoming.

Little wonder that some comedians and athletes take aim at Boston, like Michael Che of “Saturday Night Live” this year telling a global TV audience this was “the most racist city I've ever been to.” Or HBO's John Oliver suggesting that it took this summer's anti-bigotry march on Boston Common to finally make Boston “unracist.”

The reputation is real, and pervasive — but, most important, is it deserved?

The Globe Spotlight Team analyzed data, launched surveys, and conducted hundreds of interviews, to answer just that question. Spotlight examined the core of Boston's identity: our renowned colleges and world-class medical institutions; the growth that keeps expanding our skyline; business and politics; and our championship sports teams.

And the Spotlight reporters, to get a sense of how much black residents are part of the mainstream of the city, did something decidedly old-school: They visited a number of iconic Boston places and simply counted the number of black people they saw.

All told, the findings were troubling. The reasons are complex.

But this much we know: Here in Boston, a city known as a liberal bastion, we have deluded ourselves into believing we've made more progress than we have. Racism certainly is not as loud and violent as it once was, and the city overall is a more tolerant place. But inequities of wealth and power persist, and racist attitudes remain powerful, even if in more subtle forms. They affect what we do — and what we don't do.

Boston's complacency with the status quo hobbles the city's future.

Look at the Seaport, a whole new neighborhood rising on the South Boston Waterfront that benefited from \$18 billion in taxpayer investment, and you see none of the richness of an increasingly diverse city. Look at Boston's lauded colleges and realize black students remain rare; the percentage of black enrollment at many top universities has not increased appreciably in three decades, stuck in the single digits.

Look at our political institutions and try to recall how many black politicians have been elected to statewide office — or to the top job in City Hall — in the last half century. (Answer: 2.)

Peek, if you can, into corporate board rooms in Massachusetts, where only 1 percent of board members at publicly traded firms are black. Step into the newsrooms and front offices of media organizations anywhere in Boston, including the Globe's Page 1 deliberations, and see few black faces.

And look at the area's middle-class black neighborhoods — if you can find one. There also are not many downtown restaurants and bars where black patrons can go spontaneously and see others who look like them. Living in Boston can be a particularly isolating experience for black professionals.

Although the city's vast sports, entertainment, and cultural offerings are open to all, it's perhaps little wonder why black people are hard to spot at, say, a Red Sox or Patriots game or the Museum of Fine Arts. It could be they simply choose not to go, or it may be the cost. African-Americans in Greater Boston have a median net worth of just \$8. That means they owe almost as much as the combined value of what they own, be it a car, or house, or savings.

Finally, know that if you seek an apartment in the region using Craigslist, and if you are black, you can't count on getting equal treatment, even in this day and age, a Globe study found. This inquiry, like this Spotlight series, focuses on the black community specifically, not all communities of color, because blacks have had the longest and most contentious history with racism in Boston.

"To be a black person in Boston, is [often] to be the only one. . . . The only one in the office; the only one in the leadership position. It's lonely," said 45-year-old Bridgit Brown of Dorchester, a communications specialist. "You're aware of the racism. You're aware of the subtleties. It's like the air we breathe, if you're black."

For all the gains that Greater Boston has made, unfinished business on race is everywhere.

In a 1983 series of stories, a team of Globe reporters took a hard look at racial equality in our region. It was not a pretty picture, but local leaders promised things would improve. Thirty-four years later, the promise has yet to be fulfilled. For example:

Then: Just 4.5 percent of black workers were officials and managers.

Now: That number has barely moved, to 4.6 percent in 2015.

Then: The "Vault" — an organization of Boston's most powerful business leaders — had no black people among its 20 members.

Now: The "New Vault" — the 16-person Massachusetts Competitive Partnership — has no black members.

Then: This area's unemployment rate was about twice as high for blacks as whites.

Now: The gap remains, with black unemployment more than double the rate of white workers in 2014.

"A lot of times when Boston engages in looking at itself around race, it focuses on attitudes and prejudices," said James Jennings, professor emeritus of race, politics, and urban policy at Tufts University. "With that, Boston certainly has made a lot of progress, but Boston needs to start looking at structural inequality — racial hierarchy, poverty, academic achievement — to move the needle forward."

DEMOGRAPHICS AND DESTINY

To truly explain why racial inequities persist in the Boston area, it is necessary to understand how much can be blamed on demographics and how much can not.

Greater Boston stands out among the nation's top 10 metro areas in one distinct way. We have the highest proportion of white residents — nearly three out of every four.

Our area's black population is small and the size relatively unchanged in decades — only 7 percent, or 334,000 people, in a region of 4.7 million. If you look only at the city of Boston, the black population is about 23 percent, or about 148,000 people.

And it's been this way for decades, in large part because the metro area never benefited from the Great Migration — the post-Civil War movement of blacks from Southern states in search of opportunity — the way places like Chicago and New York did.

Boston might think of itself as on par with the country's big cities like New York and Chicago — and in certain ways, it is: Harvard, MIT, and many other of the nation's elite universities are in the Boston area, we are a hub of biotech innovation and the epicenter of medical research, and our sports teams have made us a city of champions.

But Boston is also very different. New York and Chicago dwarf Boston in size and scale. The population of New York City alone is 8.4 million people, nearly 2 million of whom are black. That translates into more black residents who earn more money, leading to a developed middle class with extensive professional representation — in other words, cities made welcoming, in part, because there simply is a critical mass of black residents who reflect the achievement possible within their community. Boston lacks that advantage.

But make no mistake: The relatively small size of Boston's black community is not an excuse for the inequalities — or biases — that persist here.

The experience in other cities shows that, even when the black population is relatively small, things can be done with sufficient will. Minneapolis, Denver, and Seattle — all with smaller black populations than Boston — have elected black mayors at least once. Boston has never even come close.

The size of this region's black population also cannot explain how a new showcase neighborhood triumphantly rose in the Seaport with little to no involvement of the black community. Further, it can't explain why elite colleges here admit only slightly more black students than 30 years ago.

Nor does the relatively small size of Boston's black population have anything to do with barriers to finding housing, an inequity the Spotlight Team documented in detail.

Using a methodology employed by academic researchers who study bias in housing, the Globe conducted a study of nearly 600 Craigslist ads from rental landlords in the Greater Boston area, finding housing discrimination remains in Boston.

Overall, landlords ignored nearly 45 percent of e-mails from prospective tenants with black-sounding names, like Darnell Washington or Keisha Jackson, versus 36 percent of e-mails from people with white-sounding names, like Brendan Weber or Meredith McCarthy.

For example, when a prospective tenant using the name Allison Wolf asked about renting a two-bedroom condo in Boston's Back Bay, the landlord responded later that day. "It's available," she e-mailed back. "You can see it on Sunday." But when a prospective tenant asked about that same apartment the same morning using the name Tamika Rivers, the landlord never replied.

The difference was even more pronounced when landlords received more informal e-mails with grammatical errors or typos, with landlords seeming more forgiving of such written lapses among whites than blacks.

Such lingering prejudices are part of the reason Charlotte Streat, who lives in Milton, questions her decision to call the Boston area home.

"I don't know that I would move here again," Streat, a Philadelphia native, said sitting under a hair dryer at Randolph's Styles with Character, a Roxbury hair salon.

Streat's parents were none too happy that she decided to attend college and grad school in Greater Boston several decades ago. "I was called a nigger. So yeah, my mother was not pleased," she recalled.

But she fell in love and married a Bostonian. The couple moved into a spacious home with a circular drive along Canton Avenue about 10 years ago.

Milton is a suburb where 15 percent of residents are black and the state's first black governor, Deval Patrick, once lived. Still, some black residents feel alone.

"We're isolated," said Streat, a former executive at Bank of America. "People say there are more black folk in Milton, but you're hard pressed to find them."

THE MISSING MIDDLE CLASS

The lack of a robust black middle class is both a result, and a cause, of Boston's reputation as an unwelcoming place. As blacks move up the economic ladder here, they encounter an increasingly white world, and their solitary and alienating experience becomes part of our city's word-of-mouth reputation.

During the 1970s and 1980s, the city's history — the mayhem surrounding court-ordered school desegregation — was reason enough for many black graduates and professionals to settle elsewhere. Boston's black middle class stagnated, providing little incentive for the next round of graduates to stay in Boston. And so a cycle, or perhaps a spiral, began.

Today, of all the households in the region earning at least \$75,000 annually, only 4 percent are black.

"Does Boston lose because it doesn't have a visible, strong black middle class?" asked John Barros, the mayor's chief of economic development and the most prominent black official at City Hall. "Yes. It loses out on talent. It loses out on investments."

The reality is that Greater Boston has few neighborhoods where prosperous black residents can live with others like them, and finding such areas requires a bit of searching.

The Globe ran a data analysis of census tracts nationally to see which met three criteria: At least 15 percent of the residents are black; and among the black residents, at least 30 percent had a four-year

college degree and their household income was at or above the median for their metro area. (That is about \$75,000 in Greater Boston.)

Here in Greater Boston there are just four such enclaves: two in Stoughton, one in Milton, and one in Boston's Hyde Park neighborhood. If the search were done looking for neighborhoods that met these criteria for white residents, the results would be a bountiful choice of 516 enclaves. The Boston area also reflects a pattern of segregation that is more extensive than in most other metro regions, studies show.

Forty-five other metropolitan areas have far more black enclaves than Boston, including some major metropolitan centers, such as New York, Washington, D.C., and Atlanta, each with more than 100 enclaves, and other smaller urban areas, particularly — but not only — in the South.

The town with the highest concentration of black residents in Massachusetts is Randolph, which is about 30 minutes south of the city. More than 40 percent of Randolph's population is black, as is the town council president and superintendent of schools. Its median household income is about \$12,000 less than the overall metro area.

Netty Oliveira, 51, said she and her husband considered living in Randolph before buying their tan and brick, split-entry house in Stoughton 17 years ago. Their street borders one of the four black enclaves identified by the Globe.

And while she appreciates that her town includes other black residents, she hasn't always felt totally welcomed. She'll never forget one of her first encounters with a neighbor who was white and asked her husband skeptically: "What do you do for a living?"

"I think he was afraid of black people moving in," said Oliveira, who works in criminal justice while her husband works in information technology.

She decided the Stoughton public schools weren't the best fit for her children, now 12 and 15. She eventually chose private schools, which vastly expanded her childrens' world view but forced them to contend with being in classes where they were often one of the few black students. She said white children have asked to touch her son's hair and wondered why his clothes were so nice.

"Our kids pretty much broke a lot of the color barriers," she said.

She hopes the trade-offs are worth it, even though she sometimes feels judged.

"Some of my friends say, 'You're too bourgeois. You don't think you're black.' I'm very much black," she said. "But I want more. I want all of us to have a college degree. I want us all to climb the corporate ladder."

OUR OWN WORST ENEMY

There is no doubt that Boston has made gains in overcoming its history of racism. Gone are the days when black people crouched in cars, windows rolled up, hats pulled low so as not to be seen driving through the streets of South Boston or Charlestown, fearing racial slurs or real physical violence.

Though safety remains an issue in some neighborhoods, violent crime in Boston is the lowest in a decade. Also, as police forces nationwide work to end deep mistrust of them within black communities, Boston's officers have so far avoided high-profile clashes that have led to protests elsewhere, and have garnered generally favorable reviews about the city's level of outreach.

Despite the dearth of black politicians elected to statewide office — save for Deval Patrick's two terms as governor and Edward Brooke's path-breaking election as state attorney general and a US senator in the 1960s and 1970s — gains have also been made locally, including the election of black candidates in predominantly white neighborhoods.

Yet this is a city that still stumbles and, in doing so, rekindles seething images of racial discord beamed into televisions during the school desegregation battles of the 1970s.

There was the case of Charles Stuart, a white man who in 1989 killed his wife and then lied, describing the assailant as a black man. The city readily set out in pursuit of a man fitting the fake description.

That was followed by the 2009 arrest of a prominent African-American scholar at Harvard, Henry Louis Gates Jr., handcuffed after being confronted by police for allegedly breaking into his own home, attracting national headlines.

Meanwhile, the image of Boston portrayed on the big screen, and beyond, reinforces the outsider status of many in the city's black community. There are the movies that showcase white-working-class heroes (Remember: "The Departed," "Good Will Hunting," or "The Town"); punch lines

(Think: Che and HBO's John Oliver); and sports controversies old and new (Picture: Yawkey Way and Adam Jones).

The region's main tourism website features a video of overwhelmingly white faces inviting visitors to places like Faneuil Hall, Symphony Hall, and along the Charles River. And the introduction of the website's "neighborhood dining guide" only highlights the Back Bay, downtown, the North End, and the Seaport — all neighborhoods with few black residents.

"That's literally making entire communities invisible," said Sarah J. Jackson, a black Ph.D. who moved to Boston six years ago from Minneapolis to teach at Northeastern University. "It became really apparent to me soon after moving here that the version of Boston that the city is really invested in portraying to the outside world is only white Boston. What's the fear? That people are going to go to Dorchester?"

Compare that to Philadelphia, San Francisco, and Washington, D.C., where black travelers can find entire itineraries on those area's tourism websites dedicated to African-American arts, culture, food, and history.

Our complacency on economic issues also works against us.

Despite a thriving economy fueling a downtown building boom, black residents in Massachusetts are twice as likely as their white counterparts to be unemployed. They earn sharply lower salaries when they do land jobs, have little savings, and are far less likely to own their homes.

The median net worth of non-immigrant African-American households in the Boston area is just \$8, the lowest in a five-city study of wealth disparities. It's hard to ignore the dramatic contrast to the \$247,500 net worth for white households in the Boston area.

"That borders on insane and absurd. The disparity in Boston just transcends everything," said William A. Darity Jr., a professor of public policy at Duke University who was one of the lead investigators of that study, which involved the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston. "It's just staggering."

And when it comes to income alone, the imbalance looks like this: For every one black household earning more than \$75,000 in the metro region, there are about 21 white ones.

Those findings may provide some context for the results of a Suffolk University/Boston Globe poll completed this summer. Nearly two-thirds of black Bostonians said they were treated unfairly because of race in the previous 30 days.

It also provides insight into the separate Globe-commissioned survey on Boston's national reputation, which compared us to Atlanta, Chicago, New York, Charlotte, San Francisco, Miami, and Philadelphia. The survey was conducted by Chadwick Martin Bailey, a market research and strategy firm in Boston, and designed to update a race image survey already done twice for Commonwealth Compact, a nonprofit group that promotes diversity.

The question was: How welcoming is each city to people of color? And each time it was asked — in 2010, 2013, and 2017 — Boston came in last among African-American respondents.

Atlanta topped the list the last two times, with 83 and 84 percent of blacks respectively saying it was most welcoming to people of color.

EVERYWHERE YOU LOOK

Even though about 334,000 black people live in Boston's metro region, few of them can be found at the city's most iconic locations.

Less than 2 percent of some 4,600 fans counted systematically at select entrances in Fenway Park on a summer night when the Red Sox beat the St. Louis Cardinals were black. And of nearly 8,000 ticketholders counted at Gillette Stadium at a game this fall, about 2 percent were black.

On a sunny Saturday in September, about 4 percent of the roughly 3,000 patrons counted entering the Museum of Fine Arts, one of the largest museums in the country, were black. And about 4 percent of the more than 1,180 people counted walking into the Boston Children's Museum on an October Saturday were black.

Of the 200 diners sipping cocktails and enjoying Thursday night dinner in October at Eastern Standard in Kenmore Square, four were black. That same night and time, only one black person ate at Ostra in the Back Bay and no black people dined at Blue Dragon in the Seaport.

And during the Saturday night rush at Legal Harborside, about 4 percent of nearly 380 diners were black, while about 10 percent of diners were black that same night at the Cheesecake Factory at the Prudential Center, which could be due to its more moderate-priced menu and accessible location.

There are only a small number of restaurants in which black diners report they can dependably find other black people, including Darryl's Corner Bar & Kitchen, Slade's Bar & Grill, and Savor Restaurant & Lounge.

"There's really nothing here for us . . . and this is a big city," said Thomas Grupee, a project manager working in biotech. "If you visit a place like D.C. or Atlanta, there's so many places to go that are black-owned. Why not give us a piece of the pie, too?"

Everyone in Boston loses out on the cultural front. The downtown dining and social scene does not reflect the city's full diversity, and some black patrons who want to dine in places with others like them organize "friendly takeovers" of establishments with their friends or hold private events. It's today's answer to social segregation in Boston.

That was the situation that 32-year-old Mike Free stepped into one recent night.

The doors of Scholars, a restaurant in the heart of downtown, had just opened, and the place was almost empty save for the wait staff and DJ.

But Free, dressed in jeans and a button-up, was the first to arrive. His sense of punctuality was honed by four years at West Point. His sense of excitement amplified with anticipation. Today, he was not going to be the only black person at the bar.

By the end of the night, Scholars would fill with some 400 young, urban (read: black) professionals brought together via group chats, retweets, and Instagram — and an ambitious event planner — to create a social scene where one really doesn't exist.

"When I moved, I didn't really know exactly where to go," said Free, who had just moved here from Chicago for an executive training program. "Chicago is easier. Here, you all have a different kind of vibe."

What he did know about Boston was discouraging. This was a town where a racial slur was hurled at a black Baltimore Orioles player. Friends also told him: It's not diverse. It's small. It's a difficult place for a person of color to thrive.

So he set his expectations low, really low. And after several months here, the best Free could say about Boston's social scene was that it is a step up from one of the whitest states in the nation.

"It's not Idaho," he offered with a smile.

Barros, the city's development chief, maintains that Boston needs to show that it is welcoming by creating a "social infrastructure" for black professionals to connect — or risk losing them to other cities, such as Atlanta, Washington, D.C., and New York.

Building a more vibrant black middle class and professional community in Boston may depend on the success of entrepreneurs like Gregory Minott. The 41-year-old, along with business partner Troy Depeiza, both of whom are black, started Dream Collaborative, an architecture and development firm, in 2008. It has 13 employees who design and develop commercial and residential projects with up to \$20 million price tags.

Minott knows white colleagues who vacation with their clients, leveraging those personal relationships to broaden their professional networks. This is difficult for black businessmen like him in a metro region where only 1 percent of companies with paid employees are black-owned.

"You miss that part . . . the kind of peer-to-peer thing," he said.

Minott started the firm to inspire other people of color to enter an industry where black architects make up about 2 percent of the workforce.

He'd like to tap into a wider network, including the fast-growing Seaport, but focuses on projects in predominantly black neighborhoods, such as transforming the old Grove Hall Library into the Freedom House's new community center, using culture competency — his blackness — as a competitive advantage.

For black professionals who live or work outside of the heart of the city's black community, day-to-day life can be very isolating.

For many, this means being the only black person in the room, turning them into the de facto emissary and expert on the entirety of the global black experience, a translator of everything from HBO's "Insecure" to soca music to respectability politics and the Black Power movement.

Also, being the only one in the room often means being constantly on guard, policing your attire, aesthetic, tone, speech, and mannerisms.

For the last decade, 46-year-old Farah Paul has been painfully aware that she is the only black person in management at her downtown office. "That's constantly in my head," she said. "I'll walk into a meeting. I'll scan the room, and that's the first thing I notice."

It's a fact of life that she's become accustomed, but not numb, to. And if there is another black person in the room, there's an automatic, unspoken sense of camaraderie, she said.

"You still maintain that professionalism, but you just feel a bit more comfortable," she said.

The struggle to find a place where black people can connect is part of the reason Farrah Belizaire started LiteWorks, which hosted the event at Scholars, after she graduated from Boston University.

"A lot of people come to Boston with the idea that it's racially unfriendly or that socially, they're going to have to take a loss," the 28-year-old Brockton native said. "So they always place a time limit on how long they stay."

LiteWorks, she said, is about creating the social experience she wanted to have, and she uses technology to help people stay in touch between events.

More than 1,800 people belong to "Boston's Young, Black & Social," a massive group chat Belizaire started using a smart phone app. She also uses Instagram to feature members of the LiteWorks community. Entrepreneurs, engineers, lawyers, artists, and scientists — all black and living in the Greater Boston area.

"It helps reinforce the community aspect that I'm trying to create," she said. "Here, you have to be a little bit proactive."

Part 2: A Brand New Boston, Even Whiter than the Old

By Andrew Ryan, The Boston Globe

To read online, visit: <http://apps.bostonglobe.com/spotlight/boston-racism-image-reality/series/seaport/>

Imagine a fresh start — a chance for Boston to build a new urban neighborhood of the future, untouched by the bigotry of the past.

Start with a swath of nearly 1,000 acres, where rotting railroad piers and asphalt parking lots had lain fallow for generations. Invest more than \$18 billion in public money to create some of America's most valuable property. Envision a seaside neighborhood that city planners said would be for all Bostonians.

And what happened? One of the city's whitest neighborhoods was born.

In Boston's thriving Seaport, the pre-dawn joggers are almost all white. The morning rush of commuters — lawyers, accountants, scientists, and financiers — includes very few black faces. The same whiteness dominates night life at the Envoy Hotel's rooftop bar, such restaurants as Strega Waterfront and Babbo Pizzeria e Enoteca, bowling at Kings Dining & Entertainment, and the yoga and exercise classes out on Seaport Common.

How white? This white: Lenders have issued only three residential mortgages to black buyers in the Seaport's main census tracts, out of 660 in the past decade. The population is 3 percent black and 89 percent white, with a median household income of nearly \$133,000, the highest of any Boston ZIP code, according to recent US census estimates.

But what happened in the Seaport is not just the failure to add a richly diverse neighborhood to downtown. It is also an example of how the city's black residents and businesses missed out on the considerable wealth created by the building boom. This is a city in which blacks are almost a quarter of the population, and their tax dollars were part of what helped jump-start the new Seaport.

"It is a brand-new neighborhood and it's not diverse," said Darryl Settles, a real estate developer and restaurateur, who is African-American. "I don't know one person of color that has made any money from the development of the Seaport. Not one."

The Spotlight Team scrutinized the Seaport in its examination of whether Boston still deserves its reputation as an inhospitable place for blacks. Despite the vision decades ago by the city's top development official as a place "for all Bostonians" to reconnect with the waterfront, the Seaport has become like an exclusive club created, frequented, and populated almost exclusively by the white and the wealthy.

The Seaport offered the potential to do more than build glass towers with harbor views. After decades of government investment, it offered a chance to build something not just new, but different. It

offered a chance to make inclusivity a real priority by pushing for diverse development teams and businesses that reached beyond the clubby world of Boston's traditional powerbrokers to share prosperity.

Consider the predicament faced by a prominent local black investment manager when Boston hosted the National Association of State Treasurers' conference in September. He wanted to show off the city's hot new neighborhood to a diverse contingent of officials from across the country, but he did not want them to be the only people of color in a restaurant or bar.

"I asked around to my younger friends and I couldn't find any place" in the Seaport, said Ron Homer, a former chief executive officer of the Boston Bank of Commerce, who ultimately took the group to Slade's Bar & Grill in Roxbury. "That wouldn't happen in New York or Chicago or [Washington,] D.C. or Atlanta. The Seaport reflects where the wealth and demographics of Boston are."

Diversity was never a real priority, and now some black leaders say the neighborhood has perpetuated the racial and economic segregation that have always bedeviled Boston. The Seaport's whiteness is not the result of overt prejudice, they say, but rather a symptom that indicates Boston has not addressed systemic issues involving race. Billions of dollars in public investment offered leverage to push harder for inclusion, but some believe government officials squandered that chance to enrich all Bostonians, including black residents.

"You want people to have opportunities to literally create wealth so they aren't just working down there, they are buying down there, they own the businesses that are down there, they are part of the DNA of the place," said M. David Lee, a prominent African-American architect. "They add interest and fresh ideas and music and cuisine. It would be richer because of the racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity.

"It could be," Lee said, "a whole new way of thinking about Boston."

A PRICEY NEIGHBORHOOD

There is more than one explanation for why so few black people are seen on Seaport Boulevard.

The Seaport is a hard-to-reach peninsula far from the region's black populations. Lousy public transportation there exacerbates the problem in a neighborhood served predominantly by the Silver Line hybrid bus.

Parking in the Seaport can cost \$30 for three hours when shoppers can park for free, for example, at another new development, Somerville's Assembly Row, which is often more diverse than the Seaport.

The dearth of blacks in the Seaport also reflects the jobs that have taken root in the new district. Boston's traditional industries there, including investment services, law, and accounting, all struggle with diversity. Black workers may be even scarcer in such life science and high-tech firms as Vertex Pharmaceuticals and LogMeIn that give the Seaport cachet as the "Innovation District."

In those booming industries, diversity is often marked not by blacks, but by international workers. Cambridge's Kendall Square, the region's first innovation hub, faces the same challenge. Nationally black employees account for 7 percent of high-tech workers and they are more likely to be technicians at the lower end of the pay scale, according to 2014 data from the US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

Another explanation for the Seaport's lack of diversity is economic. Condominium and apartment prices are sky high. Blame expensive land, high labor costs, new construction, often breathtaking city and water views, and the proximity to Logan International Airport, which imposes strict limits blocking construction of taller buildings in the Seaport that could pack in more units.

Boston does push big developers to build affordable housing, but there are nuances. Developers can satisfy the requirements by writing checks to a housing fund or building lower-priced apartments and condominiums in nearby neighborhoods where land costs less. In the past decade, 9 percent of the about 5,800 new units in the Seaport were designated for people with moderate incomes.

A two-bedroom apartment in the Seaport can rent for more than \$5,000 a month and cost more than \$2 million to buy. That's far beyond the reach of most people in Greater Boston, especially the region's black residents. A 2015 report by the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston and a Duke University researcher found that home equity and other assets — minus mortgages and other debts — gave white families a median net worth of \$247,500. For African-American, non-immigrant households, the figure was \$8.

Bostonians of all races have been priced out of the new neighborhood, said Mayor Martin J. Walsh, who added that he was “not defending the Seaport.”

“The Seaport is this glaring area” that lacks diversity found elsewhere in the city, Walsh said. “There are some black people that feel that they just haven’t been part of it.”

Government can exert influence through zoning, tax breaks, and other incentives, though officials say they had limited control over the evolution of the Seaport as market forces took hold. The city’s top development official, Brian P. Golden, said the Seaport had originally been envisioned as a more residential neighborhood, but investors showed strong interest in commercial development.

“Do I wish that was a more diverse neighborhood reflective of the city and society as a whole? Absolutely,” said Golden, director of the Boston Planning and Development Agency. “But we’ve been using our limited tools to nurture economic development over there for the last 20 years to make sure those benefits are felt in lots of direct and indirect ways throughout the city.”

He noted that while the \$18 billion in public investment has not created a racially inclusive waterfront, it has brought jobs, tax payments, and other benefits to “a huge swath of Bostonians.”

Even for blacks who have the money, the Seaport seems to have a clear target audience in marketing pitches that feature few black faces. Advertisements for the luxury condominiums and apartments target empty nesters from the suburbs and often feature well-tanned, graying white men standing on a balcony, relaxing on a sailboat, or urging potential residents to come “live with distinction.”

The Seaport’s identity as Boston’s new luxury brand marks an extraordinary turn for an industrial expanse where it seemed for decades that development would never take hold. Court battles scuttled grand proposals, large landowners let seaside plots sit idle as parking lots, and the Great Recession a decade ago stopped construction cold.

“On a superficial level, what are you complaining about? There are nice shiny buildings, jobs are being created, and taxes are being paid,” said Armando Carbonell of the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy. “But it raises an important question for any city that is in the Boston, San Francisco, New York mode of success right now. That is, how is that success being shared with the entire population of the city?”

A HISTORY OF PUBLIC INVESTMENT AND A LONG WAIT

Capitalism may have fueled the current demand for million-dollar condominiums, but the Seaport’s history is more complicated than free market prices. Like so much of Boston, a large share of the land began as clam flats and tidal marshes, and public money was used to transform it.

In 1869, the state Legislature voted to commit \$5 million -- in what today would be an estimated \$97 million -- in government bonds to subsidize an effort by railroad companies to fill clam flats and build wharves. It eventually became a sprawling railroad yard that moved primarily coal from ocean liners to freight trains bound for Hartford, New Haven, New York, and Philadelphia.

A decline accelerated after World War II, and by the early 1960s, the land became home to Anthony’s Pier 4, a popular waterfront restaurant. It sat in an empty expanse of parking lots and rotting wharfs that became known for failed real estate deals and gangland shootings.

Government interceded again. Taxpayers cleaned the filthy harbor (\$4.7 billion), constructed a tunnel through the neighborhood to the airport (\$12 billion), built a sprawling convention center (\$850 million), extended the Silver Line (\$601 million), and built a federal courthouse (\$223 million). At least \$200 million more in property tax breaks and other financial incentives encouraged construction of office towers and hotels.

Two decades ago city planners envisioned a vibrant Seaport evolving “into a true neighborhood with families,” according to a July 28, 2000, letter from the Boston Redevelopment Authority to the Fan Pier Land Company. They described the new Seaport as “a vibrant urban waterfront.”

“The BRA is committed to making the South Boston Waterfront the city’s next great neighborhood,” read the letter from the redevelopment authority director, Mark Maloney, who described the creation of “residences, offices, hotels, and shops as well as open parks and access to the waterfront for all Bostonians.”

It may now be flourishing, but for a long time the Seaport was no sure bet. Buildings took decades to rise. In 1986 the World Trade Center became a pioneer. More than a decade later came the Seaport Hotel and the new federal courthouse. Other buildings followed slowly, from Manulife tower to the Institute of Contemporary Art.

The surge of construction offered promise, but the financial crash of 2008 halted almost all optimism. Projects were delayed. City Hall then allowed Fan Pier developer Joseph Fallon to postpone a \$4.5 million affordable housing payment because Fallon said, according to a December 2010 letter, “the housing market has collapsed, and financing for new construction of condominium units has disappeared.”

But as the economy emerged from the Great Recession, the Seaport regained momentum. Tax breaks continued at developments like a Fan Pier headquarters for Vertex.

Vertex's 2011 groundbreaking epitomized black Bostonians' experience in the Seaport. The two-tower project was spurred, in part, by millions in state and city incentives. At the time, it was the largest private sector construction project in America.

Then-Mayor Thomas M. Menino hailed it as a historic step in creating a dynamic waterfront because, “for too long this piece of land was just an aspiration.” A photograph taken that day shows 18 people hoisting a shovelful of dirt for the ceremonial groundbreaking. Only two people in the photograph appear to be black. One is former governor Deval Patrick, who described the project as a symbol of the transformation of Massachusetts' new economy.

But there were few black people involved in the development of the building or the leadership of the company — a common story across the Seaport. Management at the Fallon Company does not appear to include any blacks or African-Americans, according to a review of trade publications and online employment profiles. The Fallon Company declined to comment and did not disclose demographic data for its employees.

None of the 21 companies on the development team — engineers, curtain wall consultants, architects, elevator specialists — had black ownership or black executives in leadership, according to a November review of company websites.

Vertex did not appear to have any black executives on its 18-member leadership team or serving on its nine-member board, according to a review of the company's website, trade publications, and online employment profiles. Vertex declined to provide detailed demographic data, but a spokeswoman said last week their web site does not reflect a black executive who was promoted in October.

Seaport developers acknowledge that the new neighborhood would not exist without billions in public investment, but they contend that sky-high costs for land, materials, and construction labor necessitate the neighborhood's luxury prices. Inadequate public transportation has required underground parking garages, pushing prices even higher.

Projects carry tremendous financial risk, developers said, and investors demand that architecture and engineering firms have proven track records. The building boom, they also said, has created tens of thousands of jobs that have benefited African-Americans and other people of color.

Developer John B. Hynes III put the neighborhood's diversity on par with other tony neighborhoods like the Back Bay but said it was “not an unfair observation” that the Seaport lacked blacks.

“There's not intent or any of that,” said Hynes, who initiated the massive Seaport Square project. “Why aren't there more minorities buying into the area? The short answer is because they're priced out. Why don't we get them to different [income] levels? Well that's a question I don't have an answer for.”

CREATING WEALTH PREDOMINANTLY FOR WHITES

Development nationally is an overwhelmingly white industry, but high-powered black developers do exist in other cities. Some of the best known are New York's R. Donahue Peebles, Chicago's Quintin E. Primo III, and Harvard Business School graduate Kenneth Fearn of Los Angeles.

In Boston, the teams assembled by Fallon and the other big builders are overwhelmingly white — engineers, land surveyors, traffic consultants, lawyers, realtors, interior designers, public relations firms, commercial brokers, and permitting specialists. Almost no blacks hold leadership roles in Boston's construction unions or at the general contractors that have built the Seaport.

Look, for example, at the Watermark Seaport, a \$126 million development completed in April 2016 on Seaport Boulevard with 346 luxury rental high-rise apartments and modern lofts. The project owners — Skanska and Twining Properties — have no black people on their management teams, according to the companies.

The corporate leadership of the architecture firm is entirely white men. There are no black faces in leadership pictured on company websites at the project's five engineering firms.

The Globe could not find a single black senior executive at any of the 14 firms on the project team. That included the landscape architect, acoustic consultant, elevator consultant, and lighting consultant.

John Moriarty & Associates, a construction firm, has built a significant part of the Seaport. The firm's namesake, John Moriarty, said he cares about diversity and has forged a recent partnership with Greg Janey, the black owner of a smaller construction firm. But Moriarty said he also understands why Seaport investors return to the same firms for project after project.

"If you're going to spend \$500 million, are you going to do it with somebody who has done it before? Or are you going to do it with somebody who is just learning?" Moriarty asked. "Of course you're going to do it with somebody who has a track record and your investors can feel comfortable with."

Boston City Hall often tussles with developers over design, height, open space, and parking. But the Boston Planning and Development Agency — which has no black staffers in leadership — does not make a point of pushing for inclusive development teams. Often the same firms get tapped for project after project.

"None of us have really gotten any work down there," said Lee, the architect, although his firm did help design the Manulife building nearly 20 years ago. "There's no pressure for it. No one is saying, 'Where's the diversity on your team?' Without that kind of pressure, it doesn't happen."

The city has achieved some success in diversifying the building trades, although the ironworkers, electricians, and other construction workers still skew disproportionately white. For more than three decades, a Boston law has required that at least 25 percent of construction hours on major developments go to people of color — a standard Mayor Walsh increased in January to 40 percent. Contractors can face financial penalties for failing to comply, although the city has not levied a fine since 2011.

A mayoral spokeswoman said the new law makes it easier to institute penalties, but the city's ultimate goal is to work with developers and contractors to create "a more diverse and equitable workforce."

In the Seaport, construction workers have logged nearly 9 million work hours since 2006, earning hundreds of millions of dollars. On average, contractors met the old minimum of 25 percent for construction workers of color who were black, Latino, or Asian, according to a Globe analysis of data collected by the city.

But even the 25 percent minimum threshold still left an imbalance in a city where white residents make up less than half the population but perform 75 percent of the construction work. A Globe analysis found that for every hour of employment for a black construction worker, a white construction worker got nearly a full day's work.

SOME SIGNS OF POTENTIAL

Massport and L. Duane Jackson are trying to make a difference in the Seaport.

He is a black real estate investor with advanced architectural and city planning degrees from MIT. Despite his local stature and the fact he's lived here for nearly a half century, Jackson still does not consider Boston his home. He travels — New York, Miami, Philadelphia — to get his cultural fix because, he said, "there isn't an affinity for me here in Boston."

Too often he has felt the sting of prejudice, most painful when the targets were his sons, both of whom were wrongly detained years ago in separate incidents by local police, Jackson said. Both of his boys are grown and have forged successful careers far from Boston.

Jackson serves on the board of the Massachusetts Port Authority, which owns big swaths of land in the Seaport. He initiated a sweeping new policy that won unanimous support: Alongside design and financing, diversity now represents 25 percent of an evaluation score for contract and development bids. Instead of setting a minimum benchmark for construction workers, the agency emphasized firms owned by women and people of color.

"You're talking about a city that has a history and legacy of racial bias, but I believe that there are a fair amount of good businessmen who want to work collaboratively and collectively to achieve goals larger than just a return on investment," Jackson said. "The more we change the public perspective and perception of Boston, particularly as a place to do business . . . African-Americans and Latinos [will] feel more welcome here."

The first project won approval this spring: a \$550 million, 1,000-plus room Omni hotel with a development team brimming with black investment teams and firms. The emphasis on diversity pushed

executives outside their normal networks and formed new alliances. One partnership has already led to new deals between the Moriarty and Janey construction firms.

"There's only one bullet in the chamber," Jackson said. "That is the public sector's willingness to take this on as a fight for economic parity. That's the game changer."

Black Bostonians have found welcoming corners of the Seaport. The Venezuela ceviche bar La Casa de Pedro draws a multicultural crowd and so can the Lawn on D and special events at the Institute of Contemporary Art. A black-owned barbership recently opened. In a neighborhood still pockmarked by undeveloped parking lots, potential remains to infuse the Seaport with the diversity reflecting a modern Boston.

"It has to be a real priority on the side of owners and decision-makers," said Daren Bascome, who is black and founder of Boston-based Proverb, a company that helps cities, cultural institutions, and commercial real estate firms create a sense of place. "If you want something that feels hip and urban and cosmopolitan, you really do want a broad cross-section of occupants in those buildings."

Like all of America's largest cities, Boston has become less segregated in recent decades. But growing Western metropolises like Phoenix, San Diego, Seattle, and Houston have become even more integrated as the urban area expanded and new neighborhoods formed, according to census data analyzed by the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston.

Geography makes Boston's Seaport unique, and national comparisons can be difficult. In Washington, D.C., District Wharf draws a diverse crowd to the banks of the Potomac River. Mission Bay in San Francisco has large shares of apartments for low- and moderate-income residents. In Newark, the Powerhouse Arts District has struggled to retain its identity and remain affordable because of its proximity to Manhattan.

"A lot of cities like Boston that consider themselves global cities are competing for the global 1 percent," said Penn Loh of Tufts University's Department of Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning. "Boston could lose its soul as a place for regular, working people of all colors."

On a summer-like night in late September, the Boston Pops Brass Quintet readied their instruments on a small stage in Seaport Common. The new public space had finally come to life as people gathered on blankets spread over patches of grass. The crowd numbered roughly 175 and only six appeared to be black. An announcer on stage introduced the quintet and said, "Thank you to WS Development for turning this mud flat into a beautiful neighborhood."

The next night, guests sipped sparkling rosé and India pale ale as music echoed from dueling DJs on two expansive, fourth-floor decks. It was the grand opening for the Seaport's two new apartment high rises: The Benjamin — as in Boston native Benjamin Franklin — and its hipper next-door neighbor, the VIA.

The side-by-side luxury buildings — which house 832 apartments, including 96 for moderate income renters — offer residents expansive fourth-floor common areas that are like private clubs above the city. Picture a swimming pool, outdoor fire pits, and more.

The white-gloved concierges were predominantly black, but almost all attendees at the opening were white. At the Benjamin's roof deck party, a reporter counted 12 black people among 185 guests.

One of the black attendees was David Brown, a 24-year-old Army reservist from Hyde Park who has watched the buildings take shape from his job across the street at Capital One.

The modern look of the buildings impressed Brown, who said he liked the posh amenities and sweeping skyline views. One touch particularly struck Brown: three hip-hop dancers performed outside the buildings as guests arrived. It made the event feel more inviting, Brown said, like nobody was stuck up.

"I can see myself living there," Brown said a few days later. "The prices are kind of crazy, but with a lot of hard work and dedication, someday."

Part 3: A Color Line Persists, in Sickness as in Health

By Liz Kowalczyk, The Boston Globe

To read online, visit: <https://apps.bostonglobe.com/spotlight/boston-racism-image-reality/series/hospitals/>

Patients fly in from all over the country to get care at Massachusetts General Hospital. Yet, most black Bostonians don't travel the five to 10 miles from their neighborhoods to take advantage of the hospital's immense medical resources. Just 11 percent of Bostonians admitted to the city's largest hospital are black, far less than its peers.

The picture is similar at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, one of the world's top oncology centers. Nearly 2 in every 5 white Boston residents diagnosed with cancer are treated there, but, among black residents with the disease, it's 1 in 5.

Across town, meanwhile, white residents of the South End are more likely than black residents to leave the neighborhood for inpatient care rather than go to nearby Boston Medical Center, once a public hospital. Blacks account for half of Boston patients at the former Boston City Hospital -- by far the most of any hospital in the city.

Though the issue gets scant attention in this center of world-class medicine, segregation patterns are deeply imbedded in Boston health care. Simply put: If you are black in Boston, you are less likely to get care at several of the city's elite hospitals than if you are white.

The reasons are complex. More whites live near Mass. General. Certain lower-cost health insurance plans generally don't pay for care at Harvard Medical School's high-priced academic medical centers, including Dana-Farber and MGH. And some blacks are uncomfortable at mostly white institutions — or those institutions may not make them feel welcome — a divide compounded by a dearth of black physicians.

All of this creates likely disadvantages for blacks, who suffer far worse health overall than whites because of poverty and environmental reasons — a gap city planners recently said is persistent and growing. Some black leaders worry that blacks are handicapped because they don't have, or don't believe they have, the same array of health care choices.

"People in our own backyard should be able to utilize this resource," said Dr. Christopher Lathan, one of the few black oncologists at Dana-Farber.

As part of its examination of whether Boston deserves its reputation as inhospitable to blacks, the Spotlight Team probed the forces driving segregation patterns in health care. The team obtained patient discharge and hospital employment data not generally available to the public, created databases, interviewed national researchers, and spoke to more than 50 black Bostonians about their health care experiences, and the conclusions were inescapable:

Despite a decade of intense and in some cases successful efforts by city leaders and high-ranking hospital officials to improve health care for minorities, certain patterns of segregation remain stubbornly entrenched, threatening to undermine the region's mission of equitable care for everyone.

Massachusetts' first-in-the-nation law mandating health insurance coverage, designed to increase equity in medical care, appears to have created greater — not less — hospital segregation, according to a scholarly paper published last year. The law increased the number of blacks with health insurance, and with that, potential access to a broader array of hospitals.

But they did not leave the institutions that have historically welcomed minorities, including Boston Medical Center. The concentration of minorities actually increased at these institutions, according to the paper.

"African-Americans in Boston are loyal to the old Boston City, because it was the hospital that served them when no one else would," said Dr. Karen Lasser, who works at BMC and was the lead author.

Sometimes that loyalty is reinforced by experience. A young mother out for a walk with her toddler on a September afternoon said she was born at BMC and remained a faithful patient until she moved to Charlestown two years ago. Suffering from flu symptoms one night, she took the bus to the closest hospital: Mass. General.

There, the only other black person in the room was an inebriated man, said Monique, who did not want the Globe to print her last name. And she felt white staff treated the white patients more warmly than they did her. "I am out of my comfort zone," she thought.

Officials at Mass. General, nationally known for its efforts to reduce disparities in health care, said in a written statement that hospital surveys show black and Hispanic patients feel they are treated the same as whites. Given the country's history of discrimination, blacks may distrust the health care system and "even a seemingly small and subtle issue can be perceived as unfair and discriminatory," according to the statement e-mailed by spokeswoman Peggy Slasman.

Indeed, stories of poor treatment while getting medical care are strikingly common among blacks. Eleven percent of black Bostonians reported being mistreated by health care professionals because of their race in the city's health care survey in 2013, compared to 2.5 percent of white residents. Those numbers have barely budged over a decade.

Public health officials agree that one way to mediate this distrust is to hire more black physicians. But recruiting black medical professionals to the city has proved to be challenging, even at BMC, partly due to the city's reputation rooted in events such as court-ordered busing in the 1970s.

"Those historic events that have occurred are still lingering in people's minds," said Dr. Thea James, a black doctor at BMC.

DECIDING WHERE TO GO

People tend to seek routine medical care close to home, so it's not surprising that Mass. General, near the largely white and wealthy Beacon Hill neighborhood, has many white patients. It's also a statewide referral center, with 70 percent of its patients coming from areas of Massachusetts outside Boston. And its health centers tend to be in or near Hispanic communities.

In the same way, it makes sense that Boston Medical Center, near large black populations in Roxbury and Dorchester, would treat many blacks.

But a Globe analysis of hospital discharges by where patients live shows that geography alone does not explain where they go. Even among residents of the neighborhoods that surround Mass. General — the Back Bay, Beacon Hill, Charlestown, East Boston, the North End, and the West End — whites were admitted to the hospital at twice the rate of blacks.

Or take the Fenway. More than one-third of patients in that neighborhood who were hospitalized over a five-year period went to nearby Brigham and Women's Hospital or Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center. But when they went to another hospital in the city, whites most often went to Mass. General, while blacks most often headed for Boston Medical Center.

Similar patterns can be seen with the two Boston hospitals owned by Steward Health Care: Blacks citywide tend to go to Carney Hospital in Dorchester, while whites are more likely to go to St. Elizabeth's Medical Center, the company's flagship teaching hospital in Brighton.

To uncover these neighborhood patterns, the Globe analyzed hospital discharge data by Boston ZIP code, comparing each hospital's share of white patients and black patients. The Globe obtained data for fiscal years 2011 through 2015 for nine Boston hospitals from the Center for Health Information and Analysis, a state agency responsible for collecting and analyzing Massachusetts health care data. One caveat: zip codes don't match neighborhoods exactly.

When looked at citywide, the data show that black Bostonians are more than three times as likely to get care at Boston Medical Center and nearly twice as likely to go to Carney as whites. About 43 percent of Boston patients at Carney are black.

Boston Medical Center, the primary teaching hospital for Boston University School of Medicine, is considered a good hospital by most measures, but in Boston, because of the competition, it survives in the shadow of the Harvard institutions.

Mass. General, meanwhile, is the mirror image: Whites are four times as likely to be admitted than blacks, though the hospital points out that it treats a larger number of Hispanic patients than black patients. Hispanics make up 16 percent of its outpatient primary care visits, for example, many at its community health centers in Revere and Chelsea.

Massachusetts Eye and Ear, next door to Mass. General, also sees a lower percent of black patients from Boston — 16 percent in its outpatient clinics — than the city population overall, according to data provided by the hospital.

At Dana-Farber, which provides mostly outpatient care, the hospital provided internal analysis to the Globe that also showed disparities. Overall, 83 percent of its patients are white and just 5 percent black. About half Dana-Farber's 59,900 patients last year came for second opinions, seeking a review of their doctor's original treatment plan.

Boston is far from the only city facing racially segregated health care, and its patterns appear to be far from the worst. In fact, some of Boston's Harvard-affiliated teaching hospitals — the Brigham, Beth Israel Deaconess, and Boston Children's Hospital — don't appear to show the same racial imbalance, perhaps because they're near black neighborhoods. At least 30 percent of Boston patients at all three are black, a higher percentage than the city's black population as a whole, according to state data.

And a national study two decades ago ranked Massachusetts overall as having the 17th most segregated hospitals in the country.

Dr. Steffie Woolhandler, a longtime Boston physician, said she spent most of her career “criticizing the Boston teaching hospitals because they had effectively gotten the affluent white patients into one system and the minority patients in another system.”

This was especially troubling since those hospitals, including the elite Harvard institutions, are nonprofits that receive substantial tax breaks.

But when Woolhandler recently moved to New York City, she was shocked by “how much worse the situation was” in that city. It appeared that poor and minority patients were crowded into New York's network of public hospitals, she said, while well-off whites took advantage of the many academic medical centers.

A study she conducted with colleagues found that, indeed, black patients in Boston have better access to academic medical centers than in New York — mainly because of Boston Medical Center. If not for BMC, the researchers found, Boston and New York offered similarly unbalanced access.

“What we're seeing here has kind of played out nationwide,” said Jonathan Jackson, a black neuroscientist at Mass. General and director of community outreach and engagement for the Lazarex-MGH Cancer Care Equity Program.

The data, of course, do not explain why patients go where they do.

Lathan, one of eight black doctors out of 359 employed by Dana-Farber, spends two days a month working at Whittier Street Health Center in Roxbury as part of the hospital's outreach to underserved neighborhoods. There, he has learned a lot about why more black patients don't seek out care at major cancer centers such as Mass. General and Dana-Farber.

The health care system's labyrinth of rules and unyielding bureaucracy create high bars for even the most sophisticated and well-educated patients. The challenge of seeking care at Mass. General or Dana-Farber can seem overwhelming.

Depending on insurance, you may be able to call these hospitals and make an appointment, or you may need a referral from a primary care doctor. And if your doctor works at a community health center with a close relationship with Boston Medical Center, you will likely be sent there.

For many blacks, there is “a perception of a hurdle,” Lathan said. “I don't think I can go there. Am I going to be allowed to go there?’ When patients get a diagnosis of cancer and they are in the western suburbs, they say, ‘You know what I am going to do? I am going to go into town and get a second opinion.’

“It's a very Balkanized city,” he said.

OLD TURF LINES ENDURE

Some of today's segregation patterns reflect the invisible hand of a referral system that dates back five decades.

In the late 1960s, Boston became one of the first cities to develop a network of community health centers to treat poor and working-class residents — a largely successful and enduring initiative that also contributed to the separation of health care in the city.

More than half of the city's 22 health centers today are racially imbalanced — in part because Boston's neighborhoods remain somewhat racially segregated.

Fifty years ago, the administration of Mayor Kevin White pushed the city's well-off teaching hospitals to divide up the city and financially support health centers in their districts.

Boston City Hospital took many minority neighborhoods, while Mass. General got nearby and largely white Charlestown and the North End.

“When I talk to health center directors, many of whom are people of color, and their boards, they all say the same thing. They pride themselves on reflecting the needs of the population,” said James Hunt, president of the Massachusetts League of Community Health Centers. “Which is different than saying you are a certain race, you go to this health center. It's not that way at all.”

These divisions reverberate in other ways, too, as health center doctors are more likely to refer to the hospitals with which they have relationships. Dana-Farber treats 44 percent of Hispanic Bostonians with cancer, for example, which likely speaks to the power of its connections to community health centers in Jamaica Plain.

The long-ago divisions also created turf lines that may hinder some hospitals' ability to attract minority patients. Mass. General leaders seem reluctant to step on toes by moving into neighborhoods

dominated by BMC. In a written statement, Mass. General said such a strategy would be “destabilizing and disruptive to existing patient-provider relationships” and “quite disrespectful.”

The hospital has provided \$1.4 million in grant money to the Mattapan Community Health Center over the past 15 years for breast cancer care for black women.

Mass. General leaders said the goal is to reduce the mortality rate by identifying women with cancer earlier and making sure they get appropriate care, which the program has done. But because Mattapan is not an MGH health center, “it was difficult to make more significant inroads there,” in terms of programs, according to Dr. Joseph Betancourt, director of the Mass. General Disparities Solutions Center.

But the forces driving racial segregation patterns in health care go beyond old turf lines, who lives where, and patient preferences. There's also another significant factor at play: money.

Blacks are disproportionately likely to be on Medicaid, called MassHealth, which pays hospitals at a lower rate than private insurers. In a startling sign of income inequality in Massachusetts, 40 percent of non-elderly blacks are on Medicaid — more than twice the rate for whites.

The Harvard teaching hospitals treat a large number of MassHealth patients, given their size, but poor patients account for a much higher percent of patients at Carney and BMC — a hospital that actually seeks out this group.

And MassHealth insurance plans increasingly say they cannot afford to pay for care at Mass. General, the Brigham, and Dana-Farber. Of six Medicaid managed care plans, serving about 800,000 residents, only one — Neighborhood Health Plan — typically pays for care at Mass. General and the Brigham. All are owned by the same company, Partners HealthCare. Only two plans routinely pay for care at Dana-Farber.

This means, for example, that in the middle-class North End, where there are few black residents and most patients have private insurance, the community health center sends people to Mass. General. But at the health center's satellite in a Charlestown low-income housing development, which has a sizeable Medicaid population, many patients are sent across town to BMC.

THE DIFFERENCES AMONG HOSPITALS

In reality, the impact on patients of segregation in the Boston health care system is unknown.

In part, that's because BMC is a good hospital, good enough that James Luisi, chief executive of the North End Waterfront Health, said he is fine with sending his patients there instead of Mass. General.

Azzie Young, who heads the health center in Mattapan, said that equity is because “we don't have the kind of disparities we have in the schools. The quality is good wherever you go.”

And so many factors — rundown housing, exposure to environmental toxins, and poverty — contribute to high rates of disease and death for the city's blacks that it's hard to tease out any harm from access to different health care.

However, it would be a mistake to say there's no difference among hospitals. Consider: U.S. News & World Report ranks Mass. General as the number four hospital in the nation, and Dana-Farber/Brigham and Women's Cancer Center and Mass. Eye and Ear as the fourth best hospitals in cancer and ophthalmology, respectively.

Medicare, the federal health insurance program for the elderly, gives Mass. General four out of five stars overall, compared to three stars for BMC and Carney, the same score as the Brigham and Beth Israel Deaconess. For mortality and complications, MGH is better than the national rate on five measures, BMC on two, and Carney on none. But in areas of patient satisfaction, such as getting help as soon as they wanted, BMC lags. This may speak to tighter resources at a hospital where doctors say there are also long waits to see dermatologists and other specialists. Carney scored worse than both on overall patient satisfaction.

Another difference is in cancer treatments.

When it comes to innovative care, Dana-Farber and the other Harvard teaching hospitals offer more options to patients.

Clinical trials test standard therapy against promising, yet unproven, therapy. Along with access to potential cutting-edge drugs, patients who enroll in trials generally get closer management and more testing, all highly sought-after benefits that many cancer patients want to exhaust before yielding to a terminal prognosis.

BMC lists seven clinical trials for breast cancer and six for lung cancer on its website, compared to 63 for breast cancer and 45 for lung cancer listed at Dana-Farber across town.

Dr. Ravin Davidoff, senior vice president of medical affairs at Boston Medical Center, said he would welcome Mass. General, the Brigham, and Dana-Farber in the hospital's Medicaid insurance network, but they are too expensive. "It's not realistic for us to pay the prices that are asked at those hospitals," he said.

Mass. General and the Brigham, for example, charge 59 percent more than BMC for the same services, according to the state Health Policy Commission.

"Does it perpetuate the disparities?" asked Davidoff. "It probably does."

Still, he said, BMC is highly experienced at caring for diabetes, high blood pressure, obesity, and other medical conditions more commonly faced by lower-income people, and it has put in place support services, such as a food pantry, that other institutions lack. And, he said, patients at Boston Medical Center get excellent care for common cancers — and are sent to outside specialists for rare or complicated diagnoses.

"For all the high volume cancers, we have incredible expertise and can compete with anybody," Davidoff said.

But differences in where blacks and whites get medical care in Boston have rarely been part of the health care debate — and researchers say it should be. It hasn't been anywhere else, really, according to Dr. Ashish Jha, a health policy professor at the Harvard School of Public Health, who has found that nationally about 5 percent of hospitals care for about 50 percent of blacks.

"Segregated schools and communities get a lot of attention and segregated health care does not," he said. "Part of it is the belief that we can improve these minority-serving institutions so they can provide comparable quality. We don't make the same argument in education."

TOUGH PLACE FOR BLACK DOCTORS

When then-Mayor Thomas Menino convened Boston's leaders and residents in 2004 to develop a plan to address racial disparities in health care, the group heard repeated complaints from minorities about insensitive racial comments from providers and an unwillingness to communicate important medical information. That insensitivity was in part due to a dearth of minority providers, the group concluded.

More than a decade later, a Globe survey of 12 Boston hospitals found that only BMC and Carney match or exceed the national average; 4 percent of doctors are black.

The Globe asked the hospitals to voluntarily report the racial breakdown of their employees. All agreed.

Mass. General and Dana-Farber reported between 2 and 3 percent black physicians, while Mass. Eye and Ear and New England Baptist Hospital each employ one black doctor out of 192 and 34 physicians, respectively. Dana-Farber, Mass. Eye and Ear, Mass. General, Children's, and Tufts have the lowest percent of black employees overall and the lowest percent of black managers.

Executives at three hospitals — BMC, Carney, and Mass. General — said recruiting efforts have been hurt by Boston's reputation as unwelcoming to blacks. "It's hard for us to refute what people feel around them," said Davidoff of BMC. "It's a tough place for black physicians to find colleagues."

The Globe interviewed 50 black Bostonians about where they get their medical care. They said they sought treatment in hospitals across the city for a host of reasons: location, referrals, expertise — and comfort. Time and again, those interviewed said they also found solace when they received care by people who looked like them.

No matter where they go for medical care, many black residents seem deeply distrustful of medicine generally and often mention the country's ugly history of medical experimentation on blacks without their knowledge. And many said they had experienced discriminatory comments or bias.

Shirley Coffey, 78, grew up in the Albany Street housing development, a quick walk to what was then Boston City Hospital. Her childhood did not include visits to a Harvard teaching hospital. "You had to have money to go to the other places, and we didn't have money," she said.

Years ago, her late husband talked her into going to the Brigham. He heard it was newer, cleaner, less crowded. But as she waited in the emergency room, she perceived unfair treatment. White patients who arrived after her got called back to see a doctor sooner, she said. She cooled her heels while the minutes ticked by. Eventually she got up and left.

"I didn't feel comfortable there," Coffey said.

The Brigham said it's confident patients today are treated equally. But decades later, that memory sticks in Coffey's mind.

"There are generations of people who felt powerless to say, 'No, you will not treat me like that,'" said her son Michael Kincade, whose own longtime doctor is at the Brigham and Women's Faulkner Hospital in Jamaica Plain. "Their decisions were based on where they were going to be treated most humanely."

Mass. General president Dr. Peter Slavin spoke to colleagues in Baltimore two years ago, shortly after Freddie Gray suffered fatal spinal injuries in a police van, his pleas for medical attention ignored, sparking protests over police brutality. "The mistrust that people may have for police mirrors the mistrust they feel for the health care system," Slavin told his audience of doctors.

Mass. General was one of the first hospitals to conduct its own internal surveys and analyze quality of care by race, reports it publishes online in part to build trust in minority communities. Those suggest that blacks who do get care at the hospital rate it highly -- though just five percent of MGH's patients overall are black.

In 2004, 21 percent of black patients felt as though the white patient next to them was receiving better care. But when the hospital examined waiting times, for example, it found that they were all the same, Slavin said in his speech.

"When we dug deeper, it turned out that a big part of our patients' experiences were shaped by how they were greeted and engaged by our frontline staff when they first walked into the hospital or an outpatient practice," Slavin told his Baltimore audience, adding that staff training has closed the satisfaction gap.

But some black leaders say Mass. General and the city's other elite hospitals don't do enough to truly make minorities feel welcome.

Jackson, the Mass. General neuroscientist, said doctors often talk to blacks about their medical problems in what patients feel is an accusatory manner: "You are at risk for heart attack or stroke because of the choices you've made, the food you eat, the stress you have." Patients, he said, end up feeling like they "are being made very small."

Sometimes it goes beyond perception.

At the Twelfth Baptist Church in Roxbury this fall, a group of veterans described hearing racially charged comments at a range of medical facilities in recent years, from being referred to as "a big black lady" who could handle extra anesthesia during a dental procedure, to being told "you people eat a lot of fried food, don't you?" when treated for a grease burn.

David Purvis, 64, a master's-level therapist who counsels veterans, saw a doctor at a Veterans Affairs hospital in Jamaica Plain for a checkup this summer and complained of heart palpitations.

"One of his first question was, 'Are you using cocaine?'" Purvis recalled. "I laughed. I told him I didn't, but he ordered a urine test anyway."

Part 4: Lost on Campus, As Colleges Look Abroad

By Nicole Dungca, The Boston Globe

To read online, visit: <http://apps.bostonglobe.com/spotlight/boston-racism-image-reality/series/colleges/>

One day this fall, Rachel Domond, a third-year student at Northeastern University, conducted a counting exercise that has become all too familiar for many African-American students. She sat on the red couches on the second floor of the Curry Student Center and scanned the room for others who looked like her.

It didn't take long to count. It never does.

"I see one black person over there," she said, motioning across the room to a group of about 40 students. "But for the most part, I see white faces, and I see all of these international students."

For many black students in Boston, the word "diversity" is taking on a global, multicultural meaning that has little to do with them. Boston has become a leader in attracting foreign students, but at the same time it lags behind other parts of the country when it comes to enrolling black college students from closer to home.

In this Athens of America, packed with top colleges, the enrollment of African-American students in Greater Boston's universities was less than 7 percent in 2015, notably less than most other major metro areas, according to the most recent federal data on students at every level. Nationally, the average for black enrollment is 11 percent.

At the 10 largest private universities that give this region its renowned reputation in higher education, it was even lower: about 5 percent.

Perhaps most troubling: In some universities, the percentage of African-American student enrollment has barely budged since 1980. Boston University remained at 4 percent at last count in federal data and Harvard University at 5 percent in 2015.

Meanwhile, international recruitment has become Boston-area universities' new growth industry, with those students already representing more than twice the percentage of black students.

The Globe Spotlight Team examined Boston-area universities' enrollment patterns as part of its exploration into why Boston is seen nationally as a city unfriendly to black people. It looked at the role area universities play in educating a critical mass of African-American graduates — people who could, as in other cities, form the next generation of civic and political leadership. It found that Boston-area universities are not producing that critical mass.

The reason? Some area universities do not appear to have shown the will or creativity required to aggressively recruit black students, or simply have not made it the kind of priority that recruiting international students has become. Less easy to measure is whether Boston's high costs, unwelcoming reputation, and scarcity of other black students on campuses here discourage them from the start.

Either way, the city loses.

DIVERSITY OF A DIFFERENT SORT

Students such as Chantel Haigler, 18, question whether her university — Northeastern — has skewed priorities, which only reinforces alienation for the black students whom administrators say they care so much about recruiting and retaining.

Northeastern's enrollment of international students has more than tripled over the past decade. Three in 10 students last year hailed from abroad, with many from China and India who can pay full private tuition.

"The school likes the 'diversity' that gives them the status to claim they're diverse, while getting the money from these students to fund the school the way they need to," said Haigler, a first-year student from New York. "Bringing in more black kids would cost them more money because in the end, many of us can't afford these schools because of institutional issues. So why spend more when you can get diversity and get money at the same time?"

The intense recruitment of international students has always been a touchy subject. Universities say that bringing foreign students into US campuses is part of helping American students adjust to a globalizing workforce, but critics of this view say international students are primarily money-makers for schools.

In an ideal world, there is no reason recruiting international students automatically comes at the cost of black enrollment. But in this era of limited resources, critics still wonder whether there's a connection between the aggressive recruitment efforts for students abroad and the low numbers of black students.

College officials deny aggressive recruitment of international students diminishes a robust commitment to boosting minorities from within the United States and say both goals can be pursued rigorously at the same time.

"It's not a zero-sum game," said Michael Armini, senior vice president at Northeastern. "Recruiting students is important across the US and around the world. One doesn't come at the expense of the other."

But some metrics can raise questions. At Boston University, for example, two admissions officers are dedicated to developing plans for recruiting underrepresented minorities for all undergraduates. Meanwhile, seven people — one director and six admission representatives — are dedicated to international admissions, according to the university's website.

The notion that black people in Boston are getting left behind, even amid growing diversity, bothers such people as Carol Fulp. "We like to think of ourselves as a 'global city' and unless we provide opportunity for all citizens of our city, we're going to lose out to other cities that are even more

progressive and even more diverse," said Fulp, the president of The Partnership, an organization dedicated to supporting a diverse workforce in the city.

While some studies show that Boston has a hard time keeping college graduates of all races — blacks and whites leave at about the same rate — Census data on millennials suggest Boston fares especially poorly in boosting its population of young black adults, graduates or otherwise.

For every black millennial added to the region from 2010 to 2015, more than two whites were added, along with nearly two Asians and more than two Latinos, according to an analysis by William Frey, a demographer at the Brookings Institution, a nonprofit research group in Washington, D.C.

Black students say they are reminded daily of the lack of diversity.

"You start looking at it, and you start saying, 'Are you guys not making an effort? Why aren't more black people coming to BC?' " said Aadon Penny, who graduated from Boston College with an MBA in 2016 and is now in New York. "They advertised the program as so diverse, but the diversity in Boston was so different. They're building up diversity in some ways, but it really doesn't feel that way."

The efforts that schools make to recruit foreign students are substantial. At Northeastern, the university began a "pathways program" to guarantee foreign students admission if they could pass intensive English language classes — and without taking the SATs and ACTs that are required for American students. Harvard administrators took frequent visits to China, where the interest for American college educations had exploded.

Besides a boost in diversity, the increase in international students has meant more full-tuition revenue, because foreign students don't qualify for need-based financial aid at many schools. In contrast, African-American and Latino-American students disproportionately rely on offers of financial aid.

Administrators say they're not just chasing money from international students. In fact, a Harvard spokeswoman said 75 percent of its international undergraduate students receive need-based financial aid.

Northeastern says that in 2016, the school had a number of international students from such countries as Ethiopia and Nigeria, which added to the diversity of the school.

Many black students say they appreciate seeing campuses that are less exclusively white. Northeastern reports that in 2016, its percentage of black students was 5 percent, reversing a downward trend from the latest federal data.

Schools also point out that they've grown their Asian-American and Latino-American populations in recent years. More American students also identify as multiracial, a category that the federal government started counting in 2008. Of Northeastern's American students in 2016, for example, 3 percent were multiracial.

But critics of aggressive international recruitment persist. At a recent conference in Boston, in front of thousands of high school counselors and admissions officers, a professor from the University of Southern California lamented how colleges will "go to the ends of the earth" to recruit star athletes or wealthy international students. But he said they have a limited playbook when it comes to finding more black students, especially those who are not among the most elite minority students with the best grades and SAT scores who are intensely sought after by top schools.

"International students are often full-paying students, and there's an economic incentive for institutions to recruit them," said professor Shaun Harper, who has studied the achievement of black and Latino men in higher education. "It enhances their brand."

CAMPUS CULTURE

Although Boston universities enroll a relatively small percentage of black students, the collective number still reaches into the tens of thousands. Those students — lured by glossy marketing brochures showing ivy-lined campuses full of students of all races laughing on the quad — flow into Boston each fall.

But they soon realize they are part of a small population on campus — one of the reasons that may drive some black students away from enrolling here.

Fresh from their first day of classes this September, freshmen slowly filed into a meeting of the Northeastern Black Student Association in the John D. O'Bryant African-American Institute, named after the first black member of the Boston School Committee. They were there for advice.

After Pictionary and pizza, the new students turned their attention to upperclassmen telling them to reach out to professors, study abroad, and regularly check the online syllabus.

But they were also honest about the subject that united them: What it was like to be black at Northeastern.

They laughed about their favorite barbershops or hair braiders, and the older students hinted at the kind of subtle, offensive comments that would be familiar to any black student: Are you on a sports scholarship? You're really a student here? Do you think medical school is really for you?

Sitting in the front of the room, one junior told them to stay strong together.

"The little microaggressions will eat at you," said Kyumon Murrell, a 21-year-old from Long Island. "And if you don't have that support network, it will crush you."

The Globe spoke to more than four dozen students and alumni from Boston-area schools, and many had similar experiences: While they were grateful for their educations, they felt the isolation of being the only black student in classes, they questioned how to fit in at overwhelmingly white campuses, and they sometimes experienced overt racism that made them ready to leave Boston.

Colleges have long known such issues exist. In 2011, a Boston College survey revealed to administrators that black students, compared to students of other racial groups, were the most dissatisfied with their time at Boston College.

The same survey, an administrator said, revealed that many white students were "tired of talking about diversity."

The lack of black faces isn't apparent just in the student population. At nearly every school in the region, the proportion of black professors is even smaller than its proportion of black students.

At Boston University, Roscoe Giles, an engineering professor who is black, said that black students say it's not uncommon for them to go four years without having a professor that looked like them. At his institution, 2.6 percent of the more than 2,500 full-time instructional staff members were black in 2015, according to federal data.

Giles was part of a 2016 task force that focused on diversifying the faculty, and its final report described a culture that included "subtle vestiges and overt expressions of racism and ethnic discrimination" and noted how the region's high cost of living could hurt retention.

"When there is low representation of yourself, it becomes hard for people who are coming in and considering coming to widely identify that the conditions exist for them to be successful," he said.

Some black students worry that they're losing spaces and traditions that have helped them adjust. Sernah Essien, a Boston University senior in charge of its black student union, lamented that the university didn't hold its annual reception for black students this year. Instead, the school invited various multicultural organizations, the College Republicans, and several fraternities to a larger group event. A Boston University spokesman didn't say why such changes were made.

Others struggle with blatant racism. At Boston College this fall, hundreds of students rallied on the campus after someone defaced a sign to say "Black Lives Don't Matter." And at nearby Salem State University, an anonymous vandal wrote a message telling a black person to die, using the n-word.

Melissa Potter Forde, who left New York City to attend Northeastern, recalls being taken aback when a classmate handing out Valentines asked her about whether she would want one with a "colored" Disney princess on it. She remembered waiting in vain for cabs after nights out, only to be told that many of them don't pick up black people. It was far from the carefree sanctuary for college kids that she had imagined.

"I had the impression that it was this liberal city and that the race relations were on par with Los Angeles or New York," said Forde, who graduated from Northeastern in 2006, but finished her last semester in New York. "But I realize there's still a time of evolution that's still taking place in the city. Racism was a big part of why I left."

BEST PRACTICES

There are plenty of reasons Boston-area colleges must work harder than schools in other regions to attract African-American students. For starters, Boston has a smaller black population to draw from, compared to other cities. It's expensive to live here. Boston's national reputation does not help. Nor does the dearth of black students and faculty on campus.

Yet, with a focused effort and a little creativity, drastically increasing the proportion of black students is certainly possible. Other metro areas, particularly those with larger black populations, have demonstrated how it can be done.

Federal statistics show that African-American students make up about 12 percent of enrollment in universities in the Chicago area; 13 percent in Philadelphia; 22 percent in Washington, D.C.; 20 percent in Miami; and 32 percent in Atlanta. Of the top 10 metro areas in the country, only Los Angeles has a smaller proportion than Boston. It has 6 percent black enrollment, one percentage point lower than our region.

At least one selective private school in Massachusetts has found a way to match those numbers. Amherst College, a small liberal arts institution with about 1,850 undergraduates about two hours from Boston, counts black students as nearly 12 percent of its student body.

While Amherst educates far fewer students than larger universities do, its minority recruitment efforts stand out. Officials there attribute some of their success to longstanding generous policies that have eliminated loans for all students who need financial aid. But it's more than money: Officials say they also pay for travel for many prospective students to visit the campus, even before they apply, and they make sure to visit many low-income and majority-minority high schools regularly.

Some Boston-area colleges are using some of those techniques, to good advantage, particularly at the undergraduate level.

Part of the growth of Boston University's African-American enrollment in its freshman class this past year — to 4.3 percent — resulted from a financial aid policy similar to Amherst's: giving enough aid to most low-income undergraduate students to ensure they wouldn't need to take out loans to attend. Tufts and MIT have implemented similar measures.

But that's still a step behind Amherst, which takes away loans for all students on financial aid and largely replaces them with grants. Out of the dozens of four-year colleges in the metro area, only Harvard appears to do the same.

Officials at Harvard were reluctant to comment on its recruitment of black students or its current involvement in a US Department of Justice investigation related to race.

That investigation focuses on whether it has discriminated against Asian-Americans. They directed the Globe to its latest first-year undergraduate figures from this fall, which classified 13.2 percent of the students as black, though that also includes multiracial students. This figure differs from how the federal government reports university racial statistics.

Another step aimed at boosting minority faculty hiring and student enrollment is the appointment of a senior academic administrator with authority for diversity issues. BU took that step this year, appointing a provost for diversity and inclusion. A task force at the university reported that 11 of 16 other similar colleges across the country — including Northeastern — had already done something similar.

Some schools, such as Boston College, also offer summer programs that provide extra tutoring as a way to make sure that students who enter college succeed toward graduation.

But critics say such initiatives won't, on their own, solve recruitment issues. Advocates for more diversity in higher education point to colleges' obsession with national rankings as part of the problem. Overreliance on those rankings can systematically shut out many black students, they say.

In the widely read U.S. News & World Report rankings, standardized test scores, grade point averages, and the percentage of alumni donors are some of the most important criteria for general rankings. Student and faculty racial diversity are not.

Every year, schools continue to rely on the SATs and ACTs as some of the primary gatekeepers for college — even though many black students, disproportionately educated in lower-performing public schools, score below the desired scores required for admission.

The differences are stark: A Brookings Institution study estimated that on the math portion of the SATs, roughly 6 percent of whites and a quarter of Asians who took the test scored at least a 700 out of an 800 scale in 2015.

By comparison, only about 1.7 percent of Latino test-takers are estimated to have done the same. And black students, who made up about 13 percent of test-takers, were even less likely to score that high: About 1 percent scored at least 700, according to estimates.

While some research has pointed to SAT scores predicting college success, one large 2014 study has shown that high school grades can be a more important measure for predicting how well a student will do. The study used data from several schools that no longer require SAT scores for admission — an option that some hope will help more minorities and low-income students get into college.

"The hardest part, by far, is getting them in," said Marvin Loiseau, a former Babson College admissions officer who is now a dean of recruitment at the Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology in Boston.

WHAT'S NEXT

The question is whether universities will make black enrollment more of a priority — and whether, over the next many years, that would help change the view of Boston as an unwelcoming place.

It's no small task. When Avery Bullock, a University of Virginia senior originally from the South, attended a Massachusetts General Hospital program meant to encourage minorities to pursue medicine, she recalled hearing vague warnings about the city from her aunt, who told her to keep racism "in the back of her head."

She kept it mind when she and a group of black friends were thrown out of a jazz club for not buying drinks, she said, even though a white couple hadn't done the same and got to stay. Or when a black physician told her program that he had been called the n-word twice in as many days.

The whole experience made her wary of returning to Boston for medical school, she said.

Meanwhile, many of the black students who have enrolled here say they are working to be heard on campus. This spring at Harvard University, a group of black students organized the first "Black Commencement" across all graduate schools at Harvard University.

Hundreds of black students gathered with friends and family near the law school, clad in dark robes and colorful stoles made of traditional African kente cloth.

Looking out at his peers on a sunny May day for the occasion, Duwain Pinder, a Harvard Business School graduate who spoke at the commencement, candidly talked about his feelings about the shooting death of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Mo. He made people laugh when he said they have all had to explain that Africa isn't a country. And he returned to the "microaggressions" so commonly associated with higher education, black students, and Boston — but this time, there was a tinge of hope.

"We have endured the constant questioning of our legitimacy and our capacity," he said. "And yet, here we are."

He paused, and the black graduates applauded.

Part 7: A Better Boston? The Choice is Ours

By The Boston Globe Spotlight Team

To read online, visit: https://apps.bostonglobe.com/spotlight/boston-racism-image-reality/series/solutions/?et rid=646475661&s_campaign=spotlightrace7:newsletter

On the final day of the series, we look at perhaps the most important topic of all in terms of the image and reality of racism in Boston: possible solutions.

The Spotlight Team set out to examine the degree of truth behind Boston's enduring image as a place inhospitable to blacks. After hundreds of interviews and extensive data analysis, we concluded that even as the city's racial climate is better than before, there remain striking inequities of wealth, opportunity, and clout. Even amid greater tolerance, there are subtle yet powerful racist attitudes, often in systemic forms.

Our reporters write here about ideas heard through the course of their work, from how to navigate racially sensitive conversations to overhauling parts of government itself. There are seven ideas, gleaned from successes that we witnessed or discussed with key people, here and elsewhere, on topics ranging from better workforce diversity to a more contemporary and inclusive marketing image for the city.

The eighth idea is represented by a box that is intentionally left blank. That is our way of signaling that we don't wish to have the final word. We look forward to hearing more ideas and hope that the conversation will continue beyond these pages.

Those who aspire to make Boston a more welcoming place for everyone say companies have to look at themselves.

So we took a close look at The Boston Globe newsroom's record on hiring and promoting minorities.

Like many companies in the region, the Globe has long struggled with diversity issues, both in terms of hiring and in providing news coverage that reflects our fast-changing population.

To its credit, the Globe was one of only three for-profit companies we contacted that agreed to provide detailed diversity data. But the numbers are sobering.

Among the 240 newsroom employees, 83 percent were classified as white, 6 percent black, 5 percent Hispanic, and 6 percent Asian, as of the end of 2016.

The percentage of black workers is slightly less than the makeup of the Greater Boston region for African-Americans, which is 7 percent, and far below the city's, which is 23 percent.

The numbers for managers are worse. Just 4 percent of the newsroom's 72 managers were black — none of them members of the newsroom's top leadership team. Including the Globe's business and production employees, just 2 percent of managers were black as of September, about the same as it was 34 years ago when the Globe published a series raising questions about the lack of black workers in management and other top positions at local firms. The Globe's newsroom numbers mirror results from the 2017 American Society of News Editors survey, which found newsrooms are significantly less diverse than the nation as a whole.

The editor of the Globe, Brian McGrory, said he is committed to undertaking new initiatives to promote more diversity. He said his goal is for the newsroom to reflect at least the demographics of the Greater Boston region.

"We cover our community best when our newsroom reflects our community," he said. "This can be difficult given the challenges our industry faces, but this project has inspired us to redouble our efforts."

McGrory said he will start next year mandating that managers consider at least one minority candidate for all openings and make bonuses partly contingent on recruiting and retaining minority journalists.

He said he will implement a mentorship program early next year to ensure new minority hires get help from seasoned journalists. He will also explore partnerships with college journalism programs to audit the Globe's coverage for fairness in covering minority communities.

In addition, he plans to hire the Robert C. Maynard Institute for Journalism Education, a nonprofit dedicated to promoting diversity in the media, to help train journalists to make sure the paper's coverage is, to the extent possible, free of unconscious racial bias.

Hollis R. Towns, executive editor for the Asbury Park Press, who won a national award for diversity leadership last year and cochairs the American Society of News Editors diversity committee, said many media organizations find it difficult to focus on diversity right now because they face enormous pressure to cut costs.

Martin Reynolds, co-executive director of the Maynard Institute, cautioned that there is no simple fix to making sure a newsroom accurately covers communities of color.

"It is a commitment to a long road," Reynolds said.

--Todd Wallack

Some advice to the city's image makers: Boston's racial diversity needs to be reflected in its tourism websites, promotional videos, and event listings.

Black travelers would be hard-pressed to see themselves reflected in the tourism section of the city's website or that of the Greater Boston Convention and Visitors Bureau, a nonprofit that serves as the primary tourism marketing organization for the region.

There was not a single black person or black cultural event listed on the bureau's homepage in November, and only glimpses of black people — such as a black vendor selling food — in the one-minute, 53-second video featuring Mayor Martin J. Walsh and Governor Charlie Baker.

In the video, Walsh tells the world: "Whenever you want to come visit, get ready for a spirited Boston welcome."

And just who does Boston go out of its way to welcome?

International visitors, if the website is any indication. It features tourism videos in Japanese, Portuguese, Spanish, and Chinese.

The way a city markets itself is about more than dollars and cents, travel experts say. It is also about showcasing what a place values and prioritizes.

David O'Donnell, spokesman for the Greater Boston Convention & Visitors Bureau, said in an e-mail that budget constraints limit the groups that they can target.

"We made the decision to focus on specific themes and international visitors," O'Donnell said, adding that themes included culinary and craft beers, history and heritage, and special Boston event.

He added that the bureau has a multicultural committee, which in addition to African-American history, "promotes Irish Heritage, Native-American Heritage, and LGBT Boston."

Laura Mandala, managing director of a market research firm that published a 2011 study on African-American travel that she is in the process of updating, says, "How one city determines that African-American travelers rise to the top of their priority list and another does not isn't something I can speak to," she said. "What I can say is . . . there's lip service that [diversity] is important, but there aren't dollars being put behind it."

Some cities, such as San Francisco and Philadelphia, are intentional about marketing themselves as diverse cities and places that welcome black travelers.

"In times like these, people are more sensitive to diversity, and we want to show the nature of the destination," said Laurie Armstrong Gossy, spokeswoman for the San Francisco Travel Association.

San Francisco's black population is about 5 percent, compared with Boston's 23 percent. Yet on San Francisco's main tourism website, a one-minute, 12-second video features a diverse array of people — black, white, Latino, Asian, Muslim, Sikh, and gay — promoting the city's #Always Welcome campaign.

"San Francisco doesn't just welcome your differences. We encourage them. We celebrate them," the narrator at the beginning of the video says.

Philadelphia, where African-Americans make up 41 percent of the population, went a step further, actively courting black travelers. The city produced "We Got You: Philly by Tarik," a Web-based travel series, featuring Tarik "Black Thought" Trotter of Grammy Award-winning hip-hop band The Roots.

"We wanted to talk to African-American travelers," said Meryl Levitz, president and chief executive of Visit Philadelphia, adding that cities must invite people, then give them clear reasons to visit. "Cities have started to realize that not everybody feels like they're going to be necessarily welcomed . . . [or] that there'll be stuff they want to do."

But highlighting a city's diversity is about more than fostering good will. Cities leave millions of dollars on the table. Visit Philadelphia said about 11 percent of the more than 42 million annual visitors to Philadelphia are African-American travelers who spend about \$676 million a year.

--Akilah Johnson

Here's a radical solution that could empower more black politicians: Rewrite Boston's city charter to dilute the powerful authority of the mayor's position, an office dominated by a succession of 48 white men since its creation in 1822.

Boston could add new elected offices, creating competing municipal power centers that could give more opportunity for people of color. New York elects a municipal watchdog called a public advocate. Chicago voters elect the city clerk and a city treasurer. Philadelphia and Los Angeles have independently elected fiscal watchdogs.

Even Portland, Ore., elects a city auditor.

Or Boston could confer real power to its City Council. Critics argue that Boston's strong-mayor form of government concentrates so much budgetary and appointment authority in one office that it limits alternative paths to power — and stifles opportunities for new political talent.

By statute, Boston mayors have such a monopoly that an incumbent has not lost in nearly seven decades — and that mayor had been to prison. Twice.

"I believe it is the most powerful political role in the state," said state Representative Russell E. Holmes of Mattapan. "That's why the former mayor kept that job for so long."

The invincibility of Boston mayors is no accident. In a 1909 overhaul of its local constitution, the city adopted the strong-mayor system in part to dilute the strength of a growing minority, the Irish. Boston a century ago had a sprawling, decentralized government dominated by ward bosses like John "Honey Fitz" Fitzgerald. As the ranks of Irish swelled, the Yankee establishment took action, Charlie Tebbetts wrote in a 2004 article in the *Historical Journal of Massachusetts*.

The Yankee establishment revamped government to concentrate almost all power in the mayor's office. The ploy backfired. The establishment's handpicked mayoral candidate, James Jackson Storrow, lost to Honey Fitz, who would become the maternal grandfather of President John F. Kennedy.

Boston's City Council has so little clout that Mayor Walsh's administration did not initially include the council on a 2014 organizational chart mapping out the power structure at City Hall.

Unlike some other major cities, Boston's City Council does not approve the mayor's Cabinet chiefs, have direct authority over zoning, or have broad power over the city's finances. The 13-member body must approve the mayor's budget for the city, but the council cannot increase spending, shift resources among departments, or veto individual line items.

The city councils in Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., and Chicago, among others, have authority beyond Boston's, such as in budget matters and appointments.

Changing Boston's charter would face high hurdles. The governor and state Legislature must approve. Perhaps more important, the mayor would have to be willing to sign off and willingly cede power. In an interview, Walsh dismissed the notion and said changing the charter has nothing to do with the city's race issues.

"If you're a councilor, there's ways of working the system," he said. "The council has all ample opportunity to work with the mayor or work against the mayor."

--Andrew Ryan

Located in an overwhelmingly white county two hours away from Boston, Amherst College might not seem like the ideal haven for minority students — or one that has any lessons for corporate America.

But the small liberal arts college has long been known for its success attracting diverse students: 12 percent of its students were black in 2015, according to federal data.

Katie Fretwell, Amherst's dean of admissions and financial aid, said some of that derives from a generous financial aid policy. But Fretwell said a huge factor is expanding its recruitment to institutions that are often overlooked, such as public high schools with largely low-income and minority populations.

"We're going to where they are," she said. "We know talent exists everywhere, and we reach pockets of talent that weren't looking at us."

She described Amherst recruiters who visited some small charter schools year after year, even if they had no luck enrolling students at first. But once one student from the charter school does enroll at Amherst, she said, recruiting becomes that much easier: That student's younger classmates start to see Amherst as a place where they can flourish.

The same aggressive outreach could also be put to work in the business world.

When there's a job opening, people often turn to their immediate networks, according to Carol Fulp, the president and chief executive of the Partnership, an organization dedicated to supporting a diverse workforce in Boston.

But Fulp said more businesses need to start building relationships with potential employees earlier and tapping more networks that aren't largely white. That can start at the college level, with businesses turning to historically black universities, or state institutions that enroll larger proportion of African-Americans. In 2015, the University of Massachusetts Boston, for example, had 15 percent black student enrollment, one of the highest in the city.

But it could also mean partnering with college organizations that serve minority students.

This year, Boston College started a "reverse career fair," where companies such as General Electric and Hill Holliday could set up meetings with various student organizations. Businesses could connect with diverse students interested in finance and management consulting, or first-generation college students.

--Nicole Dungca

Diversity doesn't happen by accident — or with merely good intentions.

Real change requires teeth.

But if you look around the city, there are glimmers of progress.

Massport did more than talk about diversity. The port authority went beyond a minimum hiring benchmark for workers. It made diversity 25 percent of the evaluation score for development bids on Massport-owned land, making it a key part of whether a firm won the award. The sweeping new policy emphasizes firms owned by women and people of color.

"This is larger than some quota on a job," said Massport board member L. Duane Jackson, who spearheaded the initiative. "This is a game changer. It says to the rest of the world, if you want to develop

some of the most valuable real estate in this country, then you have to consider diversity as a component of your team."

Often, goals requiring "women-owned" or "minority-owned" firms have been window dressing that have had little real effect. But at Massport, the first project — a 1,000-plus room Omni hotel — involves black investors, black architects, a black-owned construction firm, and other companies owned by women and people of color. The bidding requirement pushed executives beyond their traditional networks to form new partnerships that expanded opportunities beyond the hotel.

A push for diversity will also be part of the bidding to build on land in Chinatown owned by the Boston Planning and Development Agency. That diversity component does not go as far as Massport's, but it stipulates that strong inclusion plans will give proposals an edge.

Some advocates have pushed for City Hall and Baker to follow the lead of Massport and adopt diversity components with real consequences.

In Boston's nonprofit world, The Hyams Foundation started with itself. The organization works to improve racial, social, and economic justice in low-income neighborhoods. But until 15 years ago, the trustees controlling the foundation's \$134 million endowment for racial justice were mostly white.

The Hyams Foundation revamped its board of trustees, but it took a decade before they were predominantly people of color. Now the organization asks the same of its grant applicants. Jocelyn V. Sargent, the executive director of the foundation, said it's an important factor in how and who gets funding for their proposals. An applicant won't be automatically disqualified if the organization has little diversity, she said, but the foundation makes it clear that this is a critical factor.

They also give some organizations funds to attend conferences that address diversity issues.

"We made the same request of our grantees as we were doing it ourselves," she said. "It was: This needs to happen."

--Andrew Ryan and Akilah Johnson

If there is one defining symbol of the fraught relationship in Boston between race and sports, it is a street sign in the Fenway proclaiming "Yawkey Way."

Some who care about the city's future insist: This is a name that has to go.

The street on which Fenway Park sits was renamed for longtime Red Sox owner Thomas Yawkey in 1977, one year after his death. His name has become synonymous with bigotry because of his resistance to integration.

Yawkey was the last Major League owner to bring a black player to his team — Pumpsie Green, in 1959. (Prior to that, he had declined to sign Hall of Famers Jackie Robinson and Willie Mays.)

Of course, Boston is full of reminders of Yawkey's legacy in other spheres of civic life, including an MBTA station, a youth center in Roxbury, and a part of Massachusetts General Hospital. Most are monuments to the Yawkey family's philanthropy, which is about \$450 million.

But none carry the symbolic weight of the home of the Red Sox, one of Boston's signature landmarks. Indeed, Fenway Park is the only sports stadium closely linked to such a divisive figure. Streets outside other baseball stadiums are named for such beloved figures as Hank Aaron (Atlanta) and Mays (San Francisco).

Given Yawkey's controversial reputation, the idea of renaming the street has circulated for some time, including in a Globe column that I wrote two years ago. This year, the Red Sox ownership — which has distanced itself from Yawkey's record on race — has announced plans to seek the renaming of Yawkey Way.

The team cannot make the change itself: A city commission and the mayor would have to approve of the change, and the street's other residents would have to be on board. None of those seem to be obstacles. Mayor Walsh has already said he is open to a change. The official process is on hold for now, as the Red Sox decide what exactly they want to ask for.

What should be the new name of Yawkey Way?

Red Sox principal owner (and Boston Globe publisher) John W. Henry floated the idea of naming it for retired Sox slugger David Ortiz. But a street and a footbridge have already been named for Ortiz. Ted Williams, the greatest player in franchise history, has already been honored with the Ted Williams Tunnel.

An online petition has called for renaming the street for Pumpsie Green. That might be a stretch, given Green's relatively brief four seasons with the team.

There is some support for simply discarding the idea of making any kind of political statement with a renaming. Before being renamed, Yawkey Way was part of Jersey Street; that designation could simply be restored.

--Adrian Walker

Not all solutions relate to politics or policies. Some are personal.

For instance, at the family dinner table, your grandmother tries to compliment a black friend, saying he's "not like those other people." A friend tells an Asian cashier that her English is so good, even though her accent makes it clear she was born here.

Psychologists call these subtle, discriminatory comments "microaggressions" — and they're all too common in many schools and workplaces.

And they say everyone should initiate difficult conversations about these racially charged remarks to prevent them.

The term microaggression was coined in the 1970s by Chester M. Pierce, a psychiatrist and Harvard University professor. As its use has become increasingly common, some critics have even regarded the concept as a sign of political correctness run amok.

But psychologists, such as Derald Wing Sue, a Columbia University psychology professor who helped revive its use with a widely read paper, say microaggressions insult people of color.

Literature on how to have conversations about race have proliferated in recent years.

The talks are never easy, experts warn. "It's very difficult to try and convince the other person that they have engaged in offensive behavior because what they're going to say is, 'That wasn't my intent . . . You're overly sensitive or paranoid,'" Sue said.

Kenneth Sole, who uses his education in psychology to train organizations on group dynamics, said it's helpful to make sure you're not labeling one another as "good" or "bad" during such conversations.

Different situations call for different strategies, said William A. Smith, a University of Utah professor who has studied microaggressions extensively. Sometimes, in extreme circumstances in a work environment, you might want to bring the issue to the attention of a supervisor.

If you do approach someone about an offensive statement, there are ways to lower someone's defenses, Sue said, such as saying that you have been guilty of such microaggressions too.

Sue recommends distinguishing between the speaker's intentions and how the remark actually made someone feel. That could mean saying, "I know you meant well, but that comment could be taken the wrong way."

Other times, you can try to halt the offending remark as it's happening. If someone is in the middle of an offensive conversation, you could tell that person you don't want to hear the punch line to a racist joke, or say "That's hurtful," Sue said.

Whatever the situation, experts say that it's crucial that people address such issues head-on.

"We can't continue to sit on our hands with our mouths silent," Smith said.

--Nicole Dungca

PBHA Members, Bostonians Rally for Youth Jobs

By Nina Pasquini & Jordan Virtue, *The Crimson*

Tags: Class/SES, Boston, Politics, Youth

Summary: An article about Harvard student participation in the I Have a Future Coalition, which advocates for Youth Jobs funding in Boston.

To read online, visit: <https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2018/2/26/pbha-rally-youth-jobs/>

Amid chants of "Jobs not jails!" and sporadic hailstorms, about 20 members of Harvard's Phillips Brooks House Association joined hundreds of "Dreams of our Future" protesters for the annual Youth Jobs Rally in Boston last week.

The march, which started in the Old South Church in Copley Square and ended at the State House, had three main goals, according to participants. First, protesters demanded an increase in funding from the state for youth jobs in Massachusetts from \$10 million to \$14 million a year.

Protesters also argued for expungement, meaning the erasure of misdemeanors from juveniles' records after a certain period of time, and for altering the age of juvenile court jurisdiction to include ages 12 to 18.

The "I Have a Future" youth jobs coalition—which organized the march—argues that a \$4 million spending increase for the state's YouthWorks program should be a financial priority for Massachusetts.

"Young people need to be employed, partially to support their families and partially because there are pretty significant levels of violence and all sorts of other things in the city," PBHA President Anwar Omeish '19 said. "What we're saying is that this should be a funding priority. Ultimately budgeting is a question of what do you think is most important."

Cora A. Neudeck '19, PBHA's Advocacy, Health, and Programming Group Officer, said the state's increase in minimum wage affected the program.

"There was a period of time when they raised the minimum wage from eight dollars to \$11, but they never raised the overall funding, so they were paying people more, but they were able to pay less people," Neudeck said. "So there were around 870 teenagers who lost funding for their jobs."

Neudeck said PBHA supported the rally because YouthWorks funds the salaries of high schoolers who serve as "junior counselors" in PBHA's Summer Urban Program. Neudeck also said the protest broadly aligns with PBHA's social justice initiatives.

"Our Summer Urban Program has 12 camps and serves 800 low-income kids across Boston and Cambridge," Omeish said. "We employ 100 teens as part of the program, and if we didn't have the funding for those 100 teens we would only be able to serve about half of that, which is 400 low-income kids in the community."

Jose G. Coronado Flores '19, a PBHA member and director of the Mission Hill summer program, said there are now fewer summer jobs available for local students, including those from Mission Hill.

After marching through downtown to shouts of "This is what democracy looks like!" and "What do we want? Youth justice! When do we want it? Now!", demonstrators entered the State House, where they met in small groups with state legislators.

At the State House, Z-Kiya C. Jant, a sophomore at the Community Academy of Science and Health, a public high school in Boston, said the issue of youth employment is important to her personally.

"Within the community that I live in, there's a lot of people who have moved towards negative outlets to gain money within the community to try to be successful and provide for their families," she said. "And me being part of this organization, that's me trying to say, 'No, you don't need to do that.'"

Adiel M. Pollydore, who helped plan the rally, said she attended the protest because she wanted to help empower young people to make changes.

"Today, I felt a very strong solidarity with the young people who are organizing in Florida right now, and also young people who have been organizing. Young people have organized in Ferguson, in Baltimore, all over," she said. "I think that young people aren't afraid, and you can feel that energy, that fire, and that hope. It's infectious. So that's why I'm here."

A Housing Profile of a Middle-Class Worker in Boston

By Karen Morales, *The Bay State Banner*

Tags: Class/SES, Boston, Housing

Summary: An article about housing issues in Boston and their intersection with class/SES.

To read online, visit: <https://www.baystatebanner.com/2018/03/28/a-housing-profile-of-a-middle-class-worker-in-boston/>

Linda Wright works full time as a secretary for the Boston Public Schools system and describes herself as a "put-together, law-abiding citizen who pays her taxes" — but she's uncertain about where she will be living three months from now.

She is currently paying nearly 40 percent of her take-home pay for a one-bedroom apartment in Dorchester, in a building owned by Kensington Investment Company. In July, her rent will go up from \$1,450 to \$1,550, an amount Wright says she will not be able to afford.

Like so many middle-class workers, Wright is stuck. She can't afford current market-rate housing in Boston but she does not qualify for subsidized housing. As someone who was born in Boston and has lived here her entire life, she feels like one of the forgotten, like the city is telling her "get out, get out," she says.

This scenario is common throughout the city, with the average rent for all apartments at \$3,016, according to data compiled by RENTCafe, an online property listing service. The average rent for a one-bedroom across the city is \$2,797 and in Dorchester, the average rent for a one-bedroom is \$2,533.

Wright doesn't plan to leave — not without exhausting every option she may have, including entering Boston's affordable housing lotteries or going through the Boston Home Center, the city's first-time homebuyers office.

After seeking help from the city's Office of Housing Stability, Wright entered multiple lotteries for income-restricted housing, only to be told months later that she was "over-income."

"All the lotteries are for someone who's not me," she says.

According to numbers provided by the city's website, middle-income households are broadly defined as earning between \$50,000 and \$125,000. Earning less than \$50,000, households become eligible for government housing assistance.

Household size is taken into account, and Wright is currently a one-income household. Wright's gross annual income is around \$55,000, but after paycheck deductions for retirement, life insurance, health insurance and union dues, her net annual income is closer to \$45,000.

According to city of Boston's affordable housing standards, when considering Wright's net income, her maximum affordable rent for a studio apartment should be \$1,395.

Wright tells the Banner that although she may not be considered low-income enough by the city, she is additionally burdened with debt incurred from her late mother's funeral costs.

"My mom died in 2016. She didn't have life insurance, my sister didn't keep up with it. So we all had to pitch in and I had to take out a loan," she says. Her debts roughly total to \$155 per month.

On her own

Before moving into the KIC apartment building four years ago, Wright lived in a house that her uncle owned in Mattapan for 45 years. When her uncle passed away, the rest of his family moved to South Carolina and she moved on to live in Dorchester. "The rent was \$1,250, I was settled, coming out of a big place to an apartment. I was happy living by myself for the first time," she says.

Rising rent

During her second year on the lease, the landlord started charging tenants for heat. In the third year, rent increased by \$25, but by the fourth year, the rent went up a whopping \$175. Another \$100 increase is due in July.

Wright says she's barely making the current rent. "I'm behind on February's rent," she says.

Some of her neighbors have also struggled to keep up, many of them moving out or leaning on their families for support.

"I don't have anyone to fall back on," said Wright, who says most of her family has passed away.

Wright says she is considering any alternative options, including sharing an apartment with roommates, getting a second job or buying a home. With a pre-approved loan from her bank, as well as a loan from her union, SEIU Local 888, Wright says, "I think I can pull it off with that."

And even if Wright does find a new apartment, she fears that "without rent-control, the rents will continue to go up and up, I might as well stay here," she says.

She's on three different waiting lists for mixed-income apartments, including Dorchester's Treadmark building, a new 83-unit development located near Ashmont Station. Wright says the wait is three-to-five years.

The Treadmark has 51 designated-affordable rental units available for those earning up to 60 percent of the AMI and four condominium units that meet the city's Inclusionary Development Policy of 80-100 percent of the AMI. Sheila Dillon, the city's chief of housing and director of the Department of Neighborhood Development told the Banner for a previous article that Boston's AMI figure is currently at \$55,000. This happens to be Wright's gross annual income, making her eligible for one of the four condominium units.

"My story is my story," says Wright. "I don't know how many other people are in this same predicament, but I'm trying to help myself."

After 60 Years, Chinatown May Finally Get Its Neighborhood Library Back

By Max Larkin, WBUR

Tags: Boston, Gentrification, Education, Chinatown

Summary: An article about the decades-long (successful!) campaign to restore the Boston Chinatown library.

To read and listen to online, visit: <http://www.wbur.org/edify/2017/04/25/chinatown-neighborhood-library>

East Boston has an award-winning new library: one big, bright room designed to bring a diverse neighborhood together.

And in a few weeks, Jamaica Plain's library will reopen after a \$10 million renovation, with a high-tech "maker space" and a glass reading room.

Those are just two of the 24 neighborhood branches of the Boston Public Library.

But in Chinatown? Nothing — for 60 years. Activists say that means the neighborhood is missing both a vital gateway to the city outside and a meeting place for residents.

But that may be about to change.

'It's A Natural'

The Chinatown Library had a long history of serving immigrant communities on Tyler Street. But after it was bulldozed in 1956 to make room for the Central Artery, it never came back.

"It was a huge space; there was a children's section, and there was story hour there," remembers Stephanie Fan, who visited the library in its final years. "It was just a nice, warm place."

Fan grew up in Chinatown as the daughter of a printer. She and her siblings were devastated when they learned the old brick library, home to public baths and a gym, would be torn down. "We were really upset," she says.

So since 2001, Fan has been pushing the city to bring the library back for good, arguing that her neighborhood has been missing a safe and beautiful public space ever since.

There have been lots of false starts and disappointments — bookmobiles and tantalizing temporary reading rooms. A lot of heartache, Fan says, for what seems like a reasonable request.

"We're asking for a library, for goodness' sake. That's educational, that's cultural — it's a natural. And yet, we haven't got it!"

As Fan speaks, construction is underway all around her in a cavernous building on Boylston Street at the edge of the neighborhood. The China Trade Center, a building owned by the city, could house a temporary library space before the end of this year.

A Changing Neighborhood

About 12,000 people live in Chinatown's quarter-square-mile. It's one of Boston's smallest and densest neighborhoods. And a 2015 report found that it's home to some of the city's highest average rents.

It's also seen more than its share of change: from the era of the seedy "Combat Zone" district in the 1960s and '70s to the more recent rise of luxury condos. Its white population has quadrupled since 1990, and the most recent census showed the area is no longer majority Asian.

Lydia Lowe watched that change from her home in the South End and in her work as a housing advocate. "We have all these generations, we have different races, different class backgrounds," Lowe says. "People are living really close together, but they're not interacting."

It's a neighborhood in need of a common space. And a beloved branch library could do double duty: as a welcome mat for newcomers and a cultural center for a historic immigrant community that is under-served, even under siege.

Historian Wayne Wiegand says that's the role neighborhood libraries have always played in America. "When you look at it through the eyes of wave after wave of immigrant, it's the branch library that's their community connection. That's where they construct their community."

And a library would be a sign that Chinatown is valued as much as the city's other ethnic enclaves.

'We Have A Duty'

In his State of the City address in January, Boston Mayor Marty Walsh delivered a promise that activists like Fan and Lowe have long awaited: "We listened to the community," he said, "and we're finally bringing library services back to the Chinatown neighborhood."

For now, the details are unclear while the city looks for a permanent location.

David Leonard became the new president of the BPL last June. He isn't ready to talk specifics, but he says his office sees this as an opportunity to serve both Chinatown and the broader Asian-American community, after too long.

"If it's about preserving aspects of an American immigrant community, we have a duty to try and work out what that model will look like," Leonard says.

The plan for the Chinatown library will start to take shape Tuesday evening, as library officials hold the first of several public meetings on the plan.

It will be a while before those talks translate into a building. But this neighborhood has gotten used to waiting.

Advocates Say Innocent Teens Are Stamped with 'Gang' Label

By Karen Morales & Yawu Miller, The Bay State Banner

Tags: Boston, Policing, Youth, Education, Immigration, Undocumented Issues, Racism

Summary: An article about gang policing and surveillance and how it intersects with immigration and civil liberties in Boston.

To read online, visit: <https://www.baystatebanner.com/2018/05/01/advocates-say-innocent-teens-are-stamped-with-gang-label/>

Every year, thousands of teens in Boston's neighborhoods are stopped, questioned, searched and targeted for prosecution by police officers.

For those who are identified as gang members or "gang associated," criminal justice reform advocates say, this kind of scrutiny is magnified, including daily stops and searches and leading to harsher sentences for criminal convictions and in some cases, deportation by federal immigration officials.

The Boston Police Department maintains a gang database in which they enter names and information on individuals they believe to be gang members or associated with gang members. But with no oversight from agencies or individuals outside the police department, critics say the database could be unfairly targeting black and Latino youth, sharing inaccurate information with federal authorities and even putting teens in harm's way.

"If you're a Salvadoran kid in a predominantly Latino high school and you're sitting at a lunch table with a kid who's in a gang, that shouldn't be an indicator that you're involved in a gang," said attorney Sarah Sherman-Stokes, associate director of the Immigrants' Rights and Human Trafficking Clinic at Boston University School of Law.

The BPD's gang database is controversial because there's little transparency about who is in it, what groups the department considers to be gangs and with whom police are sharing the database information.

In an interview with the Banner Monday, police officials would not share information about how many gangs and how many individuals are in the database. When pressed, police spokesman Sergeant John Boyle would not even say whether the number of individuals logged in the database is in the hundreds or thousands.

"We don't give that information out for investigative reasons," he said repeatedly in response to Banner reporters' requests for specific information about the database. Boyle said the department would not share internal data from the BPD list with the Banner.

In April, the investigative news website ProPublica released a series of articles documenting numerous inaccuracies in a gang database maintained by the Chicago Police Department.

Innocent bystanders

Defense attorneys and criminal justice reform advocates say teens whom police misidentify as gang members can face dire consequences, especially those with a pending immigration status.

Sherman-Stokes' client, a student at East Boston High School, was taken into custody last year by federal immigration officials after he was identified in an incident report following a confrontation in a school cafeteria. The student, she said, was labeled as a "gang associate," a designation that would put him in the BPD gang database, despite his having no affiliation with a gang.

That incident report was then relayed to the Boston Regional Intelligence Center, a data analysis unit at the BPD that shares information with federal law enforcement agencies such as U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

BRIC manages and oversees the BPD gang database, according to information acquired through a public records request in 2017 by Kade Crockford, director of the Technology for Liberty Program at the American Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts.

Crockford said the department's use of the database presents challenges for defendants facing immigration charges.

"One of the things immigration attorneys are trying to argue in court is that because of the criteria and how they are added to the database, it allows for the use of innuendo — stuff that has nothing to do with crime or violence at all," she said. "It shouldn't be allowed to serve as a justification for deporting someone."

Federal agencies, such as ICE, do not have direct access to the gang database. But through software called COPLINK, ICE agents are given instant access to police incident reports, wherein officers often identify individuals as gang members or gang associates.

Point system

Boston police officers working with the department's Youth Violence Strike Force, commonly referred to as the gang unit, use a ten-point scoring system to qualify teens as gang members.

The point system was adopted from the Massachusetts Department of Correction, according to Boyle.

Points are awarded for criteria such as self-identification, gang tattoos and information from informants or rival gang members. People are determined to be gang members if their criteria add up to 10 points, and labeled a gang associate if their criteria reach at least six points.

Some criteria are more heavily weighted than others. For example, "prior validation by a law enforcement agency" is worth nine points and "known group tattoo or marking" is worth eight points.

But points are also awarded for things as vague as "contact with known gang member/associate." Subjects are awarded two points for each such interaction.

Other items in the 10-point verification system include "victim/target affiliated with member of rival group," which garners eight points if not in custody or incarcerated and three points if in custody or incarcerated; "information from reliable, confidential informant," worth five points, and "use or possession of group paraphernalia or identifiers," worth four points.

"What's troubling about a lot of this stuff is, even if a young person is involved, that doesn't mean that they always will be," said Crockford. "The use of this database, I think, perversely makes it very difficult for young people to get out of that type of lifestyle. Once they've been identified this way by the BPD, there is this sort of ... the more you say something to someone, the more it becomes true."

Because the database relies on law enforcement officers, school officials and confidential informants to make determinations of who is gang-involved, the determinations are often unreliable, says Fatema Ahmad, deputy director of the Muslim Justice League, a group that organizes around civil and human rights abuses under national security pretexts.

"The scoring system is absurd," she said. "They call it a '10-point system,' but it only takes six points to be labeled a gang associate. They could look you up on Facebook and see an item of clothing they think is associated with a gang."

Five instances of contact with people police consider gang members could earn a subject designation as a gang member. In neighborhoods such as East Boston, where there is well-documented gang activity, it's nearly impossible for teenagers to steer clear of people police consider gang members.

In Rule 335, which established the Youth Violence Strike Force, the BPD defines a gang as three or more people organized formally or informally who meet criteria including use of a common name, identifying signs, colors or symbols, or who frequent a specific area. The group must have members or associates who "individually or collectively, engage in or have engaged in criminal activity which may include incidents of targeting rival gang members and/or being targeted by other gangs."

Sherman-Stokes noted that this definition can cast an overly wide net.

"Kids can get logged into the database for loitering in Bremen Park," she said. "That's not criminal activity. It's called being a teenager."

'How did I get here?'

Alex Ponte-Capellan has no idea how he was logged into the gang database. He was not a gang member in 2009 when a police officer stationed in Downtown Crossing pulled him aside, told him he was in the database and showed him a file with his name, photograph and personal information.

"He said, 'We're keeping an eye on you,'" said Ponte-Capellan, who now works as an organizer with the anti-displacement group City Life/Vida Urbana. "I was kind of terrified, but I didn't know exactly what it meant."

Ponte-Capellan, a U.S. citizen who was then living in Roxbury, soon found out. Plainclothes officers in unmarked cars began aggressively pursuing him. He was in the crosshairs of the BPD's gang unit, an outfit with what critics say is a well-deserved reputation for abusive behavior.

"It was a different kind of cop," he said. "It was gang unit detectives who were super-invasive. They came to my house and talked to my parents. They'd be waiting for me in front of my house. They were kind of harassing me everywhere I went."

Although Ponte-Capellan denied being a gang member, there is no formal procedure for subjects labeled gang members or gang-associated to have themselves removed from the database. After five years without arrests or documented association with other gang members, however, subjects in the database are labeled "inactive." After 10 years, they are removed from the system.

In Boston, 50 percent of the people in the database are considered inactive, Boyle said.

ProPublica's Chicago investigation revealed that the city's police department had more than 128,000 people in its gang database, with 70 percent of them being black and 25 percent Hispanic.

Crockford said that although they have not yet been able to obtain the exact numbers from the BPD, she suspects there are similar racial disparities in Boston's gang database.

Boston School Assignment System Shortchanges Black, Latino Students: Report

By James Vanzis, Boston Globe

Tags: Boston, Education, Youth, Class/SES, Politics, Immigration

Summary: An article about the Boston school assignment system and its disparate effects on different communities.

To read online, visit: <https://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/2018/07/16/boston-school-assignment-system-shortchanges-black-latino-students-report-finds/OTdUOwYAJa6wuqamh0mHI/story.html>

A computerized system that Boston uses to assign students to schools is exacerbating segregation among the city's schools while locking out many black and Latino students from high-performing schools, according to a report obtained by the Globe.

The divides between those who have access to the best schools and those who don't could not be more stark. More than 80 percent of kindergarten students in Charlestown, Back Bay, Beacon Hill, and central Boston who enroll in the city's school system attend a high-quality school — as measured by test scores — while only 5 percent of kindergartners in Mattapan do, according to the report by the Boston Area Research Initiative at Northeastern University.

The findings illustrate the sluggish progress Boston has made in the four decades since court-ordered busing began in closing the gap in educational opportunities: The city's historically white neighborhoods still have a disproportionate share of high-quality schools, while historically black neighborhoods, like Mattapan, have fewer options, even though they have a higher density of students, the report found.

Consequently, black students on average commute nearly 2 miles to attend a high-quality school — almost twice the distance traveled by white and Asian students.

“Unfortunately, these two issues — fewer high-quality schools and more students competing for them — come together in the very neighborhoods where the most vulnerable and historically disadvantaged populations live,” the report stated. “This creates a deep and pernicious context for the emergence of inequities in assignment.”

School officials, who commissioned the report, are scheduled to present it to the School Committee on Monday night. They did not immediately respond to a request for comment on the report.

The findings highlight the challenges Boston faces in guaranteeing quality schools close to home for all students regardless of demographic background or ZIP code. To achieve this, Boston did away with traditional school attendance boundaries drawn on a map and adopted what was billed as a revolutionary computer program developed by MIT researchers that provides students a range of choices within a certain proximity of their home.

Under the system, approved by the School Committee in 2013 and implemented a year later, students are guaranteed at least six school choices of varying quality and any other schools within an approximately one-mile radius of their home. If there are not enough quality choices close to home, the algorithm will fill in the gap by adding choices that are further away.

The system replaced a nearly 25-year-old court-approved desegregation plan, and it was considered a victory for then-Mayor Thomas M. Menino, attracting national media attention.

The findings add to the challenges facing newly appointed interim Superintendent Laura Perille, and for the first time ties her to a policy decision she had a hand in developing. Perille was among the majority of the 27 members of an external advisory committee that vetted the assignment system and recommended it to the School Committee for approval in 2013.

Despite the buzz around the new assignment system, many education and civil rights advocates have been skeptical throughout the ensuing years primarily because they were keenly aware that the city lacked enough quality schools and that they tended to be located in more affluent neighborhoods. They questioned whether disadvantaged students would actually gain access to them and have been awaiting the analysis.

“I hope the results lead to a thoughtfulness and urgency of action necessary to improve quality of educational opportunities for all our children,” said Matt Cregor, education project director at the Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights and Economic Justice, who has not seen the report yet.

Adding further complexities to the debate is that educators, parents, students, and other advocates disagree on what constitutes a quality school. Some prefer strict reliance on test scores; others opt for a more nuanced assessment that takes into consideration whether schools offer art, music, phys-ed, freshly prepared lunches, after school programs, and the like.

Daniel T. O’Brien, an associate professor of public policy and urban affairs at Northeastern University, who was the lead author of the report, said in an interview Monday morning the problems uncovered were fixable.

“The important lesson here is we can improve upon the system, and we can see ways to make it stronger and more equitable,” he said.

But he said any changes will likely stir some deep conversations. For instance, to improve the chances of disadvantaged students of getting into a high-quality or medium-quality school in neighborhoods with lots of students living in them, school officials may need to provide them with more such schools to apply to — which might mean making fewer choices available to students in other parts of the city.

The researchers examined admission for kindergarten and sixth-grade students for the 2014-15, 2015-16, and 2016-17 school years.

The researchers determined the system “was unsuccessful in creating equitable access to high-quality schools,” especially since the computerized program favors granting admission to students who live near a school. An analysis of kindergarten admissions revealed the new system was causing an

increase in segregation in schools, one that was not dramatic, but significant enough to warrant further monitoring.

Nancy E. Hill, co-author of the report and professor at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, said the intense competition for the relatively small number of high-quality seats in Dorchester, Roxbury, and Mattapan caused fewer students from those neighborhoods to get their first choice of a school. Instead, those students often ended up attending schools in the bottom half of performance.

“We cannot lose sight of the fact that black and Latino children, who are already disadvantaged in other ways, face greater competition to get into” high-performing schools, Hill said in a statement. “The deck is already stacked against them in society, and this policy has made it harder for them to get the educational foundation they need to succeed.”

Adding further complications is that the school system mishandled the rollout of the system.

For instance, parents seeking schools for sixth-graders often were not given any high-quality options. That’s because the school system used the same algorithm for its kindergarten lottery, even though the system’s elementary schools end at grade five.

Earlier this year, school officials also confronted a firestorm after parents learned school officials had artificially inflated the number of high-quality schools by not downgrading schools with declining standardized test scores.

The report did find that the school system made progress in achieving its goal of reducing travel distances to schools, which school officials hope will help rein in escalating transportation costs which consume about 10 percent of its \$1.1 billion budget. For kindergartners, the average distance traveled shrunk from 1.4 miles to 1.15 miles, but that was largely due by shaving off the distance of students who had the longest commutes.

Previously, under the old assignment system, the city was carved into three sprawling assignment zones. The north zones extended from East Boston to Brighton; the east zone from South Boston to Mattapan, and the west zone from Jamaica Plain to Hyde Park.

Excerpts from #BosCops Toolkit: Information on Boston Policing

From BosCops Coalition

Tags: Boston, Policing, Youth, Class/SES, Politics, Immigration, Surveillance, Islamophobia, Racism, Undocumented Issues

Summary: A look at various policing issues in Boston and their effects on various communities.

To read the full version online, visit: <http://tinyurl.com/boscops>

ISSUE: IMMIGRATION AND POLICE POLICY

The City of Boston has come out in defense of immigrants, but existing police policy puts immigrants at risk of ICE detention and deportation.

Thousands of people are arrested each year in the City of Boston for minor offenses like driving without a license, drug possession, and disorderly conduct. Data obtained by the ACLU show these minor arrests disproportionately impact Black and Latinx Bostonians.

Every time the Boston Police Department arrests someone, ICE is notified. This puts our immigrant neighbors and family at substantially greater risk for detention and deportation. Charges for these minor arrests are often dropped, but by then the damage has been done.

The Boston Police Department collects and shares information with the federal government about people who are not suspected of criminal activity. This policy resulted in the ICE detention of and initiation of deportation proceedings against at least one Boston public school student, after an unsubstantiated claim that he was in a gang was shared with ICE. We do not know how often BPD information sharing with ICE has led to detentions and deportations without due process, but we can safely assume this is not the first or only time.

UPDATE (February 2018): In recent months, we’ve become aware of a new problem linking BPD to immigration enforcement: the gang database. In Boston, like in other cities, the police maintain a gang database. Cops add people to the database based on a number of things, including: who you’re seen with,

what you're wearing, and whether you have specific tattoos. The Boston gang database is likely composed of mostly people of color. If you're a citizen and you're added to the gang database, the consequences are very harsh, including police harassment and enhanced sentencing. For immigrants, being listed in the BPD's gang database can lead to ICE arresting and deporting you. That's what we're seeing here in Boston. In some cases, information coming from Boston Police assigned to Boston Public Schools is sent to the Boston Regional Intelligence Center (BRIC), and used to allege that students are involved in gangs. BRIC then allows ICE to access its gang database.

ISSUE: SURVEILLANCE OF MUSLIMS

Background: The Boston Police Department participates in a "Countering Violent Extremism" program that claims to prevent "radicalization" but in reality results in discriminatory, unwarranted surveillance of Muslim communities. In Boston, BPD's program is called "Youth and Police Initiative Plus" and it targets Somali young people.

The program relies on debunked theories that normal adolescent behaviors like spending time alone in your room or "living in a dangerous neighborhood" or "mistrusting police" are precursors to committing crimes or acts of violence. YPIP assumes Somalis are a potential threat due to the social and economic trauma they experience as immigrants and refugees. The application lists "unaccountable times and unobserved spaces" as a potential "risk factor" for Somali youth in Boston, implying that for Somali youth, privacy is dangerous.

BPD also participates in federal investigations with the Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF) and information sharing with the Boston Regional Intelligence Center (BRIC). Current BPD policy allows people to be under surveillance and investigation even if they are not suspected of any crime.

BPD should not engage in suspicionless and warrantless investigations, either at the local or federal level. We know that recently a Boston Police officer assigned to the JTTF [targeted and surveilled](#) a Boston-based Dakota Access Pipeline protester in North Dakota.

Programs like YPIP in Boston and BPD collaboration with JTTF are discriminatory, restrict religious expression, worsen harassment of marginalized communities, suppress open dialogue and dissent, and do nothing to advance public safety.

ISSUE: RACIAL PROFILING

Background: By every measure, white people and people of color in Boston experience profoundly different treatment at the hands of the Boston Police Department. Within the context of the larger conversation about white supremacy in our city and country, we must consider the role the police play in enforcing racism.

The Boston Police Department explicitly states "Our mission is community policing." The Boston Police Department's presence in the community continues to be defined by thousands of street investigations every year which predominantly target people of color.

According to data from the Boston Police Department analyzed and reported by the Boston Globe, 70% of the nearly 15,000 individuals that police observed, interrogated, or searched in 2016 were Black. Black people make up 25% of the population in Boston. These searches are known as "stop and frisks" or "Field Interrogations and Observations."

Racial bias in policing is so extreme in our state that the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts ruled that Black people fleeing police have a legitimate reason to do so, and that when an individual flees it doesn't necessarily mean the person is guilty. The SJC ruling cited data about racial disparities in FIOs to conclude that many police encounters with people of color are unfair and unjustified.

These street stops are in addition to racially biased traffic stops. According to a 2004 report by Northeastern University Institute on Race and Justice, Black drivers made up 13.7% of the driving population in Boston, but 32% of the driving citations issued by police. The SJC is currently considering whether pre-contextual stops of drivers (traffic stops in which a police officer uses a traffic violation as an excuse to stop a driver that the officer wants to stop for other reason like an unrelated criminal offense) are constitutional.

ISSUE: DRUG ARRESTS

Background: Officials across Massachusetts say “we cannot arrest our way out of the problem” of addiction. Yet drug arrests, prosecutions, and convictions continue to be Boston’s primary response to drug use and sales. Meanwhile, Boston residents struggling with drug addiction lack access to healing, housing, and treatment. One major problem in Boston is that people are unable to transition from detox to longer-term or residential programs because beds are not available.

There are significant disparities in access to care and treatment along race and class lines. According to the 2015 report [Addiction and Recovery Services in the City of Boston](#), “There are vast disparities in need among, and access to treatment and services is not adequate for, certain populations including females, cultural and linguistic minorities and people who are homeless, have serious mental illness, traumatic brain injury and/or PTSD.”

There are also major disparities in the rates of arrests for drugs. Across the nation, white people are more likely to use and sell drugs than people of color, yet substantially less likely to be arrested for those offenses. Although people of color make up less than 25% of Massachusetts’ population and less than 28% of people convicted of drug possession, they are roughly 55% of those convicted of drug distribution and 75% of those convicted of mandatory minimums drug offenses. Despite the fact that Black people make up only 23% of the population in Boston, they accounted for 36% of drug arrests during the years 2012-2016. Whites, meanwhile, were underrepresented; 46% of the population of the City is white, but whites were only 36% of all drug arrests.

The state’s own data shows that using police and jails as a response to addiction is deadly. Often people arrested on drug charges will spend weeks or months in jail unable to afford bail. According to the [Massachusetts Department of Public Health](#), “The risk of opioid-related death following release from incarceration is **more than 50 times greater** than for the general public. What’s more concerning is that the threat is immediate. Fatal overdoses during the first month after release are six times higher than for all other post-incarceration periods.” Incarcerating people with substance abuse issues can literally be a death sentence.

At the federal level and in Massachusetts, there is a push to **increase** penalties including mandatory minimums for people who sell drugs despite decades of proof that criminalization and incarceration do not prevent addiction or overdose. We also know that many people who use drugs also sell them. While officials at the Department of Justice and at the Massachusetts State House push for more punishment, there’s a need to demand more compassionate policies in our city.

ISSUE: POLICE MILITARIZATION AND USE OF FORCE

Background: In recent years police departments’ across America have put their arsenals of weapons, technology, and armoured vehicles on display in response to protests and demonstrations. People in Boston and around the country have expressed concern about policing using weapons of war against residents in their own neighborhoods.

The threats of police militarization have escalated under the Trump administration. In August, President Trump eliminated rules put in place by the Obama administration limiting the types of military weaponry local and state police could obtain free of charge through the federal government’s 1033 program. Also during the summer of 2017, President Trump equated neo-Nazis and white supremacists in Charlottesville with the counter-protesters who turned out to denounce their bigotry and hatred. Finally, Trump told a gathering of law enforcement officials that they shouldn’t go easy on suspects, comments that were widely interpreted as an endorsement of police brutality. This federal backdrop sets our nation on an even more dangerous course. We need to ensure our Mayor and City Council protect Boston from this dangerous path.

Officials in Boston have said that Boston is not Ferguson, yet Boston Police officers have killed a number of Black men in recent years and for the [past 30 years all but one person killed by BPD were people of color](#). In each recent case, the District Attorney for Suffolk County has cleared officers of wrongdoing. But the District Attorney is not an impartial investigator. In his role as D.A., he frequently works side by side with members of the BPD to investigate and prosecute people. Police and prosecutors are therefore on the same team, which introduces an unavoidable conflict of interest when the District Attorney is tasked with investigating police use of deadly force.

Recently in Boston, many demonstrators witnessed a militarized response to the Fight Supremacy protest. More than 30 people who came to the Boston Common to protest against white supremacy were

arrested by the Boston Police Department who were in full SWAT gear. Some demonstrators reported being pepper sprayed and beaten by Boston Police officers.

ISSUE: PLAIN CLOTHES POLICING

Background: Several tactical units of the Boston Police Department patrol in plain clothes. They often drive unmarked vehicles while wearing cargo shorts, jeans, sweatshirts, hats, and sneakers on duty. Some Bostonians know these officers as "the jump out boys" because of their reputation for being more aggressive and using intimidation tactics against residents.

There is almost no public information available about the number of officers, budget, equipment used, complaints against, stops or arrest data of the Youth Violence Strike Force, the Drug Control Unit, or the Anti-Crime unit.

Plain clothes policing is a policy that exemplifies the disparity between how white people and people of color have different experiences with the Boston Police Department. This kind of aggressive policing is focused on communities of color.

ISSUE: OVERTIME SPENDING

Background:

The total fiscal year (FY) 2018 Boston Police Department budget is \$373,380,191. In FY 2016, the BPD was allocated \$35,028,750 for overtime but spent \$57,479,518. In FY 2017 and FY 2018, budget allocations for overtime are [over 55 million dollars](#). Of the city's 100 top paid employees in 2017, [98 of them](#) were police officers.

[Police overtime spending](#) exceeds spending on youth jobs and community centers. Current overtime policies allow for excessive spending including a mandate that officers testifying in court are paid for a minimum of four hours even if they're there less than an hour. Boston Police officers collect pay for thousands of hours for construction details, while [civilians flaggers](#) work those sites in other cities and states.

Boston spends \$554 per capita on policing - more than many other major US cities including Chicago, Atlanta, Detroit, Houston, LA, and Minneapolis.

ISSUE: TRANSPARENCY AND PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY

Background: The Boston Police Department has made some progress in terms of opening its data to the public. For example, every day the BPD automatically posts the most recent incident report metadata from across the city on the City's [open data portal](#). But currently, arrest data and stop and frisk data (also known as FIO) are not available to the public on an ongoing basis on the city's data portal. These data can be posted online without compromising the privacy of Boston residents, by way of simple-to-automate data minimization. FIO and arrest data are critical to understanding the impact of policing in Boston. In addition to data about the way our neighbors are treated by police, the public should also have a right to expect information about the technology and tactics used by the Boston Police Department in our neighborhoods. There seems to be a pattern of the Boston Police Department not disclosing new or potential surveillance technology to residents. Last year, a bid to purchase social media spying software for \$1.3 million dollars was reported by the Boston Globe, [revealing that neither the public nor the public knew about BPD's plans](#). The BPD abandoned their plans to purchase the spying software thanks to organizing and public outrage.

More recently, the Boston Police Department purchased drones without the input or consent of residents, and [were observed flying the drones over public housing in Jamaica Plain](#). In order to residents to have a say about how our communities are being surveilled and patrolled, the city of Boston needs to institute [oversight and accountability policies](#) before the department can purchase and implement more technology.

ISSUE: COMMUNITY OVERSIGHT

Background: While Boston has taken steps to allow for community review of civilian complaints against police officers in the form of the Community Ombudsman Oversight Panel (CO-OP), the Panel has limited power to hold officers accountable. The current CO-OP is made up of a former police officer, a former judge, and a former city employee. These members documented resident dissatisfaction, severe delays

and bias in the investigation process, and lack of referrals to the panel in their December 2015 report to Mayor Walsh.

Boston community members continue to push for the adoption of body cameras after Ferguson Police Officer Darren Wilson killed Michael Brown in 2014. Boston Police officers are no longer wearing body cameras after the year-long pilot program. The Boston Police Department is planning a nine-month study on the body camera program.

Activism, Organizing, & Social Change

The Revolution Will Not Be Polite

By Rachael, from the Social Justice League

Tags: Social Justice, Activism, Approaches

Summary: An article discussing nice versus good activism.

To read online, visit: <http://www.socialjusticeleague.net/2012/04/the-revolution-will-not-be-polite-the-issue-of-nice-versus-good/>

A while ago, tumblr user “iamateenagefeminist” compiled [a list of non-oppressive insults](#), a public service that will never be forgotten. The people of tumblr wept with joy and appreciation (although it should be noted that the people of tumblr will literally weep over a drawing of an owl). The list is not perfect, and “ugly” should NOT be on there as it reinforces beauty hierarchies. Still, I was happy to find it, because I am always looking for more insults that don’t reinforce oppressive social structures.

But if you scroll through the reblogs you’ll see that not everyone was enamoured of the idea of creating this list at all. In particular, several people said that trying to find non-oppressive ways to insult other people is “missing the point” of social justice. Those people seem to think that being nice is a core part of social justice. But those people are wrong.

Social justice is about destroying systematic marginalisation and privilege. Wishing to live in a more just, more equal world is simply not the same thing as wishing to live in a “nicer” world. I am not suggesting niceness is bad or that we should not behave in a nice way towards others if we want to! I also do not equate niceness with cooperation or collaboration with others. Here’s all I am saying: the conflation of ethical or just conduct (goodness), and polite conduct (niceness) is a big problem.

Plenty of oppressive bullshit goes down under the guise of nice. Every day, nice, caring, friendly people try to take our bodily autonomy away from us (women, queers, trans people, nonbinaries, fat people, POC...you name it, they just don’t think we know what’s good for us!). These people would hold a door for us if they saw us coming. Our enemies are not only the people holding “Fags Die God Laughs” signs, they are the nice people who just feel like marriage should be between a man and a woman, no offense, it’s just how they feel! We once got a very nice comment on this site that we decided we could not publish because its content was “But how can I respect women when they dress like – sorry to say it, pardon my language – sluts?”. This is vile, disgusting misogyny and no amount of sugar coating and politeness can make it okay. Similarly, most of the people who run ex-gay therapy clinics are actually very nice and polite! They just want to save you! Nicely! Clearly, niceness means FUCK ALL.

On an even more serious note, nice people also DO horrible bad things on an individual level. In [The Gift of Fear](#) by Gavin De Becker, he explicitly says that people who intend to harm others often display niceness towards them in order to make them feel safe and let their guard down. This trick only works because we have been taught that niceness indicates goodness. What is more, according to De Becker, women have been socially conditioned to feel indebted to men who are “nice” to them, which is often exploited by abusers. If this doesn’t seem obvious to you, I suggest you pick up the book – it talks a lot about how socialisation of men and women makes it easier for men to abuse women.

How many more acts that reinforce kyriarchy have to be done nicely and politely before we stop giving people any credit for niceness? Does the niceness of these acts make them acceptable? It does not. An even bigger issue is that if people think social justice is about niceness, it means they have *fundamentally* misunderstood privilege. Privilege does not mean you live in a world where people are nice to you and never insult you. It means

you live in a world in which you, and people like you, are given systematic advantages over other people. Being marginalised does not mean people are always nasty to you, it means you live in a world in which many aspects of the cultural, social and economic systems are stacked against people like you. Some very privileged people have had awful experiences in life, but it does not erase their privilege. That is because privilege is about groups of people being given different rights and opportunities by the law and by socio-cultural norms. Incidentally, that is why you can have some forms of privilege and not others, and it doesn't make sense to try to "tally up" one's privilege into a sum total and compare it against others'.

By the way, the first person who says "But then why are TV shows a social justice issue?" in the comments will have their head put on a pike as an example to others. Cultural narratives are part of what builds and reinforces social roles, and those determine what opportunities a person has – and the rights they can actually exercise, even if they have them in the law. If you don't believe me and don't want to accept this idea, you will now google "stereotype threat", you will read [Thinking, Fast and Slow](#) by Daniel Kahneman, you will watch [this speech by Esther Duflo on women and development](#) (which talks about stereotypes and outcomes), and THEN you may return to this blog.

The conflation of nice and good also creates an avenue of subtle control over marginalised people. After all, what is seen as "nice" is cultural and often even class-dependent, and therefore the "manners" that matter get to be defined by the dominant ethnic group and class. For example, the "tone" argument, the favourite derailing tactic of bigots everywhere, is quite clearly a demand that the oppressor be treated "nicely" at all times by the oppressed – *and they get to define what "nice" treatment is*. This works because the primacy of nice in our culture creates a useful tool – to control people and to delegitimise their anger. A stark example of this is the stereotype of the desirably meek and passive woman, which is often held over women's heads if we step out of line. How much easier is it to hold on to social and cultural power when you make a rule that people who ask for an end to their own oppression have to ask for it nicely, never showing anger or any emotion at being systematically disenfranchised? (A lot easier.)

Furthermore, I think the confusion of meanness with oppression is the root cause of why bigots feel that calling someone a "bigot" is as bad as calling someone a "tranny" or taking away their rights. You know, previously I thought they were just being willfully obtuse, but now I realise what is going on. For example, most racists appear to feel that calling POC a racist slur is a roughly equal moral harm to POC calling them a "racist fuckhead". That's because they do not understand that using a racist slur is bad in any sense other than it hurts someone's feelings. And they know from experience that it hurts someone's feelings to be called racist douche.

So if you – the oppressed – hurt someone's feelings, you're just like the oppressor, right? Wrong. Oppression is not about hurt feelings. It is about the rights and opportunities that are not afforded to you because you belong to a certain group of people. When you use a racist slur you imply that non-whiteness is a bad thing, and thus publicly reinforce a system that denies POC the rights and opportunities of white people. Calling a white person a racist fuckhead doesn't do any of that. Yes, it's not very nice. And how effective it is as a tactic is definitely up for debate (that's a whole other blog post). But it's not oppression.

Being good and being nice are totally unrelated. We need to get serious about debunking this myth, because the confusion between the two is obfuscating our message and handing our oppressors another tool with which to silence us. In some cases, this confusion is putting people (especially women) in real danger. This social movement can't achieve its goals if people think it's essentially some kind of niceness revolution. And anyway, social justice is not about making the world a nicer place. It's about taking back the rights and opportunities denied to us by law or by social and cultural norms – and breaking out of the toxic mindset that wants us to say please and thank you when we do.

The Rise of the Native-Rights Based Strategic Framework

By Clayton Thomas-Muller

Tags: Climate Justice, Social Justice, Organization, Activism

Summary: A narrative about how indigenous organizing, climate justice, and other social justice goals can work in tandem.

To read the full version online, visit: <https://canadiandimension.com/articles/view/the-rise-of-the-native-rights-based-strategic-framework>

Years ago I was working for a well-known Indigenous environmental and economic justice organization known as the Indigenous Environmental Network (IEN). During my time with this organization I had the privilege of working with hundreds of Indigenous communities across the planet who had seen a sharp increase in the targeting of Native lands for mega-extractive and other toxic industries. The largest of these conflicts, of course, was the overrepresentation by big oil who work— often in cahoots with state, provincial First Nations, Tribal and federal governments both in the USA and Canada—to gain access to the valuable resources located in our territories. IEN hired me to work in a very abstract setting, under impossible conditions, with little or no resources to support Grassroots peoples fighting oil companies, who had become, in the era of free market economics, the most powerful and well-resourced entities of our time. My mission was to fight and protect the sacredness of Mother Earth from toxic contamination and corporate exploration, to support our Peoples to build sustainable local economies rooted in the sacred fire of our traditions.

My work took me to the Great Plains reservation, Three Affiliated Tribes of Fort Berthold to support a collective of mothers and grandmothers fighting a proposed oil refinery, which if built would process crude oil shipped in from a place called the tar sands in northern Canada. I spent time in Oklahoma working with Sac and Fox Tribal EPA under the tutelage of the late environmental justice warrior Jan Stevens, to learn about the legacy of 100 years of oil and gas on America's Indian Country—Oklahoma being one of the end up points of the shameful indian relocation era...

During my five years as an IEN Indigenous oil campaigner (2001–2006) I learned that these fights were all life and death situations, not just for local communities, but for the biosphere; that organizing in Indian Country called for a very different strategic and tactical play than conventional campaigning; that our grassroots movement for energy and climate justice was being lead by our Native woman and, as such, our movement was just as much about fighting patriarchy and asserting as a core of our struggle the sacred feminine creative principal; and that a large part of the work of movement building was about defending the sacredness of our Mother Earth and helping our peoples decolonize our notions of government, land management, business and social relation by going through a process of re-evaluating our connection to the sacred.

In the early years I often struggled with the arms of the non-profit industrial complex and its inner workings, which were heavily fortified with systems of power that reinforced racism, classism and gender discrimination at the highest levels of both non-profit organizations and foundations (funders). It was difficult to measure success of environmental and economic justice organizing using the western terms of quantitative versus qualitative analysis. Sure, our work had successfully kept many highly-polluting fossil fuel projects at bay, but the attempts to take our land by agents of the fossil fuel industry—with their lobbyist's pushing legislation loop holes and repackaging strategies—continued to pressure our uninformed and/or economically desperate Tribal Governments to grant access to our lands.

The most high profile victory came during the twilight of the first Bush/Cheney administration when our network collaborated with beltway groups like the Natural Resources Defense Council and effectively killed a harmful US energy bill containing provisions that would kick open the back door to fossil fuel companies, allowing access into our lands. The Indian Energy Title V campaign identified that if the energy bill passed, US tribes would be able, under the guise of tribal sovereignty, to administer their own environmental impact assessments and fast track development in their lands. Now this sounds like a good thing, right? Well, maybe for Tribal governments that had the legal and scientific capacity to do so, but for the hundreds of US Tribes without the resources, it set up a highly imbalanced playing field that would give the advantage to corporations to exploit economically disadvantaged nations to enter into the industrialization game.

Through a massive education campaign and highly-negotiated and coordinated collaborative effort of grassroots, beltway and international eNGOs—as well as multiple lobbying visits to Washington DC, lead by both elected and grassroots Tribal leaders—we gained the support of the National Congress of American Indians who agreed to write a letter opposing the energy bill to some of our champions in the US Senate, most notably the late Daniel Akaka who was Hawaii's first Native Senator. Under the guidance of America's oldest Indian Advocacy group he would lead a vote to kill the energy bill in the Senate. This was my first view into the power of the Native rights-based strategic and tactical framework and how it could bring the most powerful government on Earth (and the big oil lobby) to their knees...

For example with the passing of the US energy bill under the second US Bush/Cheney administration the US climate movement began to ramp up its attempts to have the administration pass a domestic climate bill... Citizen groups like the US Public Interest Research Group (US PIRG) received millions of dollars to try and organize people to put pressure on President Bush, and later President Obama, to adopt some form of climate policy... The groups that ended up receiving resources from that limited pot of climate funding... did not focus on mobilizing the

masses to get out in the streets; to target and stop local climate criminals or build a bona fide social movement rooted in an anti-colonial, anti-racist, anti-oppressive foundation to combat the climate crisis. Instead, it kept the discourse focussed on voluntary technological and market-based approaches to mitigating climate change—like carbon trading and carbon capture and storage.

I would argue that this frame is what kept this issue from bringing millions of Americans into the streets to stop the greenhouse gangsters from wrecking Mother Earth. Groups like the Indigenous Environmental Network, Southwest Workers Union and others fought tooth-and-nail to try and carve out pieces of these resources to go towards what we saw as the real carbon killers, which were local campaigns being lead by Indigenous Nations and communities of colour to stop coal mining, coal-fired power and big oil (including gas)...

Why Climate Change is Anti-Justice

From Hot Mess/PBS Digital Studios Video Series

Tags: Environment, Climate Change, Justice

Summary: One episode explaining climate's effect on inequality and justice.



To watch online, visit: https://youtu.be/Q5KipYK12_c

Stop Trying to Save Africa

By Uzodinma Iweala

Tags: Savior Complex, Africa, Activism, Service, Transnational

Summary: A former Harvard undergrad questions Africa-targeted college activists.

To read online, visit: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/07/13/AR2007071301714.html>

Last fall, shortly after I returned from Nigeria, I was accosted by a perky blond college student whose blue eyes seemed to match the "African" beads around her wrists.

"Save Darfur!" she shouted from behind a table covered with pamphlets urging students to TAKE ACTION NOW! STOP GENOCIDE IN DARFUR!

My aversion to college kids jumping onto fashionable social causes nearly caused me to walk on, but her next shout stopped me.

"Don't you want to help us save Africa?" she yelled.

It seems that these days, wracked by guilt at the humanitarian crisis it has created in the Middle East, the West has turned to Africa for redemption. Idealistic college students, celebrities such as Bob Geldof and politicians such as Tony Blair have all made bringing light to the dark continent their mission. They fly in for internships and fact-finding missions or to pick out children to adopt in much the same way my friends and I in New York take the subway to the pound to adopt stray dogs.

This is the West's new image of itself: a sexy, politically active generation whose preferred means of spreading the word are magazine spreads with celebrities pictured in the foreground, forlorn Africans in the back. Never mind that the stars sent to bring succor to the natives often are, willingly, as emaciated as those they want to help.

Perhaps most interesting is the language used to describe the Africa being saved. For example, the [Keep a Child Alive](#)/["I am African"](#) ad campaign features portraits of primarily white, Western celebrities with painted "tribal markings" on their faces above "I AM AFRICAN" in bold letters. Below, smaller print says, "help us stop the dying."

Such campaigns, however well intentioned, promote the stereotype of Africa as a black hole of disease and death. News reports constantly focus on the continent's corrupt leaders, warlords, "tribal" conflicts, child laborers, and women disfigured by abuse and genital mutilation. These descriptions run under headlines like "Can Bono Save Africa?" or "Will Brangelina Save Africa?" The relationship between the West and Africa is no longer based on openly racist beliefs, but such articles are reminiscent of reports from the heyday of European colonialism, when missionaries were sent to Africa to introduce us to education, Jesus Christ and "civilization."

There is no African, myself included, who does not appreciate the help of the wider world, but we do question whether aid is genuine or given in the spirit of affirming one's cultural superiority. My mood is dampened every time I attend a benefit whose host runs through a litany of African disasters before presenting a (usually) wealthy, white person, who often proceeds to list the things he or she has done for the poor, starving Africans. Every time a well-meaning college student speaks of villagers dancing because they were so grateful for her help, I cringe. Every time a Hollywood director shoots a film about Africa that features a Western protagonist, I shake my head -- because Africans, real people though we may be, are used as props in the West's fantasy of itself. And not only do such depictions tend to ignore the West's prominent role in creating many of the unfortunate situations on the continent, they also ignore the incredible work Africans have done and continue to do to fix those problems.

Why do the media frequently refer to African countries as having been "granted independence from their colonial masters," as opposed to having fought and shed blood for their freedom? Why do Angelina Jolie and Bono receive overwhelming attention for their work in Africa while Nwankwo Kanu or Dikembe Mutombo, Africans both, are hardly ever mentioned? How is it that a former mid-level U.S. diplomat receives more attention for his cowboy antics in Sudan than do the numerous African Union countries that have sent food and troops and spent countless hours trying to negotiate a settlement among all parties in that crisis?

Two years ago I worked in a camp for internally displaced people in Nigeria, survivors of an uprising that killed about 1,000 people and displaced 200,000. True to form, the Western media reported on the violence but not on the humanitarian work the state and local governments -- without much international help -- did for the survivors. Social workers spent their time and in many cases their own salaries to care for their compatriots. These are the people saving Africa, and others like them across the continent get no credit for their work.

Last month the Group of Eight industrialized nations and a host of celebrities met in Germany to discuss, among other things, how to save Africa. Before the next such summit, I hope people will realize Africa doesn't want to be saved. Africa wants the world to acknowledge that through fair partnerships with other members of the global community, we ourselves are capable of unprecedented growth.

The Limits of Charity *By David Hilfiker*

Tags: Charity, Service, Structural Change

Summary: When do acts of service hurt more than they help? How do we advocate for structural change in society?

THE WORDS OF THE PROPHET MICAH ARE FAMILIAR:

What does the Lord require of you? To act justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God, (8 : 6)
But what if our love of mercy chokes out our ability to act justly?

Since 1983, I have worked as a doctor with poor people in the inner city of Washington, D.C. I began at Community of Hope Health Services, a small church-sponsored clinic, and at Christ House, a thirty-four-bed medical recovery shelter for homeless men. In 1990, I founded Joseph's House, a ten-bed community for homeless men with AIDS where I work now. I intend to continue working there. But I've been having misgivings.

I have begun to see some "side effects" to the kind of work I do, and they concern the important difference between justice and charity. Justice has to do with fairness, with what people deserve. It results from social structures that guarantee moral rights. Charity has to do with benevolence or generosity. It results from people's good will and can be withdrawn whenever they choose.

To put the question most bluntly: Do our works of charity impede the realization of justice in our society?

This is not a question of our personal commitment to justice. Throughout all of my years in Washington, I have yearned for justice and felt ready to sacrifice for it. I have hoped that my work brings attention to the plight of the poor and thus contributes to justice.

What I actually do, however, is offer help to poor people. Though I believe God calls me to do this, I could leave at any time. The poor people I have served over the past seventeen years have had no "right" to what I was giving them. While I believe in justice for the poor and in challenging the structures of our society that deprive them of that justice, in fact I have offered charity.

My overall concern is this: Charitable endeavors such as Joseph's House serve to relieve the pressure for more fundamental societal changes. In her book *Sweet Charity*, sociologist Janet Poppendieck writes that charity acts as "a sort of a 'moral safety valve'"; it reduces the discomfort evoked by visible destitution in our midst by creating the illusion of effective action and offering us myriad ways of participating in it. It creates a culture of charity that normalizes destitution and legitimates personal generosity as a response to [injustice]."

I was reminded of this recently when I attended a Walk for the Homeless in Washington, one of those many good and important efforts to raise money for Joseph's House and similar organizations. Before we began to walk, a nationally known sports star gave a little pep talk, exhorting the walkers to "go out and do your part to end homelessness." I have nothing against the walk, and I suspect the sports star did not really intend the implication. But walking five kilometers on a beautiful Saturday morning is not "doing your part to end homelessness."

Something similar happens at Joseph's House itself. How many of our contributors and volunteers end up feeling that their participation with us fulfills their responsibilities to the poor? It will not be a conscious thought, of course. But you come down and volunteer for a while, or you write a check, and it feels good. Perhaps you develop a close relationship with a formerly homeless man with AIDS, and you realize your common humanity. You feel a real satisfaction in that. You bring your children. But in the process you risk forgetting what a scandal it is that Joseph's House or your local soup kitchen is needed in the first place, forgetting that it is no coincidence that your new friend is black, poor, illiterate, and unskilled. It is easy to lose an appropriate sense of outrage.

I am also concerned that places like Joseph's House may reassure voters and policy makers that the problem is being taken care of. Joseph's House gets a fair amount of publicity; we are well known around the city. So when the issue of AIDS and homelessness arises in people's mind, it can be mentally checked off: "Look at Joseph's House! Isn't it wonderful? I guess things aren't as bad as we thought."

Soup kitchens and shelters started as emergency responses to terrible problems--to help ensure that people do not starve, or die from the elements. No one, certainly not their founders, ever considered these services as appropriate permanent solutions to the problems. But soup kitchens and food pantries are now our standard response to hunger; cities see shelters as adequate housing for the homeless. Our church-sponsored shelters can camouflage the fact that charity has replaced an entitlement to housing that was lost when the federally subsidized housing program was gutted twenty years ago. Our soup kitchens can mask unconscionable cuts in food stamps.

Furthermore, if we are busy caring for the poor, who is going to do the time-consuming work of advocacy, of changing the system? Lots of "people power" goes into running Joseph's House: We have board members, staff, and volunteers. Even those of us who understand that our charity does not satisfy the demands of justice have little time or energy left for advocacy work. Day-to-day responsibilities and frequent emergencies leave few opportunities to picket, to write letters to the editor, to testify before a commission. Those of us who care the most may be the least able to get involved.

For most of us, the work of advocacy is less rewarding than day-to-day contact with needy people. It is less direct. As an advocate, I may never see significant change; I would rather immerse myself in direct service. And so the desperately needed work of advocacy is left undone.

A more subtle problem is that many social ministries may unwittingly contribute to the perception that governmental programs for the poor are inefficient and wasteful, and are better "privatized." The last twenty years have seen a harsh turn against government. People in our society who oppose justice for the poor have used the inevitable organizational problems within some government programs to smear any kind of governmental action. One of their favorite tools is the supposed "efficiency" of nonprofit organizations.

It is true that nonprofits can often do things with relatively little money--primarily because of all the volunteered hours, the donated goods, the low or non-existent salaries, the space donated by churches, and so forth. Government programs do not ordinarily get these enormous infusions of free time and materials, so of course they are more expensive than ours. But "expensive" is different from "inefficient."

Only the government--that is, "we the people," acting in concert locally, state-wide, or nationally--can guarantee rights, can create or oversee programs that assure everyone adequate access to what they need. Because government can assure entitlements while Joseph's House cannot, compa'ring the two is not even appropriate. Still, the comparison is used to rail against government action for justice.

And what of charity's toll on the recipients' human dignity? Charity may be necessary, but charity--especially long-term charity--wounds the self-worth of its recipients. Try as we might to make our programs humane, it is still we who are the givers and they who are the receivers. Charity thus "acts out" inequality. Poppendieck writes that charity excuses the recipient from the usual socially required obligation to repay, which means sacrificing some piece of that person's dignity.

We hear much talk these days about "faith-based organizations" as appropriate tools for dealing with social ills--perhaps even replacing government as the primary provider of services to the needy. But while they certainly play a useful role, faith-based organizations cannot be a substitute for government.

Consider, for example, Joseph's House. In our care for homeless people with AIDS, Joseph's House depends on the good will of an enormous number of people. We were founded only with the extraordinary support of a nationally known faith community (Washington D.C.'s Church of the Saviour), plus the gifts of many people. Even now, local foundations and several thousand individuals and churches across the country provide support, and most of our professional staff have salaries considerably below what they could earn elsewhere. All this is certainly not unique to Joseph's House, but it is hardly commonplace.

So what happens in a place that does not have a faith community with a national list of donors? What happens when the people who want to start a house such as ours already spend all their time working in soup kitchens and health clinics or providing food and shelter to homeless people in their churches? What happens if the local populace is not interested in caring for homosexuals or drug users? In all those cases, nothing happens--because society has said that homeless men with AIDS do not have an entitlement to food, shelter, and appropriate medical care.

Even if there were enough well-intentioned people in every community, where would the money come from? Like most nonprofits, Joseph's House receives much of its funding (in our case almost two-thirds) from the local and federal governments. Even with that funding, we share the lament of other similar nonprofits: There is so much more we could be doing, so many more people who need help. But no one who is implying that faith-based organizations should take over the care of homeless persons with AIDS is also talking about increasing taxes to fund them. And without those increases, charity is not going to replace taxes as a solution for this problem.

As for faith-based organizations providing for all the needs of the poor, the chances are even more remote. Some idea of the magnitude of the problem comes from Rebecca Blank, a government economist during the Bush administration and author of *It Takes A Nation*, an excellent, balanced look at U.S. poverty. She points out that if we asked churches to pay the costs of only three government programs--welfare for families, disability payments for the poor, and food stamps--every single church, synagogue, mosque, and other religious congregation would have to come up with \$300,000 a year. For the average congregation, this would mean tripling its budget and spending all of the increase on the poor. If, instead, we asked the nonprofit charitable institutions that currently serve the poor to foot this bill, they would need their contributions to increase seven-fold. Add in Medicaid, and the need for additional funding more than doubles!

Our charitable works, then, simply cannot provide care for all who need these services. Yet our projects can give the illusion that charity is the solution.

At another level, the fundamental problem for the poor in our country is, not homelessness or AIDS or hunger or the like--or even any combination of these. They are just symptoms; the problem is injustice. In promoting our institutions, it is natural to emphasize the importance of our own project. But this can lead to subtle impressions that if we just distribute enough food, or create enough bed space, or find enough homes--that is, if we just treat the symptoms--we will have solved "the problem."

Injustice, however, is more deep-seated. It is the inevitable result of the structures of our society--economic, governmental, social, and religious--that undergird inequality. The way things stand now, poverty is built into these systems.

Consider just the economics. Despite the U.S. poverty rate being the lowest since the 1970s, despite the lowest unemployment rate in thirty years and the rise in the minimum hourly wage to \$5.15, one out of eight Americans is still poor. Among children below the age of six, one out of every four lives in a poor family.

What are the economic structures that keep poor people trapped in their poverty?

The first is low wages. The big change in U.S. poverty over the last twenty years has been the decline in wages among the less skilled, leaving many full-time workers in poverty. Of the people who are below the poverty

line, 30 percent live in families with at least one full-time worker. In 1970, a single mother working full-time at minimum wage could pull herself and two children out of poverty. Today, a minimum-wage job leaves a parent and one child below the poverty line. Another is unemployment. The national unemployment rate is just 4 percent, but this figure is deceptive. It does not include involuntary part-time workers (increasingly common as employers avoid paying benefits); those who have dropped out of the work force altogether (for example, those who are so discouraged they are no longer even looking for work); those who are incarcerated; or those with jobs that do not pay them enough to stave off poverty.

Yet another is lost or inadequate unemployment benefits. Fewer than half of the unemployed still collect unemployment benefits. For those who do, the average benefit is 40 percent of one's previous earnings--not much if the previous earnings were minimum wage.

Also dragging down the poor is the high cost of housing. Of all the U.S. households with incomes below the poverty line, nearly half (45 percent) spend more than 70 percent of their money on rent and utilities.

Other developed countries have put into place economic safety nets for people who fall into poverty. But the "safety net" in the United States is so shredded it no longer deserves the name.

Charity does little to change the wider social and political systems that sustain injustice. In fact, most charities depend heavily on the very volunteers, individual donors, and institutions that have prospered under the current systems. And people who have done well in a system are usually not interested in changing it drastically--in fact, they may be diametrically opposed.

So even if we ourselves perceive the need for systemic changes, we may feel compelled to whisper those perceptions rather than shout them for fear of alienating those on whom we most depend. Charity offends almost no one; at one point or another, justice offends practically everyone.

I am not, of course, suggesting that we abandon charity. As an adjunct to justice, charity is both necessary in our current situation and a requirement of our faith. But we must acknowledge the broader implications of our charity and recognize that it alone is not enough. That done, we need to start thinking, about ways for our charitable organizations to support those who work for justice.

Our promotional materials, for example, must at least refer to systemic factors, recognizing that charity is not the solution.

We must be careful about comparing our work to, or even alluding to, the "inefficiency" of government programs. We must offer our volunteers reading materials, seminars, and discussion opportunities about the systemic issues. By putting themselves into face-to-face contact with the poor, they have taken an important first step. We need to encourage them to continue the journey.

We must include education as part of our mission. This can mean talking about larger issues in our newsletters and donor appeals. Perhaps it will result in a few people dropping their financial support, but that is the type of risk our organizations need to take.

We must engage in political advocacy. By law, tax-exempt organizations are able to use portions of their budget for advocacy. What if every social ministry dedicated 5 percent of its budget to advocacy, freeing up time for staff to preach sermons, to speak on justice issues in small groups at our churches, to testify before government commissions, to write letters to their newspaper, to call or write our elected representatives?

We must get behind the effort to drastically change campaign financing. Though barred from supporting individual candidates, nonprofits can use this election year to emphasize that the United States will not be an effective democracy until the enormous influence of money on government decisions is reduced. "We the people" currently have little power to persuade our representatives to vote for justice.

Working for justice is messier and far less rewarding than charity. There are no quick fixes, and the most common reason for quitting is discouragement. But we have little choice. Within an unjust society, there are limitations to our charity; we need to join others in the struggle for justice as well. It is a fundamental requirement of our faith.

Black Study, Black Struggle

By Robin D. G. Kelley

Tags: Activism, Universities, Protests, Structural Change, Racism

Summary: An article connecting student anti-racist activism to history and scholarship, and urging student activists to go further.

To read online, visit: <https://bostonreview.net/forum/robin-d-g-kelley-black-study-black-struggle>

In the fall of 2015, college campuses were engulfed by fires ignited in the streets of Ferguson, Missouri. This is not to say that college students had until then been quiet in the face of police violence against black Americans. Throughout the previous year, it had often been college students who hit the streets, blocked traffic, occupied the halls of justice and malls of America, disrupted political campaign rallies, and risked arrest to protest the torture and suffocation of Eric Garner, the abuse and death of Sandra Bland, the executions of Tamir Rice, Ezell Ford, Tanisha Anderson, Walter Scott, Tony Robinson, Freddie Gray, ad infinitum.

That the fire this time spread from the town to the campus is consistent with historical patterns. The campus revolts of the 1960s, for example, followed the Harlem and Watts rebellions, the freedom movement in the South, and the rise of militant organizations in the cities. But the size, speed, intensity, and character of recent student uprisings caught much of the country off guard. Protests against campus racism and the ethics of universities' financial entanglements erupted on nearly ninety campuses, including Brandeis, Yale, Princeton, Brown, Harvard, Claremont McKenna, Smith, Amherst, UCLA, Oberlin, Tufts, and the University of North Carolina, both Chapel Hill and Greensboro. These demonstrations were led largely by black students, as well as coalitions made up of students of color, queer folks, undocumented immigrants, and allied whites.

What I offer here are a few observations and speculations about the movement, its self-conception, and its demands, many of which focus on making the university more hospitable for black students. I am not opposed to this. Nor am I questioning the courageous students who have done more to disrupt university business-as-usual than any movement in the last half-century. Instead I want to draw attention to the contradictory impulses within the movement: the tension between reform and revolution, between desiring to belong and rejecting the university as a cog in the neoliberal order. I want to think about what it means for black students to seek love from an institution incapable of loving them—of loving anyone, perhaps—and to manifest this yearning by framing their lives largely through a lens of trauma. And I want to think about what it means for black students to choose to follow Stefano Harney and Fred Moten's call to become subversives in the academy, exposing and resisting its labor exploitation, its gentrifying practices, its endowments built on misery, its class privilege often camouflaged in multicultural garb, and its commitments to war and security.

It is fair to say that most black students have minimal interest in joining the current wave of activism. Many are not politically radical, while others feel that they do not yet have the discernment to know if they are. Others fear that an activist past may haunt them in the future, while the majority is simply trying to get through school and join the ranks of professionals. This essay does not attempt to offer such students an invitation to activism, although that would be a worthy project. Rather, I am interested in speaking to those who are already activists, specifically about the ideological fissures in their movement and what these might tell us about the character of contemporary black movements, the future of the university, and what I believe is a crisis of political education. And while crises reveal contradictions, they also signal opportunities.

In particular, I challenge student activists to not cleave their activism from their intellectual lives or mistakenly believe that because the university does not offer them the education they crave, it is beyond their reach. There is a long history of black activists repurposing university resources to instruct themselves and one another—to self-radicalize, in effect. This is not to say that today's student activists should do exactly as was done in the past, but historical models may provide valuable insights for those seeking novel solutions. Moreover, I encourage student activists to carefully consider the language they use to frame their grievances. In particular, I argue that while trauma can be an entrance into activism, it is not in itself a destination and may even trick activists into adopting the language of the neoliberal institutions they are at pains to reject.

The epicenter of recent student activism, the University of Missouri, Columbia, is a two-hour drive from the spot where former Ferguson police officer Darren Wilson ended Michael Brown's life. In November the activism of a coalition called Concerned Student 1950 (the year "Mizzou" admitted its first black student)—coupled with a

hunger-striking graduate student and a threatened strike by the varsity football team—forced the president and chancellor to resign and the university’s Board of Curators to acknowledge a long history of campus racism. It was a victory for students of color at Mizzou and elsewhere, who have been fighting deeply entrenched racism for years. Since President Obama took office in 2009, the U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights has received more than a thousand formal complaints of racial harassment at colleges and universities.

While students on various campuses have done everything from addressing racial incidents to criticizing university investments, the national trend is to push for measures that would make campuses more hospitable to students of color: greater diversity, inclusion, safety, and affordability. That means more students, faculty, staff, and administrators of color; “safe spaces” and mental health support; reduced or free tuition; curricular changes; and the renaming of campus buildings and monuments after significant nonwhite figures. Similarly the Obama administration convened a meeting of administrators, faculty, students, and lawyers to promote ways to “foster supportive educational environments.” As former Secretary of Education Arne Duncan put it, college should be about “finding a home and a community” and ensuring that campuses are “welcoming places for learning for every student.”

Indeed, to some extent campus protests articulated the sense of betrayal and disappointment that many black students felt upon finding that their campuses failed to live up to their PR. Many students had come to the university expecting to find a welcoming place, a nurturing faculty, and protective administration. If they believed this, it was in no small part because university recruiters wanted them to: tours for prospective students, orientations, and slickly produced brochures often rely on metaphors of family and community, highlight campus diversity, and emphasize the sense of belonging that young scholars enjoy.

But while the rebellions succeeded in getting the attention of administrators and trustees, as well as the national media, students endured an awful backlash—including credible death threats—that tested the limits of the family metaphor, which to many now seems both misguided and disingenuous. Conservatives and liberals alike trivialized their activism, dismissing the protesters as oversensitive whiners whose demands for speech codes, dress codes, and mandatory anti-racist courses threaten the university’s integrity and impede critical thought.

The rancor, however, has obscured fundamental differences within the movement. Student’s core demands for greater diversity, inclusion, and cultural-competency training converge with their critics’ fundamental belief that the university possesses a unique teleology: it is supposed to be an enlightened space free of bias and prejudice, but the pursuit of this promise is hindered by structural racism and patriarchy. Though adherents of this perspective differ in their assessments of the extent to which the university falls short of this ideal, they agree that it is perfectible.

I do not. The fully racialized social and epistemological architecture upon which the modern university is built cannot be radically transformed by “simply” adding darker faces, safer spaces, better training, and a curriculum that acknowledges historical and contemporary oppressions. This is a bit like asking for more black police officers as a strategy to curb state violence. We need more faculty of color, but integration alone is not enough. Likewise, what is the point of providing resources to recruit more students of color without changing admissions criteria and procedures? Why do we stay wedded to standard “achievement” measures instead of, say, open admissions?

A smaller, more radical contingent of protesters is less sanguine about the university’s capacity to change. Rejecting the family metaphor, these students understand that universities are not walled off from the “real world” but instead are corporate entities in their own right. These students are not fighting for a “supportive” educational environment, but a liberated one that not only promotes but also models social and economic justice. One such student coalition is the Black Liberation Collective, which has three demands:

- 1) that the numbers of black students and faculty reflect the national percentage of black folks in the country;
- 2) that tuition be free for black and indigenous students;
- 3) that universities divest from prisons and invest in communities.

Likewise the demands from protesters at UNC, Chapel Hill are a model for radical global politics. They include ending ties to prisons and sweated labor; retraining and disarming campus police; offering free childcare for students, staff, and faculty; and paying a minimum wage of \$25 per hour for workers, with the addendum “that all administrators be compensated at the same rate as workers.” Many will say these are not winnable demands, but winning is not always the point. Unveiling the university’s exploitative practices and its deeply embedded structures of racism, sexism, and class inequality can be profound acts of demystification on their own.

But still, a common thread runs through both the more modest and more radical critics of universities. Both demand that universities change in ways that we cannot expect them to change. The first group asks

universities to deliver on their promise to be post-racial havens, but that will not happen in a surrounding sea of white supremacy. The second sees universities as the leading edge in a socially revolutionary fight. While I share the transformative aims of the latter, I think that universities are not up to the task. Certainly universities can and will become more diverse and marginally more welcoming for black students, but as institutions they will never be engines of social transformation. Such a task is ultimately the work of political education and activism. By definition it takes place outside the university.

Fugitive Study

Black studies was conceived not just outside the university but in opposition to a Eurocentric university culture with ties to corporate and military power. Having emerged from mass revolt, insurgent black studies scholars developed institutional models based in, but largely independent of, the academy. In later decades, these institutions were—with varying degrees of eagerness—incorporated into the university proper in response to pressure to embrace multiculturalism.

In 1969 Vincent Harding, Stephen Henderson, Abdul Alkalimat, A. B. Spellman, Larry Rushing, and Council Taylor founded the Institute of the Black World (IBW) at Atlanta University in order to mobilize the “collective scholarship” of black intellectuals to confront racism and colonialism, here and abroad. Black students, artists, and activists at the University of Chicago founded the Communiversity, offering courses in African history and Marxist political economy to community members on Chicago’s South Side. Less than two decades later, the United Coalition Against Racism, a student organization at the University of Michigan, established the Ella Baker – Nelson Mandela Center for Anti-Racist Education (BMC). The center was never conceived as a safe space for students of color but rather as a resource for anti-racist struggles “dedicated to the principle of thinking in order to act.” The BMC offered leadership training, sponsored cultural and educational events, provided rare anti-racist literature, and served as a radical place for study and critical engagement open to everyone, especially nonuniversity working-class residents.

In fact, it was during a talk held at IBW that the Guyanese historian Walter Rodney, some six years before he was martyred, urged radical black scholars to become “guerrilla intellectuals.” By this he meant freeing ourselves from the “Babylonian captivity” of bourgeois society, moving beyond disciplinary imperatives, and “grounding” with the people so as to engage, act, and think collectively in terms of social movements. Recently, Rodney’s notion of the guerrilla intellectual has been resuscitated and transformed in Stefano Harney and Fred Moten’s *The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning and Black Study*.

Harney and Moten disavow the very idea that the university is, or can ever be, an enlightened place, by which I mean a place that would actively seek to disrupt the reproduction of our culture’s classed, racialized, nationalized, gendered, moneyed, and militarized stratifications. Instead they argue that the university is dedicated to professionalization, order, scientific efficiency, counterinsurgency, and war—wars on terror, sovereign nations, communism, drugs, and gangs. The authors advocate refuge in and sabotage from the undercommons, a subaltern, subversive way of being in but not of the university. The undercommons is a fugitive network where a commitment to abolition and collectivity prevails over a university culture bent on creating socially isolated individuals whose academic skepticism and claims of objectivity leave the world-as-it-is intact.

Unlike Rodney’s guerrilla intellectuals, Harney and Moten’s guerrillas are not preparing to strike, planning to seize power, contesting the university (or the state; the difference isn’t always clear)—at least not on the terms they have set. To do so would be to recognize the university and its legitimacy and to be invested in its regimes of professionalization. Instead Harney and Moten argue that the university’s power over our lives is illusory. It lulls us into believing that politics—to lobby for access to, or control over, such institutions—is our only salvation. The book is a clarion call to think together, to plan together in undisciplined assembly. When *The Undercommons* hit the Internet—first as a 2008 essay and then as a 2013 collection of essays—it spread like wildfire among the PhD precariat and radical-thinking graduate students. For many young scholars cobbling together a life adjuncting, Harney and Moten’s critique of the university spoke an essential truth: “It cannot be denied that the university is a place of refuge, and it cannot be accepted that the university is a place of enlightenment. In the face of these conditions one can only sneak into the university and steal what one can.”

Contrast this with black student protesters who appeal to the university to “repair a broken community,” to make students “feel safe, accepted, supported and like they belong,” and to remedy their sense of alienation through “intense ‘inclusion and belonging’ training for all levels of students, staff, faculty, and administration.” Why black students might seek belonging and inclusion over refuge is understandable, given their expressed sense of alienation and isolation, combined with the university’s liberal use of the family metaphor. It also explains why students are asking the university to implement curriculum changes—namely, the creation of cultural-competency

courses, more diverse course reading lists, and classes dedicated to the study of race, gender, sexuality, and social justice. They not only acknowledge the university's magisterium in all things academic, but they also desperately wish to change the campus culture, to make this bounded world less hostile and less racist.

But granting the university so much authority over our reading choices, and emphasizing a respect for difference over a critique of power, comes at a cost. Students not only come to see the curriculum as an oppressor that delimits their interrogation of the world, but they also come to see racism largely in personal terms.

The Personal Is Not Always Political

Second only to a desire for increased diversity, better mental health services were a chief priority for student protesters. Activists framed their concerns and grievances in the language of personal trauma. We shouldn't be surprised. While every generation of black Americans has experienced unrelenting violence, this is the first one compelled to witness virtually all of it, to endure the snuffing out of black lives in real time, looped over and over again, until the next murder knocks it off the news. We are also talking about a generation that has lived through two of the longest wars in U.S. history, raised on a culture of spectacle where horrific acts of violence are readily available on their smartphones. What Henry Giroux insightfully identifies as an addiction does nothing to inure or desensitize young people to violence. On the contrary, it anchors violence in their collective consciousness, produces fear and paranoia—wrapped elegantly in thrill—and shrouds the many ways capitalism, militarism, and racism are killing black and brown people.

So one can easily see why the language of trauma might appeal to black students. Trauma is real; it is no joke. Mental health services and counseling are urgently needed. But reading black experience through trauma can easily slip into thinking of ourselves as victims and objects rather than agents, subjected to centuries of gratuitous violence that have structured and overdetermined our very being. In the argot of our day, "bodies"—vulnerable and threatening bodies—increasingly stand in for actual people with names, experiences, dreams, and desires. I suspect that the popularity of Ta-Nehisi Coates's *Between the World and Me* (2015), especially among black college students, rests on his singular emphasis on fear, trauma, and the black body. He writes:

In America, it is traditional to destroy the black body—it is heritage. Enslavement was not merely the antiseptic borrowing of labor—it is not so easy to get a human being to commit their body against its own elemental interest. And so enslavement must be casual wrath and random manglings, the gashing of heads and brains blown out over the river as the body seeks to escape. It must be rape so regular as to be industrial. . . . The spirit and soul are the body and brain, which are destructible—that is precisely why they are so precious. And the soul did not escape. The spirit did not steal away on gospel wings.

Coates implies that the person is the brain, and the brain just another organ to be crushed with the rest of the body's parts. Earlier in the book, he makes the startling declaration that enslaved people "knew nothing but chains." I do not deny the violence Coates so eloquently describes here, and I am sympathetic to his atheistic skepticism. But what sustained enslaved African people was a memory of freedom, dreams of seizing it, and conspiracies to enact it—fugitive planning, if you will. If we reduce the enslaved to mere fungible bodies, we cannot possibly understand how they created families, communities, sociality; how they fled and loved and worshiped and defended themselves; how they created the world's first social democracy.

Moreover, to identify anti-black violence as heritage may be true in a general sense, but it obscures the dialectic that produced and reproduced the violence of a regime dependent on black life for its profitability. It was, after all, the resisting black body that needed "correction." Violence was used not only to break bodies but to discipline people who refused enslavement. And the impulse to resist is neither involuntary nor solitary. It is a choice made in community, made possible by community, and informed by memory, tradition, and witness. If Africans were entirely compliant and docile, there would have been no need for vast expenditures on corrections, security, and violence. Resistance is our heritage.

And resistance is our healing. Through collective struggle, we alter our circumstances; contain, escape, or possibly eviscerate the source of trauma; recover our bodies; reclaim and redeem our dead; and make ourselves whole. It is difficult to see this in a world where words such as trauma, PTSD, micro-aggression, and triggers have virtually replaced oppression, repression, and subjugation. Naomi Wallace, a brilliant playwright whose work explores trauma in the context of race, sexuality, class, war, and empire, muses:

Mainstream America is less threatened by the 'trauma' theory because it doesn't place economic justice at its core and takes the focus out of the realm of justice and into psychology; out of the streets, communities, into the singular experience (even if experienced in common) of the individual.

Similarly, George Lipsitz observes that emphasizing “interiority,” personal pain, and feeling elevates “the cultivation of sympathy over the creation of social justice.” This is partly why demands for reparations to address historical and ongoing racism are so antithetical to modern liberalism.

Managing trauma does not require dismantling structural racism, which is why university administrators focus on avoiding triggers rather than implementing zero-tolerance policies for racism or sexual assault. Buildings will be renamed and safe spaces for people of color will be created out of a sliver of university real estate, but proposals to eliminate tuition and forgive student debt for the descendants of the dispossessed and the enslaved will be derided as absurd. This is also why diversity and cultural-competency training are the most popular strategies for addressing campus racism. As if racism were a manifestation of our “incompetent” handling of “difference.” If we cannot love the other, we can at least learn to hear, respect, understand, and “tolerate” her. Cultural competency also means reckoning with white privilege, coming to terms with unconscious bias and the myriad ways white folks benefit from current racial arrangements. Powerful as this might be, the solution to racism still is shifted to the realm of self-help and human resources, resting on self-improvement or the hiring of a consultant or trainer to help us reach our goal.

Cultural-competency training, greater diversity, and demands for multicultural curricula represent both a resistance to and manifestation of our current “postracial” moment. In *Are We All Postracial Yet?* (2015), David Theo Goldberg correctly sees postracialism as a neoliberal revision of multicultural discourse, whose proposed remedies to address racism would in fact resuscitate late-century multiculturalism. But why hold on to the policies and promises of multiculturalism and diversity, especially since they have done nothing to dislodge white supremacy? Indeed I want to suggest that the triumph of multiculturalism marked a defeat for a radical anti-racist vision. True, multiculturalism emerged in response to struggles waged by the Black Freedom movement and other oppressed groups in the 1960s and ’70s. But the programmatic adoption of diversity, inclusion, and multiculturalism vampirized the energy of a radical movement that began by demanding the complete transformation of the social order and the eradication of all forms of racial, gender, sexual, and class hierarchy.

The point of liberal multiculturalism was not to address the historical legacies of racism, dispossession, and injustice but rather to bring some people into the fold of a “society no longer seen as racially unjust.” What did

Glass Ceiling- A glass ceiling is a political term used to describe “the unseen, yet unbreachable barrier that keeps minorities and women from rising to the upper rungs of the corporate ladder, regardless of their qualifications or achievements.”

it bring us? Black elected officials and black CEOs who helped manage the greatest transfer of wealth to the rich and oversee the continued erosion of the welfare state; the displacement, deportation, and deterioration of black and brown communities; mass incarceration; and planetary war. We talk about breaking **glass ceilings** in corporate America while building more jail cells for the rest. The triumph of liberal multiculturalism also meant a shift from a radical anti-capitalist critique to a politics of recognition. This means, for example, that we now embrace the right of same-sex couples to marry so

long as they do not challenge the institution itself, which is still modeled upon the exchanging of property; likewise we accept the right of people of color, women, and queer people to serve in the military, killing and torturing around the world.

At the same time, contemporary calls for cultural competence and tolerance reflect neoliberal logic by emphasizing individual responsibility and suffering, shifting race from the public sphere to the psyche. The postracial, Goldberg writes, “renders individuals solely accountable for their own actions and expressions, not for their group’s.” Tolerance in its multicultural guise, as Wendy Brown taught us, is the liberal answer to managing difference but with no corresponding transformation in the conditions that, in the first place, marked certain bodies as suspicious, deviant, abject, or illegible. Tolerance, therefore, depoliticizes genuine struggles for justice and power:

Depoliticization involves construing inequality, subordination, marginalization, and social conflict, which all require political analysis and political solutions, as personal and individual, on the one hand, or as natural, religious, or cultural on the other. Tolerance works along both vectors of depoliticization—it personalizes and it naturalizes or culturalizes—and sometimes it intertwines them.

But how can we embrace our students and acknowledge their pain while remaining wary of a culture that reduces structural oppression to misunderstanding and psychology?

Love, Study, Struggle

Taped inside the top drawer of my desk is a small scrap of paper with three words scrawled across it: “Love, Study, Struggle.” It serves as a daily reminder of what I am supposed to be doing. Black study and resistance must begin with love. James Baldwin understood love-as-agency probably better than anyone. For him it meant to

love ourselves as black people; it meant making love the motivation for making revolution; it meant envisioning a society where everyone is embraced, where there is no oppression, where every life is valued—even those who may once have been our oppressors. It did not mean seeking white people's love and acceptance or seeking belonging in the world created by our oppressor. In *The Fire Next Time* (1963), he is unequivocal: "I do not know many Negroes who are eager to be 'accepted' by white people, still less to be loved by them; they, the blacks, simply don't wish to be beaten over the head by the whites every instant of our brief passage on this planet." But here is the catch: if we are committed to genuine freedom, we have no choice but to love all. To love all is to fight relentlessly to end exploitation and oppression everywhere, even on behalf of those who think they hate us. This was Baldwin's point—perhaps his most misunderstood and reviled point.

To love this way requires relentless struggle, deep study, and critique. Limiting our ambit to suffering, resistance, and achievement is not enough. We must go to the root—the historical, political, social, cultural, ideological, material, economic root—of oppression in order to understand its negation, the prospect of our liberation. Going to the root illuminates what is hidden from us, largely because most structures of oppression and all of their various entanglements are simply not visible and not felt. For example, if we argue that state violence is merely a manifestation of anti-blackness because that is what we see and feel, we are left with no theory of the state and have no way of understanding racialized police violence in places such as Atlanta and Detroit, where most cops are black, unless we turn to some metaphysical explanation.

For my generation, the formal classroom was never the space for deep critique precisely because it was not a place of love. The classroom was—and still is—a performative space, where faculty and students compete with each other. Through study groups, we created our own intellectual communities held together by principle and love, though the specters of sectarianism, ego, and just-plain childishness blurred our vision and threatened our camaraderie. Still, the political study group was our lifeblood—both on and off campus. We lived by Karl Marx's pithy 1844 statement:

But if the designing of the future and the proclamation of ready-made solutions for all time is not our affair, then we realize all the more clearly what we have to accomplish in the present—I am speaking of a ruthless criticism of everything existing, ruthless in two senses: The criticism must not be afraid of its own conclusions, nor of conflict with the powers that be.

Study groups introduced me to C. L. R. James, Frantz Fanon, Walter Rodney, Barbara Smith, Angela Davis, Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, Vladimir Lenin, Chancellor Williams, George E. M. James, Shulamith Firestone, Kwame Nkrumah, Kwame Turé, Rosa Luxemburg, Antonio Gramsci, Chinweizu Ibekwe, Amílcar Cabral, and others. These texts were our sources of social critique and weapons in our class war on the bourgeois canon. As self-styled activist-intellectuals, it never occurred to us to refuse to read a text simply because it validated the racism, sexism, free-market ideology, and bourgeois liberalism against which we railed. Nothing was off limits. On the contrary, delving into these works only sharpened our critical faculties.

Love and study cannot exist without struggle, and struggle cannot occur solely inside the refuge we call the university. Being grounded in the world we wish to make is fundamental. As I argued in *Freedom Dreams* nearly fifteen years ago, "Social movements generate new knowledge, new theories, new questions. The most radical ideas often grow out of a concrete intellectual engagement with the problems of aggrieved populations confronting systems of oppression." Ironically I wrote these words with my students in mind, many of whom were involved in campus struggles, feeling a bit rudderless but believing that the only way to make themselves into authentic activists was to leave the books and radical theories at home or in their dorms. The undercommons offers students a valuable model of study that takes for granted the indivisibility of thought and struggle, not unlike its antecedent, the Mississippi Freedom Schools.

The Mississippi Freedom Schools, initially launched by the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee as part of the 1964 Freedom Summer, were intended to create "an educational experience for students which will make it possible for them to challenge the myths of our society, to perceive more clearly its realities and to find alternatives, and ultimately, new directions for action." The curriculum included traditional subjects that publicly funded black schools did not offer, but they were never designed to be simply better versions of the traditional liberal education model. Rather, students examined power along the axes of race and class. Students and teachers worked together to reveal how ruling whites profited from Jim Crow, and they included in their analysis the precarious position of poor whites. Rural black kids of all ages learned to distinguish between "Material Things and Soul Things," developing a trenchant critique of materialism. The freedom schools challenged the myth that the civil rights movement was just about claiming a place in mainstream society. They didn't want equal opportunity in a burning house; they wanted to build a new house.

Perhaps one of the best historical models of radical, collective, grounded intellectual work was launched by black feminists Patricia Robinson, Patricia Haden, and Donna Middleton, working with community residents of Mt. Vernon, New York, many of whom were unemployed, low-wage workers, welfare mothers, and children. Together, they organized and read as a community—from elders to children. They saw education as a vehicle for collective transformation and an incubator of knowledge, not a path to upward mobility and material wealth. Influenced by Frantz Fanon, they interrogated and critiqued racism, sexism, slavery, and capitalism, emphasizing the ways in which racism produced a kind of psychosis among poor black people. Their study and activism culminated in a collectively written, independently published book called *Lessons from the Damned* (1973). It is a remarkable book, with essays by adults as well as children—some as young as twelve, who developed trenchant criticisms of public school teachers and the education system.

Although they acknowledged the unavoidability of addressing trauma, they understood that one's activism could not stop there. In a section titled "The Revolt of Poor Black Women," the authors insisted that a genuine revolution requires the overthrow of capitalism, the elimination of male supremacy, and the transformation of self. Revolution, they argued, is supposed to usher in a brand new beginning; it is driven by the power of freed imagination, not the dead weight of the past. As Robinson, Haden, and Middleton wrote, "All revolutionaries, regardless of sex, are the smashers of myths and the destroyers of illusion. They have always died and lived again to build new myths. They dare to dream of a utopia, a new kind of synthesis and equilibrium."

At UCLA, where I teach, these same insights are taking a new form. A group of graduate students launched their version of the undercommons in January 2016. Based on the Freedom School model, UCLA's undercommons holds weekly outdoor meetings featuring activists from groups such as Black Lives Matter, Critical Resistance, and the L.A. Poverty Department. Faculty and students lead discussions. These events have drawn as many as 150 students, and the community continues to grow. The primary organizers—Thabisile Griffin, Marques Vestal, Olufemi O. Taiwo, Sa Whitley, and Shamell Bell—are all doctoral students who see the university as a site of contestation, a place of refuge, and a space for collective work. Their vision is radical and radically ambitious: they are abolitionists committed to dismantling prisons and redirecting their funding to education and the repair of inequality. Their ultimate goal is to create in the present a future that overthrows the logic of neoliberalism.

These students are demonstrating how we might remake the world. They are ruthless in their criticism and fearless in the face of the powers that be. They model what it means to think through crisis, to fight for the eradication of oppression in all its forms, whether it directly affects us or not. They are in the university but not of the university. They work to understand and advance the movements in the streets, seeking to eliminate racism and state violence, preserve black life, defend the rights of the marginalized (from undocumented immigrants to transfolk), and challenge the current order that has brought us so much misery. And they do this work not without criticism and self-criticism, not by pandering to popular trends or powerful people, a cult of celebrity or Twitter, and not by telling lies, claiming easy answers, or avoiding the ideas that challenge us all.

Opportunities for White People in the Fight for Racial Justice: Moving from Actor → Ally → Accomplice

by Jonathan Osler

Tags: Service, Structural Change, Allyship, Approaches

Summary: What does true solidarity look like? What is the difference between actor, ally, and accomplice?

To read the full version online, visit: <http://www.racialjusticeallies.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/from-ally-to-accomplice.pdf>

Actor	Ally	Accomplice
The actions of an Actor do not disrupt the status quo, much the same as a spectator at a game, both have only a nominal effect in shifting an overall outcome. Such systems are challenged when actors shift or couple their actions with those from Allies and/or Accomplices. The actions of an Actor do not explicitly name or challenge the pillars of White supremacy which is necessary for meaningful progress towards racial justice. There is an excellent quote by Lilla Watson on need for Actors to shift to Accomplices: <i>"If you have come here to help me, you're wasting your time. If you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together."</i>	Ally is typically considered a verb - one needs to act as an ally, and can not bestow this title to themselves. The actions of an Ally have greater likelihood to challenge institutionalized racism, and White supremacy. An Ally is like a disrupter and educator in spaces dominated by Whiteness. An Ally might find themselves at a social gathering in which something inappropriate is being talked about. Instead of allowing that space to incubate Whiteness, the Ally wisely disrupts the conversation, and takes the opportunity to educate those present. Being an Ally is not an invitation to be in Black and Brown spaces to gain brownie points, lead, take over, or explain. Keep in mind that as White people, whether as an Actor, Ally or Accomplice, we are still part of the 'oppressor class'. This means we have to be very creative in flipping our privilege to help Black, Brown and Indigenous peoples. Allies constantly educate themselves, and do not take breaks. Francesca Ramsey's Video: 5 Ways of Being an Ally	The actions of an Accomplice are meant to directly challenge institutionalized racism, colonization, and White supremacy by blocking or impeding racist people, policies, and structures. Realizing that our freedoms and liberations are bound together, retreat or withdrawal in the face of oppressive structures is not an option. Accomplices' actions are informed by, directed and often coordinated with leaders who are Black, Brown First Nations/Indigenous Peoples, and/or People of Color. Accomplices actively listen with respect, and understand that oppressed people are not monolithic in their tactics and beliefs. Accomplices aren't motivated by personal guilt or shame. Accomplices build trust through consent and being accountable - this means not acting in isolation where there is no accountability.

Calling IN: A Less Disposable Way of Holding Each Other Accountable

by Ngọc Loan Trần

Tags: Social Justice, Activism, Approaches

Summary: How can we hold people accountable and still foster communities of growth and love?

To read online, visit: <https://www.humanityinaction.org/files/567-N.Trn-CallingIN.pdf>

I started having conversations on this practice of "calling in" after attending Race Forward's Facing Race Conference in Baltimore, MD in 2012. Facing Race was a gathering of thousands of people working on advancing racial justice. The space was full of energy, commitment, and a ride-or-die-and-put-it-all-on-the-line mentality for making sure we've got our bases covered in this fight against racism and dismantling white supremacy.

What happens when thousands of people who all "get it" come together and everyone knows something about "the work"? We lose all compassion for each other. All of it.

I witnessed all types of fucked up behavior and the culture that we have created to respond to said fucked up behavior.

Most of us know the drill. Someone says something that supports the oppression of another community, the red flags pop up and someone swoops in to call them out.

But what happens when that someone is a person we know — and love? What happens when we ourselves are that someone?

And what does it mean for our work to rely on how we have been programmed to punish people for their mistakes?

I'll be the first person and the last person to say that anger is valid. Mistakes are mistakes; they deepen the wounds we carry. I know that for me when these mistakes are committed by people who I am in community with, it hurts even more. But these are people I care deeply about and want to see on the other side of the hurt, pain, and trauma: I am willing to offer compassion and patience as a way to build the road we are taking but have never seen before.

I don't propose practicing "calling in" in opposition to calling out. I don't think that our work has room for binary thinking and action. However, I do think that it's possible to have multiple tools, strategies, and methods existing simultaneously. It's about being strategic, weighing the stakes and figuring out what we're trying to build and how we are going to do it together.

So, what exactly is "calling in"? I've spent over a year of trying to figure this out for myself, and this practice is still coming to me daily. The first part of calling each other in is allowing mistakes to happen. Mistakes in communities seeking justice and freedom may not hurt any less but they also have possibility for transforming the ways we build with each other for a new, better world. We have got to believe that we can transform.

When confronted with another person's mistake, I often think about what makes my relationship with this person important. Is it that we've done work together before? Is it that I know their politics? Is it that I trust their politics? Are they a family member? Oh shit, my mom? Is it that I've heard them talk about patience or accountability or justice before? Where is our common ground? And is our common ground strong enough to carry us through how we have enacted violence on each other?

I start "call in" conversations by identifying the behavior and defining why I am choosing to engage with them. I prioritize my values and invite them to think about theirs and where we share them. And then we talk about it. We talk about it together, like people who genuinely care about each other. We offer patience and compassion to each other and also keep it real, ending the conversation when we need to and know that it wasn't a loss to give it a try.

Because when I see problematic behavior from someone who is connected to me, who is committed to some of the things I am, I want to believe that it's possible for us to move through and beyond whatever mistake was committed.

I picture "calling in" as a practice of pulling folks back in who have strayed from us. It means extending to ourselves the reality that we will and do fuck up, we stray and there will always be a chance for us to return. Calling in as a practice of loving each other enough to allow each other to make mistakes; a practice of loving ourselves enough to know that what we're trying to do here is a radical unlearning of everything we have been configured to believe is normal.

And yes, we have been configured to believe it's normal to punish each other and ourselves without a way to reconcile hurt. We support this belief by shutting each other out, partly through justified anger and often because some parts of us believe that we can do this without people who fuck up.

But, holy shit! We fuck up. All of us. I've called out and been called out plenty of times. I have gotten on people ruthlessly for supporting and sustaining oppression and refusing to listen to me. People have gotten on me about speaking to oppressions that aren't mine, being superficial about inclusion, and throwing in communities I'm not a part of as buzzwords. But when we shut each other out we make clubs of people who are right and clubs of people who are wrong as if we are not more complex than that, as if we are allknowing, as if we are perfect. But in reality, we are just really scared. Scared that we will be next to make a mistake. So we resort to pushing people out to distract ourselves from the inevitability that we will cause someone hurt.

And it is seriously draining. It is seriously heartbreaking. How we are treating each other is preventing us from actually creating what we need for ourselves. We are destroying each other. We need to do better for each other.

We have to let go of treating each other like not knowing, making mistakes, and saying the wrong thing make it impossible for us to ever do the right things.

And we have to remind ourselves that we once didn't know. There are infinitely many more things we have yet to know and may never know.

We have to let go of a politic of disposability. We are what we've got. No one can be left to their fuck ups and the shame that comes with them because ultimately we'll be leaving ourselves behind.

I want us to use love, compassion, and patience as tools for critical dialogue, fearless visioning, and transformation. I want us to use shared values and visions as proactive measures for securing our future freedom. I

want us to be present and alive to see each other change in all of the intimate ways that we experience and enact violence.

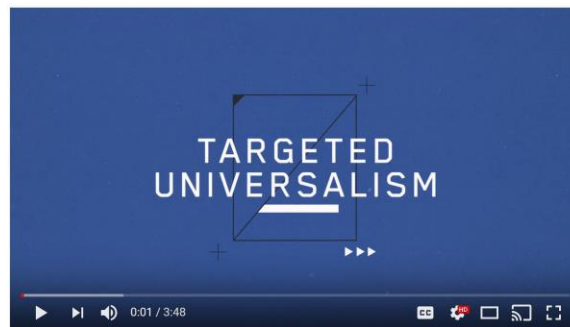
I want our movements sustainable, angry, gentle, critical, loving — kicking ass and calling each other back in when we stray.

Targeted Universalism

From the Haas Institute for a Fair & Inclusive Society

Tags: Social Justice, Activism, Approaches, Service, Organization

Summary: A look at targeted universalism, the idea that by focusing on the margins we can get the best outcomes for all.



To watch online, visit: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wgGcftWpwUQ>

What Can Be Done in the Face of Heart-Wrenching Truths: An Exploration in Quotes

Tags: Social Justice, Activism, Approaches, Support

Summary: How do we maintain hope in all this darkness?

What can be done in the face of heart wrenching truths? What can I do? Complacency and willful indifference just doesn't work. Ignorance was never bliss, just one of several deceptive ways to keep me from my brothers and sisters suffering - distracted and removed from my own humanity to care. – Jemila

My friend, Jemila, wrote this on Facebook today and it really resonated with me. Sometimes world events can be like an undertow that pulls you down into the depths of anxiety, anger, even depression – and yet becoming “blissfully ignorant” is not a viable option for people who pay attention. How do we stay compassionate and keep our balance?

Gloria Steinem said “The truth will set you free, but first it will piss you off.”

“Usually when people are sad, they don't do anything. They just cry over their condition. But when they get angry, they bring about a change.” -Malcolm X

How do we use painful emotions to generate effective action rather than ulcers? How do we tell the difference between right action and reaction?

Siddhartha Gautama: “Rage is a powerful energy that, with diligent practice, can be transformed into fierce compassion. However much we disagree with our enemies, our task is to identify with them. They too feel justified in their point of view.” Is this really our task? Sometimes it seems naive or trite. But there have been times when being able to find the kernel of humanness in someone who is acting in a way that I abhor has helped me to make a human connection and have them hear me.

And then there is Martin Luther King, Jr, who has another perspective on compassion when he says, “True compassion is more than flinging a coin to a beggar; it comes to see that an edifice which produces beggars needs restructuring.” This opens up the whole idea that helping individuals may not be enough. Does true compassion require us to address systemic change and, if so, how? Or does system change happen one person at a time?

It is easy to feel hopeless and lose energy. "Politics hates a vacuum. If it isn't filled with hope, someone will fill it with fear." - Naomi Klein - and that is just what our adversaries do. "Hope is essential to any political struggle for radical change when the overall social climate promotes disillusionment and despair." - bell hooks

We must use all the tools at our disposal to resist the lethargy or unthinking action of despair. How? Music, shared celebration, attention to our needs (rest, good nutrition, recreation, introspection, love), art, mutual support, collaboration and connection. And balance – finding ways to place all the suffering that we see in a "bigger container" that also includes the daily progress, small victories, kindnesses, wonders, and joy of the world.

Malcolm X: "We need more light about each other. Light creates understanding, understanding creates love, love creates patience, and patience creates unity."

Glossary of Terms & Further Reading

Ableism: A system of oppression that includes discrimination and social prejudice against people with intellectual, emotional, and physical disabilities, their exclusion, and the valuing of people and groups that do not have disabilities.

Ageism: A system of oppression that works against the young and the old and values individuals in their 30s to 50s.

Ally: a person who is a member of an advantaged social group who takes a stand against oppression, works to eliminate oppressive attitudes and beliefs in themselves and their communities, and works to interrogate and understand their privilege.

Anti-Semitism: the systematic discrimination against and oppression of Jews, Judaism, and Jewish culture and traditions.

Asexual: an identity term for a people who either do not feel sexual attraction or do not feel desire for a sexual partner or partners. Some asexual individuals may still have romantic attractions.

Biphobia: the irrational hatred or fear of people who identify as bisexual, pansexual, or fluid.

Bisexual: An identity term for people who are attracted to people of more than one gender, whether romantically, sexually, or both. Bi* is often used as an inclusive abbreviation for the bisexual, pansexual, non-monosexual, and fluid community.

Birth Assigned Sex: the designation that refers to a person's biological, morphological, hormonal, and genetic composition. One's sex is typically assigned at birth and classified as either male or female.

Cisgender: individuals whose gender identity and expression line up with their birth-assigned sex.

Cissexism: The system of oppression that values cisgender people, upholds the gender binary, and marginalizes, oppresses, and makes invisible the lives and experiences of transgender people.

Classism: The institutional, cultural, societal, and individual beliefs and practices that assign value to people based in their socio-economic class. Here, members of more privileged socio-economic classes are seen as having a greater value.

Collusion: Thinking and acting in ways that support dominant systems of power, privilege, and oppression. Both privileged and oppressed groups can collude with oppression.

Coming Out: the process by which LGBTQI individuals recognize, accept, typically appreciate, and often celebrate their sexual orientation, sexuality, or gender identity/expression. Coming out varies across culture and community.

Cultural Appropriation: the adoption of elements of one culture by members of another culture, particularly when members of a dominant culture appropriate from disadvantaged minority cultures.

Discrimination: When members of a more powerful group behave unjustly or cruelly to members of a less powerful group (Qkit: LGBTQ Residence Hall Programming Toolkit, UC Riverside)

Ethnocentrism: judging another culture solely based on the standards and values of one's own culture. Also, a belief in the inherent superiority of one's own nation or ethnic group.

Gay: an identity term for a male-identified person who is attracted to other male-identified people.

Gender: Socially constructed roles, behaviors, activities, and attributes that a given society deems masculine or feminine. This social construct is often linked to and confused with the biological construct of sex.

Gender Binary: a social construction of gender in which there are two distinct and opposite genders: male/masculine/men and female/feminine/women.

Gender Expression: a person's presentation of their gender. These outward expressions of gender can be intentional or unintentional and involve one's mannerisms, clothing, hair, speech, clothing, and activities (and more!).

Gender Identity: a person's innate sense of their own gender: being a man, a woman, a girl, a boy, in between, or outside of the gender binary.

Genderqueer: an identity term for a person who may not identify with and/or express themselves within the gender binary.

Heterosexism: the individual, societal, cultural, and institutional beliefs and practices that favor heterosexuality and assume that heterosexuality is the only natural, normal, or acceptable sexual orientation. This creates an imbalance in power, which leads to systemic, institutional, pervasive, and routine mistreatment of gays, lesbians, and bisexuals. (UT Austin Gender and Sexuality Center)

Heterosexual: an identity term for a female-identified person who is attracted to male-identified people or a male-identified person who is attracted to female-identified people.

Homophobia: the fear, hatred, and intolerance of people who identify or are perceived as gay or lesbian.

Horizontal Oppression: When people from targeted groups believe, act on, or enforce dominant systems of oppression against other members of targeted groups.

Internalized Oppression: the fear and self-hatred of one's own identity or identity group. Internalized oppression is learned and is based in the acceptance of oppressive stereotypes, attitudes, and beliefs about one's own identity group.

Intersectionality: A feminist sociological model and/or lens for critical analysis that focuses on the intersections of multiple, mutually-reinforcing systems of oppression, power, and privilege. Intersectional theorists look at how the individual experience is impacted by multiple axes of oppression and privilege. Variables include, but are not limited to: race, gender, ethnicity, religion ability, education, sexual orientation, sexuality, gender identity, gender expression, class, first language, citizenship, and age. (J. Beal 2011)

Intersex: A person whose genitals, secondary sex characteristics, chromosomes, and/or hormone levels do not fit into the medical/societal definition of male or female. This is the preferred term to hermaphrodite.

Islamophobia: the irrational fear or hatred of Islam, Muslims, Islamic traditions and practices, and, more broadly, those who appear to be Muslim.

Lesbian: an identity term for a female-identified person who is attracted to other female-identified people.

Oppression: The systemic and pervasive nature of social inequality woven throughout social institutions as well as embedded within individual consciousness. Oppression fuses institutional and systemic discrimination, personal bias, bigotry, and social prejudice in a complex web of relationships and structures that saturate most aspects of life in our society.

- Oppression denotes structural and material constraints that significantly shape a person's life chances and sense of possibility.
- Oppression also signifies a hierarchical relationship in which dominant or privilege groups benefit, often in unconscious ways, from the disempowerment of subordinated or targeted groups.
- Oppression resides not only in external social institutions and norms but also within the human psyche as well.
- Eradicating oppression ultimately requires struggle against all its forms, and that building coalitions among diverse people offers the most promising strategies for challenging oppression systematically. (Adams, Bell, and Griffin, editors. *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice: A Sourcebook*. New York: Routledge.)

Pansexual: an identity term for a person who is attracted to people of all genders: men, women, transgender individuals, and genderqueers.

Power: the ability to get what you want (The GLSEN Jumpstart Guide: Examining Power, Privilege, and Oppression).

Prejudice: A pre-judgment or unjustifiable, and usually negative, attitude of one type of individual or groups toward another group and its members. Such negative attitudes are typically based on unsupported generalizations (or stereotypes) that deny the right of individual members of certain groups to be recognized and treated as individuals with individual characteristics. (Institute for Democratic Renewal and Project Change Anti-Racism Initiative. *A Community Builder's Tool Kit*. Claremont, CA: Claremont Graduate University.)

Privilege: A group of unearned cultural, legal, social, and institutional rights extended to a group based on their social group membership. Individuals with privilege are considered to be the normative group, leaving those without access to this privilege invisible, unnatural, deviant, or just plain wrong. Most of the time, these privileges are automatic and most individuals in the privileged group are unaware of them. Some people who can "pass" as members of the privileged group might have access to some levels of privilege (J. Beal 2009).

Queer: a term for individuals whose gender identity/expression and/or sexual orientation does not conform to societal norms. This reclaimed term is increasingly being used as an inclusive umbrella term for the LGBTQIA community.

Pronouns: a word that substitutes for a noun. Most people have pronouns that they expect others to use for them. Most cisgender individuals use pronouns that line up with their birth-assigned sex. Many GenderQueer and Trans* folks have selected pronouns that best suit who they are and sometimes generate new terms.

Racism: oppression against individuals or groups based on their actual or perceived racial identity.

Religious Oppression: oppression against individuals or groups based on their religious beliefs and practices.

Sexism: a system of oppression that privileges men, subordinates women, and devalues practices associated with women.

Sexual Orientation: a person's sexual and emotional attractions, not necessarily dependent on behavior. Terms associated with sexual orientation include: gay, lesbian, bisexual, pansexual, heterosexual, and more!

Social Justice: a process and a goal. A commitment to a socially just world and the committed actions to make that world a reality. Or, "The goal of social justice is full and equal participation of all groups in a society that is mutually shaped to meet their needs. Social justice includes a vision of society in which the distribution of resources is equitable and all members are physically and psychologically safe and secure... Social justice involves social actors who have a sense of their own agency as well as a sense of social responsibility toward and with others, their society, and the broader world in which we live." (*Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice*)

Transgender: an umbrella term for people who do not identify with their birth-assigned sex and/or whose gender expression does not conform to the societal expectations. Trans* is used as an inclusive abbreviation.
Transsexual – people who change their presentation to express their gender identity. Examples of these transitions might include: changing one's name, pronouns, hair, or manner of dress, and medical transitions, like gender affirmation surgery, hormone replacement therapy.

Transphobia: the fear and hatred of transgender people.

White Privilege: The concrete benefits of access to resources and social rewards and the power to share the norms and values of society that Whites receive, tacitly or explicitly, by virtue of their position in a racist society. (Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice, Second Edition, Routledge, 2007)

Xenophobia: the fear and hatred of that which is perceived to be foreign or strange.

Please note that many of these definitions have been influenced by multiple sources. Some terms have specific roots in communities of color, the LGBTQ communities, and other marginalized groups. We thank everyone out there who does social justice work and has contributed to our understanding of the above terms.

If you are interested in further reading on these and similar topics, check out the Social Justice 202 syllabus [here](#)!