First-Year Urban Program Reading Packet 2023

the FUPprint

your first steps towards FUP love
and the Harvard community

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 the reading carefully, paying particular attention to the essential pieces, 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 no way for a compilation of readings of this sort to cover everything—if there is a topic that you feel is missing, please bring it 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 FUPpies! We want to make sure you all are equipped to take on your first-year year? Below is a list of resources at your disposal

Mental Health Resources *There are several mental health resources for your choosing and preferences*

- **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 University Health Services (HUHS) in the Smith Campus Center, open from Monday-Friday, 8:30AM-5:30PM
  - 24/7 CAMHS Cares hotline: 617-495-2042
  - 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-services

- **Sexual Assault Resources** *There are also a multitude of resources for sexual assault.*
  - **Office for Gender Equity (OGE)** Taken from the OGE Website: "*The Office for Gender Equity works to advance Harvard's commitment to providing an environment where each of us feels safe to participate fully in University life—whether studying, teaching, conducting research, or working to support our individual and collective goals"*
    - Located at 1350 Massachusetts Avenue, Suite 901, Smith Campus Center, open from Monday-Friday
    - Phone: 617-496-0200
    - SHARE Counselors (Confidential, non-urgent): 617-496-5636
      - Office at 1350 Massachusetts Avenue, Suite 624, Smith Campus Center
    - Crisis Hotline (Confidential, urgent): 617-495-9100

- **Title IX Office**
  - Consistent with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Harvard College does not discriminate against students, faculty or staff based on sex in any of its programs or activities, including but not limited to educational programs, employment, and admission. Sexual harassment, including sexual violence, is a kind of sex discrimination and is prohibited by Title IX and by the University. (For resources and policies: https://titleix.college.harvard.edu/)

  Located at University Hall, 024, open from Monday-Friday, 9AM-5PM
  - https://titleix.college.harvard.edu/get-support

- **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. Harvard Foundation is in the ground level of Grays Hall. The BGLTQ Office 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. Whether you simply need an escort to take you home or something more serious, they are available.*
  - 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

Essential FUPrint Pieces

Introduction

The FUP Packet is a ~magical document~ that has over 100 pages of readings that will help you contextualize your experience in FUP and some different social issues we will explore during our time together. With that said, we know this may be a lot of information to digest. We ask that you please read the essential FUPrint Pieces outlined below, if you read anything at all. The rest of the pieces are also available if a certain theme piques your interest.

***All essential pieces are the first piece in their section**

Introduction to Social Justice

What Is Privilege? An Analysis of Privilege, Power Structures, & Systematic Oppression

Class and Socio-Economic Status (SES)

Elite Colleges Constantly Tell Low-Income Students They Do Not Belong

Racism & Race

Video: 5 Things You Should Know About Racism

Gender and Sexuality

Who Does Marriage Leave Behind?

Health and Ableism

I'm Not Your Inspiration, Thank You Very Much

Harvard on Campus and in Community

Phillips Brooks House Changes Its Politics: From Social Service to Social Change

Cambridge and Boston

Boston. Racism. Image. Reality.

Activism, Organizing, and Social Change

The Limits of Charity

COVID-19

Why Racism, Not Race, Is a Risk Factor For Dying of COVID-19

Black Lives Matter, Police Abolition Movement

Yes, We Mean Literally Abolish The Police

Panel Readings

Introduction

As a part of the FUP Experience, you will attend various panel discussions around key social justice topics relevant to both our FUP worksite partners as well as the broader state of our society. Please read these as contextualizers before our panel discussions!

Environmental Justice

Required.

Why Climate Change is Anti-Justice

As the Green Line Extension Opens, Advocates Sound the Alarm On Gentrification

optional materials.

WCVB (Boston) CityLine Coverage of Responses to Environmental Justice in the City of Boston featuring our community partners

Climate Justice in Boston: Link for Segment One

Climate Justice in Boston: Link for Segment Two

Environmental Racism is a Public Health Crisis

Abolition and Racial Justice

Yes, We Mean Literally Abolish The Police

Labor Rights

Labor and Immigration Activism. HARVARD'S "INVISIBLE WORKERS" AND THE FIGHT FOR FAIRNESS AT THE WORLD'S RICHEST UNIVERSITY

Student Activism. The Grad Student Strike is Over. What's Next for Student Workers? | News | The Harvard Crimson (thecrimson.com)

Housing Insecurity

Housing is Short in Supply in Boston. Here's Why That Matters

Faith and Social Justice

Social Justice and Equality

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Introduction to Social Justice

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

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

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 youths[2].

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 experiences 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.

Class & Socio-Economic Status (SES)

Elite Colleges Constantly Tell Students That They Do Not Belong

By Clint Smith

***Tags**: Class/SES, Campus Life*

***Summary**: How the Harvard experience differs for students of different socioeconomic statuses*

Last Tuesday, the Justice Department charged 50 people with involvement in an elaborate scheme to purchase spots in some of the country's top schools. The tactics described in the indictment were complex and multipronged, requiring multiple steps of deception and bribery by parents and their co-conspirators to secure their children's admission to the schools of their choice. The plot purportedly included faking learning disabilities, using Photoshopped images to make it seem as if students played sports that they did not actually play, and pretending that students were of different ethnicities in an effort to exploit affirmative-action programs. The alleged scheme was led by a man named William Singer, who called his business venture a "side door" into college. On Tuesday, Singer pleaded guilty to all charges.

The case, rightfully, has set off a wave of conversations about how the wealthy are able to lie and manipulate their way into the country's elite colleges and universities. But the scandal also provides an opportunity to interrogate how these universities are set up in ways that systematically amplify and exacerbate the class differences between their students. Students from low-income backgrounds receive daily reminders—interpersonal and institutional, symbolic and structural—that they are the ones who do not belong.

To understand the prevalence of wealth at top-tier schools, and how those schools often fail to adequately serve low-income students, it helps to turn to a book called The Privileged Poor, by the Harvard University professor Anthony Abraham Jack, published earlier this month. In the book, Jack combines his own journey as a low-income student from Miami who attended selective schools (Amherst College as an undergrad and Harvard for graduate school) and his two-year ethnographic research project, in which he interviewed and followed the lives of low-income students as they navigated life at an unidentified elite school he refers to as "Renowned University."

In the early pages of the book, Jack outlines how top colleges and universities are and have long been havens of the wealthy. In 2017, a team led by the Harvard economist Raj Chetty found that students coming from families in the top 1 percent—those who make more than $630,000 a year—are 77 times more likely to be admitted to and attend an Ivy League school than students coming from families who make less than $30,000 a year. Furthermore, the study found that 38 elite colleges have more students who come from families in the top 1 percent than students who come from the bottom 60 percent (families making less than $65,000 a year). In other research, Anthony Carnevale and Jeff Strohl, of Georgetown University's Center on Education and the Workforce, have documented how just 14 percent of undergraduates at the most competitive schools—places like Stanford, Princeton, and Columbia—come from families who make up the bottom half of U.S. income distribution.

While many top schools have taken steps to provide more access to disadvantaged students and become more socioeconomically diverse, they remain saturated with wealth. Most low-income students still receive their education elsewhere, disproportionately attending for-profit colleges, community colleges, and less-selective four-year institutions.

The low-income students who do end up at these elite institutions are often treated as homogeneous in both policy and the scholarly literature, as if they all navigate these schools in the same way. This is one of the most important contributions Jack has made with his research—disaggregating the experience of low-income students at elite colleges.

Jack describes two categories: the privileged poor and the doubly disadvantaged. The privileged poor are students who come from low-income backgrounds but attended wealthy private high schools, giving them a level of familiarity with and access to the social and cultural capital that tend to make people successful at elite universities. The doubly disadvantaged are students who arrive at these top institutions from neighborhood public schools, many of which are overcrowded and underfunded. They are schools where these students have excelled, but that are ill-equipped to give them the sociocultural tools necessary to understand the nuances of how these elite colleges operate. For example, without being explicitly told, how would students know what "office hours" are, and that they are encouraged to use them? Many low-income students attending these universities are unfamiliar with what Jack refers to as "the hidden curriculum," those invisible rules and expectations that can lead some students to success while leaving others floundering. The book is full of examples like this, the sort of social capital that many students, faculty, and administrators take for granted.

But certain common experiences affect both categories of low-income students, regardless of where they went to high school. For instance, Jack's research documents how three out of four colleges close their dining halls during spring break. Many low-income students cannot afford to leave campus, much less go on vacation for break, and as a result take extraordinary measures to make sure they have enough to eat. Some students ration their food, skipping meals to make a limited supply last the entire break. Some students go to food pantries, leaving the campus of a school that might have a billion-dollar endowment to stand in line for a can of beans. One student Jack interviewed described how she increased her online-dating activity to secure meals on first dates where she expected the men to pay. "She was treating Tinder as if it were OpenTable," Jack writes. The closing of dining halls reflects a lack of consideration of what many of these students need to survive.

Jack refers to these formal university policies as "structural exclusion," and the dining hall is far from the only example. Many low-income students at Renowned University also participated in a pre-orientation program Jack calls "Community Detail," in which students administer janitorial services in the university dormitories. The program is offered during the summer and throughout the year as a stand-alone job. While the students are paid, many of them found that the work brought about enormous humiliation. These disadvantaged students were put in a position where they had to clean up soiled tampons, used condoms, and dried vomit from their classmates' bathrooms to complete their custodial obligations. Some of the students described the intense shame they felt as they sat in class alongside students whose toilets they had just cleaned. Having students who need money clean the bathrooms of their more affluent peers reifies existing class boundaries.

"Poor students come to this institution and the first thing that they see are dirty dorms they have to clean," said one of Jack's research participants. "I think it's really unfair that students who are lower-income go into Community Detail whereas wealthier students are doing Summit Seekers and going climbing. Or playing instruments. Or doing artsy thing with Vamonos Van Gogh." Or as another student put it, "Say I was to knock on someone's door. I'm like, 'Yo, can I clean your bathroom real quick?' I'm going to clean the toilet you just threw up on this past weekend when you were partying like crazy. Let me just clean that for you. And then just add the fact that I'm a minority reinforces that stereotype that all Spanish people do is clean and mow lawns."

Even well-intentioned efforts to provide opportunities for low-income students can inadvertently play a role in magnifying class differences. At Renowned, a program Jack calls "Scholarship Plus" allows students on financial aid to attend events on campus that they might not have otherwise been able to afford. (Not to be confused with the college support program of the same name, on whose board Jack serves.) A lot of the students Jack spoke with said that without the program, they wouldn't have been able to participate in many parts of campus life. However, the process of getting tickets to events made them feel acutely conscious of their class status. The system had two lines for tickets: one for the students who could pay, and another for the students

who could not. What's more, the line for the students using the Scholarship Plus program was near the back door, and students entered the theater via a small side door rather than the main entrance used by their peers. And because of the socioeconomic realities of the United States, the main line was made up of primarily white students, while the Scholarship Plus line was made up of mostly students who were black and Latino. "It's embarrassing," said one of the students Jack interviewed. Another student said, "I was ashamed of what I was coming from. So being in that line, saying Scholarship Plus, I dunno. It was like being on a welfare line, or social services."

The examples of social and economic dissonance are plenty, and as Jack puts it, "Elite universities are now a bundle of confusing contradictions: They bend over backwards to admit disadvantaged students into their hallowed halls, but then, once the students are there, they maintain policies that not only remind those students of their disadvantage, but even serve to highlight it."

The students described in Jack's book are the students I was thinking of after news of the scandal broke. These low-income students—overwhelmingly students of color—arrive on elite-college campuses and are perpetually made to feel as if they don't deserve to be there, whether it's while cleaning a classmate's bathroom, stocking up on nonperishable food for spring break, or overhearing an offhand comment about how their acceptance was predicated on the color of their skin, or the lower socioeconomic status of their family. Meanwhile, many wealthy students for all intents and purposes have their parents buy their way into these schools through private-school tuition, test prep, donations to colleges, and myriad other advantages. And they rarely experience the same level of skepticism as to whether they have "earned" their place.

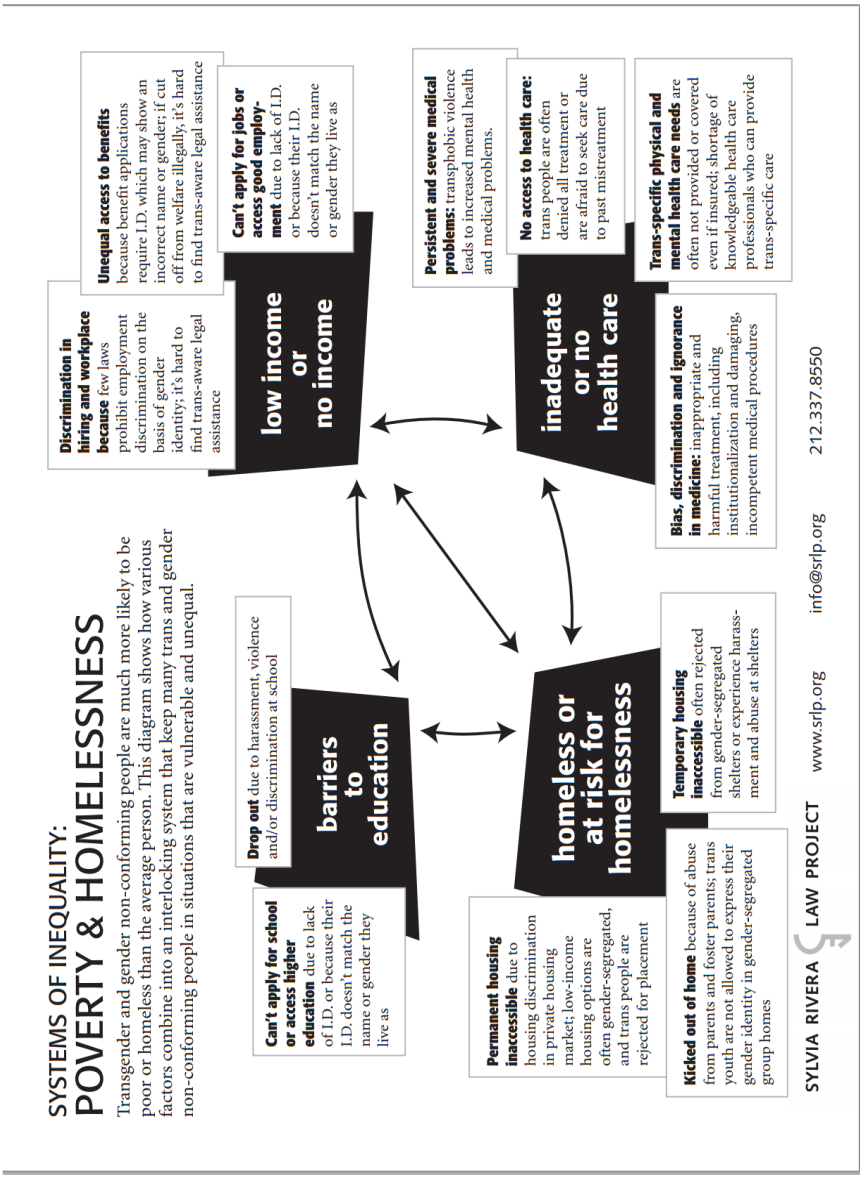
I have seen this sense of frustration and disillusionment in the eyes of undergraduates I've worked with at Harvard, young people who over the course of four years endure the psychological toll of navigating a school environment that both implicitly and explicitly tells them that the only reason they were admitted was an undeserved handout, that their place was not earned but is instead an act of charity, that they were given someone else's spot. But what this scandal demonstrates is that the very idea of our society—in the context of higher ed or otherwise—being a "meritocracy" was made up to justify and reify existing social hierarchies. It is not real. What is real is the advantages of wealth and race, which often combine to give people things that they have told themselves they deserve. What is real is that students who have done everything right are often the ones made to feel as if their place on campus is anything other than earned.

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.*

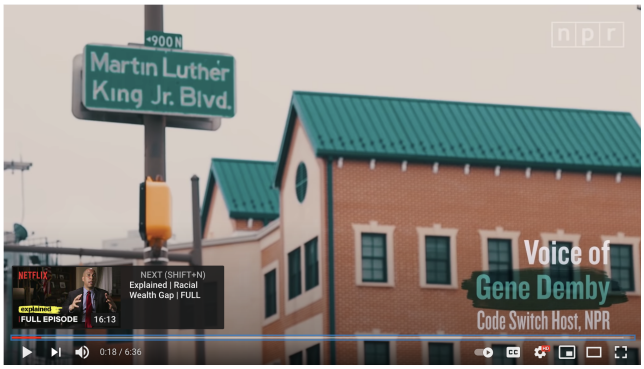


Housing Segregation and Redlining in America: A Short History

From NPR

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=O5FBJyqfoLM

Racism & Race

5 Things You Should Know About Racism
From MTV

Tags: *Social Justice, Activism*

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

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

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

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 asChae 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, andWing 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 Hirabayshi, 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 HIrabayshi 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, Hirabyashi, 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.

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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.*

To read online, visit:
https://medium.com/@heysong/we-will-not-be-used-are-asian-americans-the-racial-bourgeoisie-964cf8e7c93d

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.

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!

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.

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 malingering 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=aItfxSRG-rU

Why People Are Split on 'LatinX'

By Harmeet Kaur

Tags: *Race, Ethnicity, Generational Difference, Colonization, Identity Formation*

Summary: *A comprehensive summary of the term LatinX. Arguments for and against its use largely depend on who is using them.*

To read online, visit:

https://www.cnn.com/2020/08/12/us/latinx-term-usage-hispanics-trnd/index.html

Depending on which corners of the internet you inhabit, you might have come across the term "Latinx." "Latinx" has emerged as an inclusive term to refer to people of Latin American descent, encompassing those who don't identify as male or female or who don't want to be identified by their gender. It's been used by journalists, politicians, corporations, colleges and universities. In 2018, it even made it to the dictionary. But among the people "Latinx" is intended to describe, few have heard of the term -- let alone use it. In a new survey, researchers found that only about one in four adults in the US who identify as Hispanic or Latino have heard the term "Latinx," while just 3% say they use it to describe themselves. The findings, published Tuesday by the Pew Research Center, signal just how complex identity is for people categorized as Hispanic or Latino. "This reflects the diversity of the nation's Hispanic population, and the Hispanic population of the US thinks of itself in many different ways," Mark Lopez, director of global migration and demography research at Pew Research Center, told CNN. "'Latinx' is just one of those many dimensions."

'Latinx' is more common among younger Hispanics

In the US, the terms "Hispanic" and "Latino" are often used to refer to people of Spanish-speaking or Latin American origin. Though they're often used interchangeably, "Hispanic" refers only to people from Spanish-speaking countries, which includes Latin America and Spain. "Latino" refers to people with roots in Latin America, which includes Portuguese-speaking Brazilians, but excludes Spain. Those two terms describe a very broad group of people, and don't always align with the ways that those populations identify themselves. Previous Pew research has shown that Hispanic adults most often identify by their country of origin, using terms such as Mexican, Cuban or Salvadoran as opposed to pan-ethnic labels like "Hispanic" or "Latino." "Latinx" is another term that has emerged in recent years. It's largely seen by those who use it as an inclusive term that incorporates those who fall outside the male/female gender binary. The Pew survey sampled more than 3,000 Hispanic adults in the US in December 2019 on their awareness and use of the term "Latinx." Those who used the term tended to be younger, US-born, bilingual or predominately English-speaking and Democratic-leaning, the survey found. They were also more likely to have gone to college.

Most preferred the terms 'Hispanic' or 'Latino'

Searches for the term "Latinx" saw a significant spike in June 2016, according to Google Trends -- the same month as the Pulse nightclub shooting in Orlando. Since then, the term has grown in popularity online, though search interest in "Latino," "Latina" and "Hispanic" over the last decade remains much higher, the Pew researchers noted. But though online interest in "Latinx" has risen, people of Latin American descent largely haven't embraced the term. The Pew survey also asked its respondents whether they thought "Latinx" should be used to refer to the nation's Hispanic or Latino population. Just 4% preferred the term. About 60% said they preferred the term "Hispanic," while about 30% said they preferred "Latino." Those who had heard of "Latinx" were more likely to say the term should be adopted to describe Hispanics and Latinos. But even among that group, a

majority preferred the terms "Hispanic" or "Latino." "When you ask people whether or not 'Latinx' should even be used to describe the Hispanic population or if they had a choice, which they would pick, 'Latinx' is oftentimes third behind Hispanic and Latino," Lopez said. "So people may be aware of it, but that doesn't necessarily translate into its use." Part of the reason for that could be because "Latinx" just hasn't been around as long as the other descriptors, Lopez said. "Hispanic" came into use around the 1970's and first appeared on the US Census in 1980. But that sparked a conversation over whether that population should be designated as "Latino," and "Latino" was added to the Census in 2000. "Latinx," by contrast, is a relative newcomer.

Why people are split on 'Latinx'

It's unclear where and when exactly the term "Latinx" came about, but activists and academics have largely adopted it to be more inclusive of Hispanics and Latinos who don't fit into the male/female gender binary. The term replaces the "o" in "Latino" or the "a" in "Latina" with an "x" to make it gender-neutral. But in doing so, its critics say, English speakers are imposing a term on the Hispanic and Latino population that doesn't make sense for them. Gilbert Guerra and Gilbert Orbea were early opponents of the term, arguing against it in a widely-cited 2015 op-ed for Swarthmore College's campus newspaper. "Perhaps the most ironic failure of the term is that it actually excludes more groups than it includes," wrote Guerra and Orbea. "By replacing o's and a's with x's, the word "Latinx" is rendered laughably incomprehensible to any Spanish speaker without some fluency in English." Cristobal Salinas, a professor at Florida Atlantic University who has researched the use of the term "Latinx," said the term is sometimes seen as US-centric -- and just another way that the US is exerting its influence on Latin America. Salinas recently conducted a study with 34 Latin American students about their relationship to the term "Latinx." Many of them said that though they used the term in higher education spaces, they didn't use it at home with their family members because it didn't translate across generations. "The older people, they have been through this before," Salinas told CNN, referring to the introduction of terms such as "Hispanic" and "Latino." Others, like archaeologist Kurly Tlapoyawa, argue that "Latinx" erases people of indigenous and African origin, writing in an essay for Medium that the "Latin" aspect is what's more problematic. Tlapoyawa noted that the idea of "Latin America" is rooted in colonialism and was championed by the French. He wrote that he identifies as "Mazewalli," a term in the Nawatl language meaning "indigenous person." "If one is serious about non-gendered terminology, why cling to a European language as the basis of one's identity? Why not simply adopt an indigenous term?" Tlapoyawa wrote.

What matters is how people self-identify

Some who take issue with the term "Latinx" have proposed "Latiné" or "Latinu" as gender-neutral alternatives that are more consistent with the way Spanish is spoken. "Regardless of what terminology we use, we have to remember that people create terms to express their own realities, and we should not let terms create our realities," Salinas said. Because what's most important, he said, is how people see themselves.

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 is 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 initiativesthat 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.

Post-SCOTUS Ruling, We Must Still Fight for LGBTQ Title IX Protections

By Ose Arheghan

Tags: *Trans Activism, Gender, Title IX, Students, SCOTUS*

Summary: *Despite the Supreme Court ruling ensuring LGBTQ+ rights in the workplace, the Department of Education continues to discriminate against trans students.*

To read online, visit:

https://www.advocate.com/commentary/2020/6/23/post-scotus-ruling-we-must-still-fight-lgbtq-title-ix-protections

Amidst a global health pandemic and the onslaught of racist, violent attacks against Black people at the hands of the state, the Department of Education continues to quietly chip away at students' rights. While students all across the country took to the streets to stand in solidarity with Minnesota protestors, Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos and the Department of Education were busy threatening to pull federal funding from schools in Connecticut that allow trans athletes to compete on sports teams that align with their gender identity.

LGBTQ+ students — especially Black and Brown ones — have always faced astronomical barriers to safe learning environments. Title IX, the federal law prohibiting sex discrimination in schools, has historically guaranteed that students' status as queer and as trans does not interfere with their ability to access education. In an effort to clarify those protections, the Department of Education under the Obama administration released a guidance that said prohibiting trans students from using facilities that align with their gender identity violates federal anti-discrimination laws. This guidance also made it more likely to ensure trans students were addressed by their correct names and pronouns and treated consistently with their gender identity. But even with that guidance published, few students knew about the rights they have, and even fewer had the tools to defend them. Now, the situation has gotten worse.

One of the first things Betsy DeVos did upon taking office in 2017 was rescind that guidance, leaving trans students in the lurch, and last week, they took it a step further. While activists across the country took to the streets to protest police brutality and other forms of anti-Blackness, student survivors of sexual assault watched the Department of Education roll back their rights, and a global pandemic claimed hundreds of thousands of lives, the Department continued to go to new lengths to harm trans students. The Trump Administration's ruling against Connecticut's trans-inclusive policy demonstrates their lack of support for schools and districts that are looking to keep trans students safe and included in their own schools. In doing so, the Department has once again used a law meant to prohibit sex discrimination, to require it.

Connecticut is one of 19 states that require schools to allow transgender student athletes to compete on sports teams consistent with their gender identities. In the fall of last year, three cisgender Connecticut girls who had lost competitions to transgender athletes filed a complaint with the Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights arguing that by respecting transgender students' identities, Connecticut schools discriminated against cisgender student athletes. The

Department responded last week by agreeing with those girls. This move contradicts countless court decisions protecting trans students, especially a 2017 decision in which the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals clarified that Title IX does indeed protect trans students against discrimination. Still, the Department has now warned the schools that this policy of inclusion will be punished by withholding federal funds. In short, the government is threatening to punish schools for providing inclusive school environments.

Trans Americans have experienced major signs of progress as well as many setbacks these few months. Many people are celebrating this week's 6-3 Supreme Court ruling that determined Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act includes protections for workers based on their sexual orientation and gender identity. Unfortunately, this decision comes right on the heels of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' release of their final rule on Section 1557. This legally binding rule, which was released on the four year rememberance of the Pulse shooting, revoked provisions present in the 2016 rule that prohibited discrimination based on gender identity, now states sex discrimination will be limited to one's sex — male or female and as determined by "biology." This decision does not take into account the complexities of sex and gender and leaves room for a legal interpretation that does not protect transgender patients again discrimination in the medical field.

These two decisions have very different interpretations of how trans people will be protected under the law in the future. While the HHS rule, which was released before the Supreme Court decision claims sex discrimination is only relevant in regards to one's "biological sex," Supreme Court Justice Neil Gorsuch argues differently. In his majority opinion statement he claims, "It is impossible to discriminate against a person for being homosexual or transgender without discriminating against that individual based on sex." That argument may allow for changes in favor of trans rights in not only the Health and Human Services realm of politics, but also Title IX.

Unless students are paying close attention, generally, it's hard to follow all of this as the definitions under Title IX, and the Department of Education's guidance gives mixed signals. Just a few weeks ago, the Department dropped 2,000+ pages of legalese muddying the landscape of student survivors' rights. The final rule, which alters schools' obligations in responding to complaints of sex discrimination, including sexual harassment and assault, confounds even legal scholars. And it's especially confusing for trans students and advocacy groups, given that those thousands of pages sidestep the topic of trans students' rights altogether. The Department's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) website clarifies nothing. It mimics Obama-era language stating that "Title IX protects all students, including LGBTQ students, from sex discrimination," but then OCR turns around and threatens to punish schools, like the ones in Connecticut, that protect trans youth from discrimination.

These protections are critical to ensuring trans students can equally access education. According to GLSEN's 2017 National School Climate Survey, students who attend schools with formal policies and practices to protect trans and gender-nonconforming students were less likely to experience harassment and discrimination, they were also less likely to miss school due to fear of safety, had higher post-graduation aspiration and stronger school performance.

At its core, Title IX is intended to ensure that gender discrimination and harassment never stops someone from succeeding in education — including trans students. We cannot let Betsy DeVos and her Department of Education use Title IX as an avenue to discriminate against us based on our gender. It's a manipulation of the law and an insult to previous administrations, and courts, that have affirmed LGBTQ+ students' rights under the law. When the Department of Education under DeVos rescinded the 2016 guidance on transgender students under Title IX, there was no Supreme Court ruling substantively linking sex and gender-based discrimination to queer and trans people — but now there is. Now is the time to take action and work to ensure inclusion for all young people in their schools.

As a queer Black student in America, I often feel as if I'm being pulled in many directions at once and the past few days are a perfect example. We are in the middle of a global health pandemic.

Because my friends are currently spread all across the country, I spend my time coordinating with other queer Black folks to make sure everyone stays safe as we fight for our lives in our hometowns. Every night, I check in to make sure all my people are alive and accounted for, and then turn back to organizing. We as young people are busy making sure our communities have bail funds and resources, and that organizers have safe houses and first aid supplies. For the Department of Education, in the midst of everything else happening right now, to keep quietly stripping trans students of our rights and federal protections is inhumane. This is not the brand of leadership I or the majority of the country voted to see in governmental positions of power.

Reflecting on the past year, I cannot help but be so proud of the organizing and activism that queer young people have engaged in all across the country. However, as a trans student who engages with Title IX activism, I know we can be doing more. As queer folks, we cannot leave the fight to improve Title IX protections to survivors of sexual assault alone. The Department of Education continues to utilize Title IX in a way that infringes on trans students' ability to live and learn, and attempts to pit communities against each other. Our fight for equal protection under the law is not disconnected; it is founded on the same grounds that all of us are deserving of legal protections, support, and resources in this country.

We must take up this fight to ensure survivors and transgender students are protected in school. June is Pride month and while many queer folks are understandably disappointed that we are unable to gather and celebrate with our friends and chosen family, I hope we can take this time to engage in coordinated organizing efforts. Pride started as a riot; in my mind the best thing we can do to honor that legacy is to continue fighting for our rights.

As students, we owe it to ourselves to take our rights into our own hands. We need to push for the 2016 guidance for trans students under Title IX to be reinstated, pressure the Department of Education to stop their threats to withhold federal funding to schools who protect trans students, and demand our schools protect the rights of trans students — even if the Department of Education won't.

"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 me 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...

How ID laws can put trans people in danger

By Vox

Tags: *Trans discrimination, ID laws*

Summary: *Across the country, states with laws restricting the ability to change gender markers on IDs result in decreased safety for trans people and limit justice for crimes against them.*

To watch online, visit:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=900bLSMuA4A&t=469s

The Queer Black History Of Rioting

By Jonathan Borge

Tags: *Queer, Trans, Intersectionality, Black Live Matter, Riots, Policing*

Content Warning: *Mentions of violence*

Summary: *A brief history of the beginnings of the LGBTQ+ liberation movement, paying close attention to the efforts of Black trans womxn in particular.*

To read online, visit:

https://www.refinery29.com/en-us/2020/06/9861317/first-pride-riots-history-black-lgbtq-blm

"The first Pride was a riot."

This June, the LGBTQ+ community has routinely shared those six words across social media. Activists and demonstrators in support of the Black Lives Matter movement use them to remind us that there's a clear throughline between the fight for LGBTQ+ rights in the United States and a revitalized push for anti-racist legislation that protects people of color, especially Black Americans.

Leading queer-championing organizations such as GLAAD are encouraging the LGBTQ+ community to look within and to revisit history. The anger that has erupted after the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery (and thousands of other Black people) is deeply and historically connected to gay liberation. The first Pride was indeed a riot. But history has been written to disqualify and erase the efforts of those at the frontlines: the Black queer community; Black transgender women in particular.

To unpack that fragmented and compartmentalized history, we first need a little background.

The 1960s are considered "the last great reform era in American history," a time when citizens grew fed up with violence and injustice. In addition to the civil rights movement and ardent efforts to overturn Jim Crow laws, marginalized communities also fought for women's liberation, the abolishment of police brutality, and the end of the Vietnam War. At the time, LGBTQ+ individuals were regularly arrested for having consensual sex (that violated sodomy laws), kissing in public, gathering in bars, or simply existing if they were perceived to be queer. The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual considered being gay a mental disorder; in fact, the American Psychiatric Association didn't remove homosexuality as a disorder until 1973.

While Stonewall is remembered as the riot that sparked the gay liberation movement as we know it, others came before it, most in protest of unwarranted police surveillance and brutality against disenfranchised queer people of color. As Out has outlined, books such as City of Night and Gay L.A.: A History of Sexual Outlaws, Power Politics, and Lipstick Lesbians consider the first modern gay uprising to be the Cooper's Donuts Riots. It occurred in May 1959, after law enforcement arrested LGBTQ+ folks without probable cause as they hung out at the gay-friendly donut shop.

This was followed by the Compton's Cafeteria Riot in August 1966, and the Black Cat Riot in 1967, during which officers beat customers and arrested 14 people. Each one was fueled by angry sex workers, trans and gender non-confirming people, and drag queens who faced violence and discrimination. "[LGBTQ+] people were thrown out of hotels, they were stabbed, they had their breasts cut, they were mutilated because of their genitalia," Felicia Flames, a "self-described transsexual woman," told The Advocate in 2018. "We were tired of being arrested for nothing."

And then came Stonewall — a series of events that perfectly illustrates how the revolutionary elements of the fight for civil rights influenced gay liberation.

There are hundreds of contradictory and inconsistent accounts of the Stonewall riots. But what we do know is that on the night of June 27, 1969, the Stonewall Inn witnessed a violent police raid on drag queens, transgender people, and gay people, a majority of whom were Black or brown. These

events led to six days of protests on Christopher Street in New York City — what we now know as the Stonewall Uprising.

Some of the leading figures fighting for justice at Stonewall were Black transgender women, most famously Marsha P. Johnson. Johnson — who, when asked, would say the "P" initial stood for "Pay It No Mind," in the context of her gender — was a performer and activist. According to the Marsha P. Johnson Institute, she described herself as "gay," "transvestite," and a "drag queen." In several books, including Lillian Faderman's The Gay Revolution: The Story of the Struggle, Johnson is remembered for climbing a lamppost and shattering an officer's squad car with a heavy object, which prompted other protestors to strike the police with pennies, beer cans, and glass bottles.

"Angry lesbians, angrier drag queens, excessive mourning, staggering heat, racial tensions, the example of civil disobedience set by the women's movement, the antiwar protesters, the Black Panthers — all the elements were present and only a single flame was needed to ignore the bonfire," noted author Edmund White in the anthology The Stonewall Reader. Sylvia Rivera, a brown trans woman who participated in anti-war and Black liberation marches, also heavily influenced the Stonewall riot and its subsequent protests. So did Miss Major Griffin Gracy, a Black trans activist who eventually worked for the Transgender Variant Intersex Injustice Project.

"From Stonewall to the very first Pride march in 1970, the Christoper Street Liberation Day march, Black trans and queer people have always been the ones willing to take the most votive action — whether it was throwing the brick or the first punch," says Elle Hearns, founder and executive director of the Marsha P. Johnson Institute. "We've always been at the center of the movement. Black trans women like myself were always on the frontlines, and Marsha P. Johnson is a great example of what it looks like to take action in every aspect of your life."

Storme DeLarverie, a biracial, lesbian drag performer who spent time with Dinah Washington and Billie Holiday, is believed to have "thrown the first punch" at Stonewall.

DeLarverie, who later joined the Stonewall Veteran's Association, opened up about her experience in a January 2008 interview with Curve Magazine. "[The officer] then yelled, 'I said, move along, faggot.' I think he thought I was a boy. When I refused, he raised his nightstick and clubbed me in the face," she said. When asked if she'd heard of the "Stonewall Lesbian," a.k.a. "The woman who was clubbed outside the bar but was never identified," she said, "Yes. They were talking about me." She said she never identified herself "because it was never anybody's business."

Another place where Black rights and queer rights intersected is in the way in which LGBTQ+ activists protested. Their methods — igniting trash fires, smashing cop cars, chanting "gay power!" — were heavily influenced by the demonstrations of powerful groups such as the Black Panther Party (BPP), which was founded in 1966.

Following Stonewall, gay activists groups such as the Gay Activists' Alliance, Gay Liberation Front, and the Street Transvestite Action Revolutionaries (STAR), were formed, and adopted the "lexicon" of the BPP. "For the gay men, drag queens, and trans people that frequented the Stonewall Inn, the recognition of police brutality as a tool of gender oppression was a point of adjacency made possible by the prolific accounts of police brutality circulated and amplified by the civil rights movement in general, and the Black Panthers, in particular," argued Lisa M. Corrigan, an associate professor of communication and director of the gender studies program at the University of Arkansas, in her article "Queering the Panthers: Rhetorical Adjacency and Black/Queer Liberation Politics."

The connection went both ways. Despite internal hesitation, some Black Panther and Gay Liberation Front leaders encouraged solidary between groups, since they had parallel ideologies. Huey P. Newton, co-founder of the BPP, spoke about his support of the gay liberation movement in 1970, telling reporters that the Panthers "would like to have unity with homosexual groups who are also politically conscious." In August of that year, Newton delivered a speech, "The Women's Liberation and Gay Liberation Movements," in which he called for intersectionality.

"Whatever your personal opinions and your insecurities about homosexuality and the various liberation movements among homosexuals and women (and I speak of the homosexuals and women as oppressed groups), we should we should try to unite with them in a revolutionary fashion," he said.

Similarly, members of the Gay Liberation Front, like activist John O'Brien, attempted to contribute to the BPP financially to show solidarity. (Some GLF members, however, ultimately denied his motion to do so, citing homophobic language used by the Panthers.) In 1970, Afeni Shakur, a Black Panther activist and Tupac Shakur's mother, helped organized a meeting with the Gay Liberation Front at Jane Fonda's house to discuss working together.

Unfortunately, so many of the vocal Black queer activists that fought during the '60s and '70s are largely understudied when compared to their white counterparts. Names like Kathy Kozachenko, Elaine Noble, Leonard Matlovich, and Harvey Milk are widely known for their contributions to LGBTQ+ rights. Black activists aren't as celebrated, despite the essential roles they played. A select few include: Bayard Rustin, a key adviser to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.; writer, poet, and activist Audre Lorde; Ernestine Eckstein, a leader of the Daughters of Bilitis, the first lesbian and civil rights organization in the U.S.; Barbara Jordan, the first Black woman elected to the Texas Senate; writer and scholar Angela Davis; and author James Baldwin.

This year especially, Pride cannot be celebrated without acknowledging the critical, and oftentimes dangerous work that has been done, and continues to be done, by Black queer voices and activists — while honoring the confluence of race, gender, and sexual orientation.

Earl Fowlkes, president and CEO of the Center for Black Equity, stresses that intersectionality is important now more than ever. As a Black child, he says he didn't experience homophobia. He had a supportive family and a gender non-conforming uncle to look up to. However, things changed in his adulthood. "One of the things that shocked me when I came out was the fact that there was so much racism in the queer space," he says, explaining we must acknowledge the pervasiveness of racism in our society to become better. "We can undo this if we all do it together. What the white gay community can do is listen and have dialogue with the Black queer community — talk to us, invite us to the table."

Today, activists like Hearns, who is also a co-founding member of the Black Lives Matter movement, are working to prevent the erasure of Black queer folks — especially Black transgender women — and the whitewashing of queer history. (Donating to her Marsha P. Johnson Institute, for instance, helps uplift these voices).

The reality is that even well-intentioned allies may never begin to understand what it's like to live as a Black trans woman, or a severely disenfranchised American, Hearns explains. The language surrounding 2020's demonstrations remind us that all Black lives matter — regardless of sexual identity or gender.

No human can afford to stay silent on the issue of racism, around the country and against the LGBTQ+ community specifically. According to Mapping Violence, Black people are three times more likely to be killed by the police than white people, despite being 1.3 times less likely to be armed. Between 2013 and 2019, 99% of police officers that killed people on duty have not been charged with a crime.

Black transgender women are disproportionately affected by fatal violence. According to the National Center for Transgender Equality, more than one in four trans people have faced bias-driven assault. The organization states more than one-fifth (22%) of transgender people who have interacted with the police reported harassment, and the rates are much higher for Black transgender individuals: 38% reported harassment, and 15% reported assault by officers.

The 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey found that 57% of transgender people are afraid to go to the police for help largely due to the threat of being harassed, physically or sexually assaulted, or misgendered—which is why the deaths of transgender people often go severely unreported.

The Human Rights Campaign reports that at least 26 transgender or gender non-conforming people in 2019 were violently killed, and at least 14 trans individuals have died so far in 2020, most of whom are Black — including the recent deaths of Dominique "Rem'mie" Fells and Riah Milton, just this past week. The American Medical Association has deemed violence against trans people an epidemic.

This is why the fight for equality and the end to police brutality seen in the 1960s and '70s, and reflected in today's unrest, begins with Black queer people, especially Black transgender women.

"We're seeing the people who are most directly impacted getting smooshed, not only in our society, but in our movement. There will always be the desire for those who are oppressed to shake the hands of their oppressor, and under these conditions, that won't warrant us any new results. That is the hard challenge for Black trans people during this time. How do we survive when everyone else is willing to sell us out?" Hearns says, noting that Black trans individuals are banding together — separately and within the larger Black Lives Matter movement — to gain visibility. In Minneapolis, for instance, City Council members Andrea Jenkins and Phillipe Cunningham, who both identify as transgender, are working to "end" the police department.

"The reality is that we're creating our own solutions. We always have," Hearns continues. "We've always acknowledged our own power, our own talent, our own brilliance. Black trans people will never be extinct, no matter how hard people work to try to get rid of us, there will always be more of us that come."

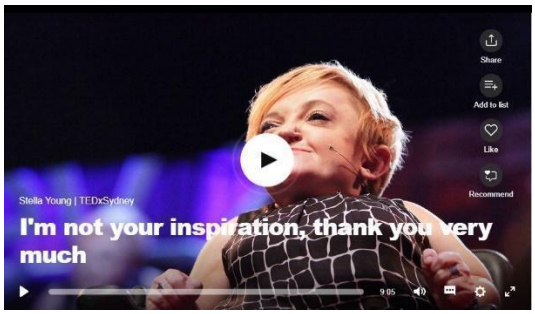
Health and Ableism

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,

If 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.

The Hearing World Must Stop Forcing Deaf Culture to Assimilate

By Sara Nović

Tags: *Accessibility, Culture, Education*

Summary: *Deafness is not an inconvenience or disability but being Deaf is a Culture and a Way of Life*

To read online, visit:

https://www.nbcnews.com/think/opinion/hearing-world-must-stop-forcing-deaf-culture-assimilate-ncna812461

The big summer action movie "Baby Driver" made waves in the Deaf community — CJ Jones, a Deaf actor, plays the deaf foster father of the film's protagonist, Baby. It's exciting for two reasons: deaf characters rarely appear in big mainstream films, and it's even rarer that deaf people play themselves.

But the fight for authentic representation is far from over.

Many in the Deaf community now have their eyes on the new Todd Haynes film, "Wonderstruck," which makes its mainstream theater debut today. It spotlights the Deaf community, yet stars Julianne Moore as one of the deaf protagonists. Moore is only the latest in a long line of hearing actors playing deaf roles — most recently Chris Heyerdahl in the new Syfy-turned-Netflix series "Van Helsing."

Filmmakers have offered many excuses for not casting deaf actors — everything from not knowing where to find one, to asserting a deaf woman would get injured during the shooting of an action sequence.

More disappointing than Hollywood's justifications, however, is the way the Deaf community's critiques are portrayed as political correctness run amok.

Consider the way the public treats other Hollywood excuses: When the spotlight falls, for example, on the film industry's lack of racial and gender diversity, consumers and journalists alike are rightfully outraged; when the same thing happens to deaf artists, the mainstream offers only silence.

The reason could lie in a fundamental misunderstanding of deafness: Hearing people view deafness as a deficiency rather than a separate linguistic context, worldview and culture. Conversely, Deaf people who identify with the Deaf community and use a signed language — here in the United States, American Sign Language (ASL) — consider their Deafhood their primary cultural identity. Those who identify this way use the capital "D" to mark the difference between the physicality of not hearing and the social, cultural and linguistic implications of thinking and communicating in a language other than English.

But what is Deaf culture? Like many others, it is rooted in language.

The manual modality of signed language gives rise to common mannerisms and codes of behavior in Deaf settings. By incorporating gestures, movement and facial expressions, Deaf people tend to be far blunter with one another than considered appropriate in hearing company. Stomping on the floor, for example, or throwing something at a Deaf person (known as "beanbagging") are accepted ways of getting someone's attention.

What the hearing world calls "hearing loss," the Deaf community counters with "Deaf gain." It avoids terminology like "handicapped," "hearing impaired" or "mute."

I'm speaking from the North American Deaf cultural experience, which uses ASL. Sign languages are not universal; they sprout organically from communication within a deaf population and develop over time, like spoken languages.

American Sign Language likely evolved from a combination of home signed systems created by deaf people with individual families and friends, Martha's Vineyard Sign Language and French Sign Language. Due to Martha Vineyard's high rate of genetic deafness (1 in 155 versus 1 in 5,728 on the mainland), its sign language was used by deaf and hearing inhabitants alike from 1714 until the

early 20th century. It connected with French Sign Language in early 19th-century Connecticut, with the 1817 establishment of America's first deaf school — now the American School for the Deaf. Frenchman Laurent Clerc was one of its founders. These two languages entwined with home signs that the diverse student body brought from across the nation to become the ASL we use today. As is often true with minority cultures, Deaf culture has been carried forward through its connection to a shared history — and a shared oppression.

Alexander Graham Bell offers a prime example. In addition to inventing the telephone, Bell was a prominent eugenicist with mommy issues. (Bell's mother was deaf, as was his wife.) He sought to purify the human race of the congenitally defective, as laid out in his famous lecture, "Memoir upon the Formation of a Deaf Variety of the Human Race."

Bell understood that deafness was a social identity as well as a physical attribute. So he campaigned for the closure of Deaf social clubs and schools, and sought to prevent deaf people from marrying each other.

Bell's call for the eradication of deafness was in part implemented by a shift in deaf education practices. After oral-education resolutions were passed at the Milan Convention in 1880, deaf students were increasingly forbidden to sign; some reported having their hands tied to their desks to "encourage" speech. This had devastating linguistic effects on deaf children for generations — and is still propagated today through the Alexander Graham Bell Association.

The association routinely asserts that learning ASL can harm English acquisition. It says speaking and listening are the only way for a deaf child to be a productive member of society. Today's science negates the idea that bilingualism has a deleterious effect on a child's development, but with respect to sign language, the stigma remains.

Yet AG Bell, or organizations like it, don't need to do much to sway public opinion. More than 90 percent of deaf children are born to hearing parents and, for many, their child is the first deaf person they've met. The relationship often begins with a doctor saying, "I'm sorry" when he presents the news, using terms like "treatment" and "cure." Since parents are naturally inclined to want their children to be like them, it's an easy sell to say that speaking and listening will make a child happy, healthy and a successful part of society.

Bell's perspective on deafness also continues to affect U.S. educational legislation. The 1990 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act is designed to funnel students into "the least restrictive environment" wherever possible. For hearing people, this reads as mainstreaming deaf children into regular schools. In reality, it confuses the concepts of language and speech.

Despite technological advances, learning to speak and listen while deaf is a complex process that can take time. Meanwhile, the human brain's critical period for language acquisition is birth to 5 years. Without sufficient exposure, a person may never be fluent in any language. This is to say nothing of the social and emotional impact of constantly being the only deaf person in one's class or school. What if being in a Deaf school, with no communication barriers between one's teachers and peers, is the least restrictive environment? What if bilingualism is the smoothest path to success? Though the hearing community may view deafness as a hardship, having a common language and collective experience can foster a spirit of inclusivity. Race, class and gender-based discrimination are further amplified by disability. But because deafness can impact people of all races, religions and classes, American Sign Language often serves as a connection between people from otherwise disparate backgrounds.

Such diversity is a fertile breeding ground for rich artistic expression. ASL poets use visual rhythm and rhyme. ASL slam poetry, vlogs, and music videos are burgeoning genres, and the institution of Deaf theater is thriving, most recently in Deaf West's Tony-nominated Broadway revival of "Spring Awakening," and a coming 2018 revival of "Children of a Lesser God."

But the Deaf community is increasingly endangered by education policy crafted without its input, and a scientific community racing toward a cure for deafness without considering the ethical ramifications. There seems little concern about, for example, what inherent value a language or culture can have, or what it might mean to knowingly pursue its extinction. In short, who gets to define normal?

To keep society's definition of normalcy from becoming too narrow, the hearing mainstream must accept a cultural view of deafness, even when it is inconvenient. Because only when the hearing world respects deaf people as intellectual equals, when it parses out the difference between accessibility and forced assimilation — and yes, when it starts casting deaf actors in deaf roles — will Deaf culture be allowed to reach its full potential.

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 withsexually 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 discussedin 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 ofdisability 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

Phillips Brooks House Changes Its Politics

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 order 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.

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 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.

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!

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 women.

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."

IMPORTANT NOTE: Since the publication of this article, Harvard University has divested from Fossil Fuels. For more information on that visit:
https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2022/5/14/divest-harvard-report/

Cambridge & Boston

Boston Globe Spotlight Series on Race

By Akilah Johnson, The Boston Globe

Tags: *Racism, Dithcare, Universities, Politics, Class/SES*

Summar*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 bourgie. 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 Savvor 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.

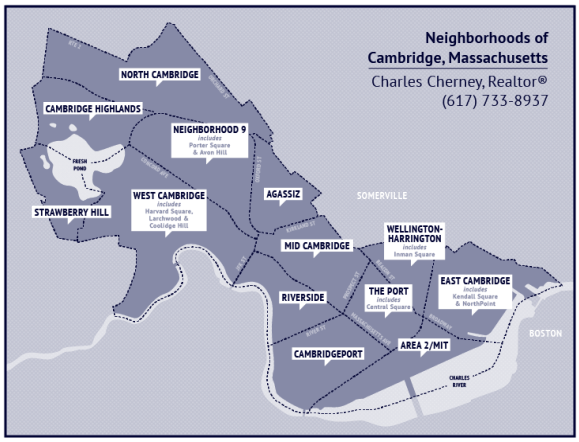
More than 1,800 people belong to “Boston's Young, Black & Social," a massive group chat Belizaire started using a smart phone app. She also uses Instagram to feature members of the LiteWorks community. Entrepreneurs, engineers, lawyers, artists, and scientists — all black and living in the Greater Boston area.

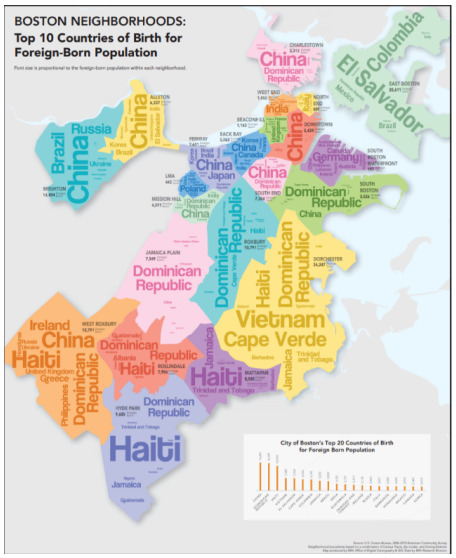
“It helps reinforce the community aspect that I'm trying to create," she said. “Here, you have to be a little bit proactive."

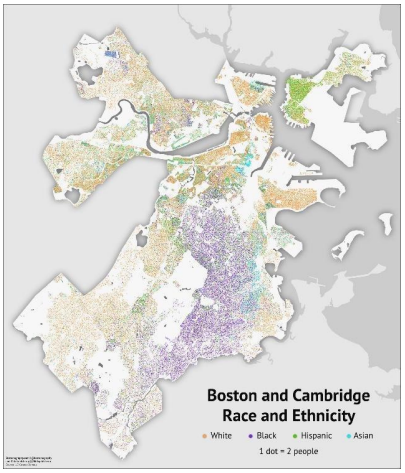
Maps of Boston & Cambridge

Tags: *Cambridge, Boston, Race, Class/SES, Immigration*

Summary: *Several maps revealing demographic information about Boston & Cambridge.*







The Greater Boston Area and surrounding cities. Some notable neighbors: Chelsea, Somerville, Malden, Medford, Wellesley, Quincy, & Braintree

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/OTdUOwYAjJa6wuqamh0mHI/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.

Activism, Organizing, & Social Change

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?*

(*Edited to shorten.)

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] ."

... 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, comparing 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.

... 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.

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 grassroot, 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)...

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-onthe-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 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

COVID-19 & Health Inequity

Why Racism, Not Race, Is a Risk Factor For Dying of COVID-19

by Claudia Wallis

Tags: *Health, COVID, Racism*

Summary*: Explaining why BIPOC are at higher risk and how the devaluation of Black and brown life leads to death and disease.*

COVID-19 is cutting a jarring and unequal path across the U.S. The disease is disproportionately killing people of color, particularly Black Americans, who have been dying at more than twice the rate of white people. In some places—Washington, D.C., Kansas, Wisconsin, Michigan and Missouri—the death rate is four to six times higher among Black people. Infection data are less reliable and less complete than information on mortality. Yet here, too, the discrepancies appear to be stark.

The reason for these disparities is not biological but is the result of the deep-rooted and pervasive impacts of racism, says epidemiologist and family physician Camara Phyllis Jones. Racism, she argues, has led people of color to be more exposed and less protected from the virus and has burdened them with chronic diseases. For 14 years Jones worked at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as a medical officer and director of research on health inequities. As president of the American Public Health Association in 2016, she led a campaign to explicitly name racism as a direct threat to public health. She is currently a fellow at Harvard University's Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study and is writing a book about addressing racism.

As the country confronts the unequal impact of COVID-19 and reels from the killing of George Floyd and the ongoing legacy of racial injustice it represents, Jones spoke with contributing editor Claudia Wallis about the ways that discrimination has shaped the suffering produced by the pandemic.

[*An edited transcript of the interview follows.*]

Along with age, male gender and certain chronic conditions, race appears to be a risk factor for a severe outcome from COVID-19. Why is that?

Race doesn't put you at higher risk. *Racism* puts you at higher risk. It does so through two mechanisms: People of color are more infected because we are more exposed and less protected. Then, once infected, we are more likely to die because we carry a greater burden of chronic diseases from living in disinvested communities with poor food options [and] poisoned air and because we have less access to health care.

Why do you say Black, brown and indigenous people are more exposed?

We are more exposed because of the kinds of jobs that we have: the frontline jobs of home health aids, postal workers, warehouse workers, meat packers, hospital orderlies. And those frontline jobs—which, for a long time, have been invisibilized and undervalued in terms of the pay—are now being categorized as essential work. The overrepresentation [of people of color] in these jobs doesn't just so happen. (Nothing differential by race just so happens.) It is tied to residential and educational segregation in this country. If you have a poor neighborhood, then you'll have poorly funded schools, which often results in poor education outcomes and another generation lost. When you have poor educational outcomes, you have limited employment opportunities.

We are also more exposed because we are overrepresented in prisons and jails—jails where people are often financial detainees because they can't make bail. And brown people are more exposed in immigration detention centers. We are also more likely to be unhoused—with no access

to water to wash our hands—or to live in smaller, more cramped quarters in more densely populated neighborhoods. You're in a one–bedroom apartment with five people living there, and one is your grandmother, and you can't safely isolate from family members who are frontline workers.

And why are people of color less protected?

We are less protected because in these frontline jobs—but also in the nursing homes and in the jails, prisons and homeless shelters—the personal protective equipment [PPE] has been very, very slow in coming and still may not be there. Look at the meatpacking plants, for example. We are less protected because our roles and our lives are less valued—less valued in our job roles, less valued in our intellect and our humanity.

You've noted that once infected, people of color are more likely to have a poor outcome or die. Could you break down the reasons?

This has two buckets: First, we are more burdened with chronic diseases. Black people have 60 percent more diabetes and 40 percent more hypertension. That's not because we are not interested in health but because of the context of our lives. We are living in unhealthier places without the food choices we need: no grocery stores, so-called food deserts and what some people describe as "fast-food swamps." More polluted air, no place to exercise safely, toxic dump sites—all of these things go into communities that have been disempowered. That's why we have more diseases, not because we don't want to be healthy. We very much want to be healthy. It's because of the burdens that racism has put on our bodies.

What is the second bucket that raises risks from COVID-19?

Health care. Even from the beginning, it was hard for Black folks to get tested because of where testing sites were initially located. They were in more affluent neighborhoods—or there was drive-through testing. What if you don't have a car? And there was the need to have a physician's order to get a test. We heard about people who were symptomatic and presented at emergency departments but were sent back home without getting a test. A lot of people died at home without ever having a confirmed diagnosis. So even though we know we are overrepresented, we may have been undercounted.

Once you get into the hospital, there's a whole spectrum of scarce resources, so different states and hospital systems had what they called "crisis standards of care." In Massachusetts, they were very careful to say that you cannot use race or language or zip code to discriminate [on who gets a ventilator]. But you could use expected [long-term] survival. Then the question was: Do you have these preexisting conditions? This was going to systematically put Black and brown people at a lower priority or even disqualify them from access to these life-saving therapies. [*Editor's Note: Massachusetts has since changed its guidelines. But Jones says the revision is an incomplete fix.*]

What can be done to better protect people of color?

We need more PPE for all frontline workers; we need to value all of those lives. We need to offer hazard pay and something like conscientious objector status for frontline workers who feel it is too dangerous to go back into the poultry or meatpacking plant. We know that there are communities at higher risk, and we need to be doing more testing there.

Several states do not report racial and ethnic data on COVID-19 cases. Why is that a problem?

States should be reporting their data disaggregated by race, especially now that we know that Black and brown and indigenous folks are at higher risk of being infected and then dying. It's not just to document it, not just to alarm or to arm some people with a false sense of security. It's because we need to provide resources according to need: health care resources, testing resources and prevention types of resources.

When we first spoke on May 14, George Floyd was still alive and well in Minneapolis. In the wake of his killing and the public response, at the same time as the pandemic, do you see an opportunity for meaningful change?

The outrage is encouraging, because it has been expressed by folks from all parts of our population. The protests are effective mixing bowls for the virus. But at least they are not frivolous mixing bowls like pool parties. Participants in the protests are thinking not just about their individual health and well-being but about the collective power that they have now to possibly make things better for their children and grandchildren. This is both a treacherous time and a time of great promise.

Racism is a system of structuring opportunity and assigning value based on the social interpretation of how one looks (which is what we call "race") that unfairly disadvantages some individuals and communities, unfairly advantages other individuals and communities, and saps the strength of the whole society through the waste of human resources. Perhaps this nation is awakening to the realization that racism does indeed hurt us all.

Coronavirus reminds Asian Americans like me that our belonging is conditional

by John Cho

***Tags**: Racism, COVID, Xenophobia*

***Summary**: Actor John Cho talks about his experience with racism and anti-Asian sentiment in the context of COVID*

To read online, visit:

https://www.latimes.com/opinion/story/2020-04-22/asian-american-discrimination-john-cho-coronavirus

I called my parents a few nights ago to tell them to be cautious when stepping out of the house, because they might be targets of verbal or even physical abuse. It felt so strange. Our roles had flipped.

My plea mirrored the admonitions I received from them as a child growing up in Houston. The world, they cautioned, was hostile and it viewed us as strangers. So they warned me to stick close to my family. Close to my kind.

The fact that the coronavirus seems to have originated in China has spawned a slew of anti-Asian hate crimes. Across the country, Asian American parents and children are making versions of the call I made. Friends are sharing first-hand accounts of abuse on text chains and circulating articles on Facebook, always ending with the suddenly ominous "stay safe."

Growing up, the assumption was that once we became American enough, there would be no need for such warnings — that we would be safe. To that end, my parents encouraged me and my younger brother to watch as much television as possible, so that we might learn to speak and act like the natives. The hope was that race would not disadvantage us — the next generation — if we played our cards right.

When I became an actor (maybe as a result of all that TV), and really started to work, I felt glimmers of my parents' hope coming to fruition — doors were open, strangers were kinder. In some ways, I began to lead a life devoid of race. But I've learned that a moment always comes along to remind you that your race defines you above all else.

It might be a small moment, like a salesperson greeting you with *"konnichiwa."* Or it might be a string of moments, like the press tour that Kal Penn and I took to promote "Harold & Kumar Go to White Castle" in 2004, a few years after 9/11.

We flew across the country — New York, Chicago, Atlanta, Seattle — and it became a grim routine: Flight after flight, Kal would be pulled aside for a "random" search. On one leg of the tour, Kal's friend Gabe joined us, and when we hit security, Kal was selected for a search while Gabe and I flew through unscathed. We gathered our bags and waited on a bench for Kal to be released. Rummaging through his backpack, Gabe suddenly said, "Kal's going to be annoyed." When I looked

inside it, I realized why: Gabe, who is white, had gone camping recently, and had neglected to remove his Rambo-sized hunting knife from his backpack.

I gasped and looked back at Kal, who was watching a Transportation Security Administration worker empty the contents of his bag. It was a reality check.

Asian Americans are experiencing such a moment right now. The pandemic is reminding us that our belonging is conditional. One moment we are Americans, the next we are all foreigners, who "brought" the virus here.

Like fame, the "model minority" myth can provide the illusion of "raceless-ness." Putting select Asians on a pedestal silences those who question systemic injustice. Our supposed success is used as proof that the system works — and if it doesn't work for you, it must be your fault.

Never mind that 12% of us are living below the poverty line. The model minority myth helps maintain a status quo that works against people of all colors.

But perhaps the most insidious effect of this myth is that it silences us. It seduces Asian Americans and recruits us to act on its behalf. It converts our parents, who in turn, encourage us to accept it. It makes you feel protected, that you're passing as one of the good ones.

And because the stereotypes may be complimentary (hardworking, good at math), it makes people — including us — think that anti-Asian sentiment is somehow less serious, that it's racism lite. That allows us to dismiss the current wave of Asian hate crimes as trivial, isolated and unimportant. Consider the comedians who mock Asians, but restrain themselves when it comes to other groups.

Of course, with the falsely positive come the negative stereotypes (you're sneaky, you're stealing jobs, you're corrupt). After I had been busted for cheating on a Latin quiz in high school, I recall my teacher asking, "Why are Koreans such cheaters?"

During times of national stress, it's these darker stereotypes that prevail. My wife's families were incarcerated in camps during World War II, even while her great-uncles were serving in an all-Japanese American battalion of the U.S. Army. Vincent Chin, a Chinese American autoworker, was brutally beaten to death in Detroit in 1982, blamed for the Japanese "takeover" of the auto industry. And just recently, an Asian woman in Brooklyn had acid thrown at her while she was taking out the trash, another among the skyrocketing attacks against Asians.

I came to this country in 1978, at the age of 6. I was naturalized on Nov. 21, 1990, during the military buildup before the start of the Gulf War. I remember being surprised by the judge at the ceremony asking me whether I would defend my country in uniform if called upon. I wasn't expecting that question, though my friends and I had been wondering about a possible draft, and I took my time to truly consider it. I answered yes and I meant it.

I claimed the citizenship my parents wanted for me and I think I've spent my life earning it. I'm not going to let anyone tell me or anyone who looks like me that we are not really American.

If the coronavirus has taught us anything, it's that the solution to a widespread problem cannot be patchwork. Never has our interconnectedness and our reliance on each other been plainer.

You can't stand up for some and not for others. And like the virus, unchecked aggression has the potential to spread wildly. Please don't minimize the hate or assume it's somewhere far away. It's happening close to you. If you see it on the street, say something. If you hear it at work, say something. If you sense it in your family, say something. Stand up for your fellow Americans.

COVID-19 Data on Native Americans is a 'National Disgrace.' This Scientist is Fighting to be Counted

by Lizzie Wade

***Tags**: Native Rights, COVID, Healthcare Disparities*

***Summary:** Writing about closing discriminatory data gaps obscuring how Native peoples are disproportionately affected by COVID and historical discrimination*

To read online, visit:
https://www.science.org/content/article/covid-19-data-native-americans-national-disgrace-scientist-fighting-be-counted

Abigail Echo-Hawk can't even count how many times she's been called a troublemaker. It's happened at conferences, workshops, and even after she testified before Congress—all places where she has advocated for the full and ethical inclusion of American Indians and Alaska Natives in public health data. "I didn't used to know what to say," she says. "Now, my answer is, 'Is calling for justice making trouble?'"

As the director of the Urban Indian Health Institute (UIHI) and the chief research officer for the Seattle Indian Health Board, Echo-Hawk has been working for years with Indigenous people, mostly in cities, across the United States to collect data about their communities. She has also advised the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the National Institutes of Health, and many universities on best practices for analyzing data about American Indian and Alaska Native communities. Now, the COVID-19 pandemic has given Echo-Hawk's work even more urgency.

The virus has taken a disproportionate toll on many Indigenous communities in the United States. But its full impact is unclear because of problems Echo-Hawk has long fought to correct, including racial misclassification and the exclusion of Indigenous communities from data sets and analyses used to make health policy decisions.

"Abigail has highlighted the inadequacy of, the restricted access to, and the delays in receiving data" about how COVID-19 is affecting Indigenous people in the United States, says Spero Manson, director of the Centers for American Indian and Alaska Native Health at the Colorado School of Public Health, who is Pembina Chippewa. "But it all builds on her prior work."

Echo-Hawk, who is a citizen of the Pawnee Nation of Oklahoma, grew up in rural Alaska. She credits her interest in public health to the values she saw modeled by the leaders and members of her tribal communities. "They think about the health and well-being of an entire community in a very holistic way," Echo-Hawk says.

She had a different experience after moving to Seattle for college and seeking prenatal care for her first pregnancy at a local hospital. When a medical assistant found out that Echo-Hawk was Indigenous, she began to aggressively question her about drinking and drug use. (Echo-Hawk was doing neither.) "That was very traumatic for me ... I was treated in a way that a lot of people of color are, and that is with disdain, discrimination, and outright racism. And it inhibited my care," she says.

She didn't see a doctor again until her second trimester, when she went to the Seattle Indian Health Board. There she was welcomed, trusted, and treated with respect. That experience set Echo-Hawk on a path that eventually led to studying health policy at the University of Washington, Bothell, and working at the research program Partnerships for Native Health, now at Washington State University. She became director of UIHI in 2016.

"The system of colonialism in the United States has created, and continues to increase risk factors for, poor health outcomes in Native communities," Echo-Hawk says. The U.S. government removed many Indigenous communities from their lands and confined them to reservations. Many didn't have access to medical care and were cut off from their traditional diets and lifestyles, including spiritual practices that were tied to their homelands. Today, American Indians and Alaska Natives have higher rates of obesity, diabetes, asthma, and heart disease than white Americans, as

well as higher rates of suicide. The system of oppression in the United States, Echo-Hawk says, "has built a perfect environment to kill us in a pandemic."

But data showing the pandemic's full impact on Indigenous communities across the country have not been collected, and accessing the information that does exist can be an uphill battle. Citing privacy concerns, for example, CDC initially denied tribal epidemiology centers, including UIHI, access to data about testing and confirmed COVID-19 cases, even though it was making those data available to states. What's more, data collected by tribes, local and state health departments, and national agencies are often wildly inconsistent, says Desi Rodriguez-Lonebear, a social demographer at the University of California, Los Angeles, and a citizen of the Northern Cheyenne Nation. "I cannot tell you with any sort of certainty the number of positive cases of COVID-19 on my reservation right now," she says. "It's shocking."

It also reflects an old pattern, Rodriguez-Lonebear says. "For so long, data has been used against our people." For example, the U.S. census, which began in 1790, excluded American Indians until 1860, and didn't count those living on reservations until 1900. The census data were then used to justify the invasion and settlement of supposedly empty land, Rodriguez-Lonebear says.

Today, American Indians and Alaska Natives make up about 2% of the U.S. population but are often left out of national data analyses or marked as statistically insignificant. "I see being eliminated in the data as an ongoing part of the continuing genocide of American Indians and Alaska Natives. If you eliminate us in the data, we no longer exist," Echo-Hawk says.

One way this erasure happens is through racial misclassification, Echo-Hawk says. Documents such as hospital intake forms might not give people the option to identify as American Indian or Alaska Native, lumping them into an "other" category. Similarly, CDC reports maternal mortality data by three racial categories: white, Black, and Hispanic. All other races are classified as "other." When UIHI did its own analysis of maternal mortality, it found that urban American Indian mothers were 4.2 times more likely to die during or shortly after pregnancy than non-Hispanic white mothers.

Echo-Hawk is pushing for similar detail on COVID-19 cases. Before the pandemic, she traveled the country working with Indigenous communities and training scientists at universities and other institutions to change their data collection and analysis practices. Now, she can't leave Seattle because of the pandemic, but she's working up to 15 hours a day, 7 days a week. "This is probably the most troubling time ever in my career," she says. Echo-Hawk and others pushed CDC to give tribal health authorities access to COVID-19 cases—with some success. Still, the data are "a sliver" of what she asked for, she says. "The federal government is failing to uphold their end of the bargain," Rodriguez-Lonebear agrees. CDC did not respond to a request for comment.

Echo-Hawk is a co-author on a recent article in the *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* that found American Indians and Alaska Natives were 3.5 times more likely to be diagnosed with COVID-19 than non-Hispanic white people. "That is a gross underreporting," she says, because the study could only analyze data from the 23 states that reported patients' race and ethnicity over 70% of the time. "The data is a national disgrace," and the gaps affect all communities of color, Echo-Hawk says. "How can decisions be made in the United States to prevent, intervene, and treat COVID-19, when you can't even truly tell what populations are most affected?"

"Data can be used as a weapon to further marginalize and harm communities of color," especially Indigenous communities, agrees Kelly Gonzales, a citizen of the Cherokee Nation who studies the effects of systemic racism and colonialism on health at the Oregon Health & Science University–Portland State University School of Public Health. As a founding member of the independent Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) Decolonizing Research and Data Council, she draws on Echo-Hawk's work to design and teach methods of data collection and analysis that advance racial justice. "On days where doing this work in the context of ongoing white supremacy and colonial violence feels really challenging and impossible, I remember her doing this work, and I remember I'm not alone."

Black Lives Matter & Police Abolition

Yes, We Mean Literally Abolish the Police

by Mariame Kaba

***Tags**: Police Abolition, Racial Justice, Police Violence*

***Summary:** Police reform is unsuccessful, focus instead on other non-violent social programs so police are not necessary.*

To read online, visit:
https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/12/opinion/sunday/floyd-abolish-defund-police.html?action=click&module=Opinion&pgtype=Homepage&fbclid=IwAR1wM5ZB6X4ubF3vrSQGHhxQ45WNtrWXJgG65WF5AyDTzMDoupH549n4evs

Congressional Democrats want to make it easier to identify and prosecute police misconduct; Joe Biden wants to give police departments $300 million. But efforts to solve police violence through liberal reforms like these have failed for nearly a century.

Enough. We can't reform the police. The only way to diminish police violence is to reduce contact between the public and the police.

There is not a single era in United States history in which the police were not a force of violence against black people. Policing in the South emerged from the slave patrols in the 1700 and 1800s that caught and returned runaway slaves. In the North, the first municipal police departments in the mid-1800s helped quash labor strikes and riots against the rich. Everywhere, they have suppressed marginalized populations to protect the status quo.

So when you see a police officer pressing his knee into a black man's neck until he dies, that's the logical result of policing in America. When a police officer brutalizes a black person, he is doing what he sees as his job.

Now two weeks of nationwide protests have led some to call for defunding the police, while others argue that doing so would make us less safe.

The first thing to point out is that police officers don't do what you think they do. They spend most of their time responding to noise complaints, issuing parking and traffic citations, and dealing with other noncriminal issues. We've been taught to think they "catch the bad guys; they chase the bank robbers; they find the serial killers," said Alex Vitale, the coordinator of the Policing and Social Justice Project at Brooklyn College, in an interview with Jacobin. But this is "a big myth," he said. "The vast majority of police officers make one felony arrest a year. If they make two, they're cop of the month."

We can't simply change their job descriptions to focus on the worst of the worst criminals. That's not what they are set up to do.

Second, a "safe" world is not one in which the police keep black and other marginalized people in check through threats of arrest, incarceration, violence and death.

I've been advocating the abolition of the police for years. Regardless of your view on police power — whether you want to get rid of the police or simply to make them less violent — here's an immediate demand we can all make: Cut the number of police in half and cut their budget in half. Fewer police officers equals fewer opportunities for them to brutalize and kill people. The idea is gaining traction in Minneapolis, Dallas, Los Angeles and other cities.

History is instructive, not because it offers us a blueprint for how to act in the present but because it can help us ask better questions for the future.

The Lexow Committee undertook the first major investigation into police misconduct in New York City in 1894. At the time, the most common complaint against the police was about "clubbing" — "the routine bludgeoning of citizens by patrolmen armed with nightsticks or blackjacks," as the historian Marilynn Johnson has written.

The Wickersham Commission, convened to study the criminal justice system and examine the problem of Prohibition enforcement, offered a scathing indictment in 1931, including evidence of brutal interrogation strategies. It put the blame on a lack of professionalism among the police.

After the 1967 urban uprisings, the Kerner Commission found that "police actions were 'final' incidents before the outbreak of violence in 12 of the 24 surveyed disorders." Its report listed a now-familiar set of recommendations, like working to build "community support for law enforcement" and reviewing police operations "in the ghetto, to ensure proper conduct by police officers."

These commissions didn't stop the violence; they just served as a kind of counterinsurgent function each time police violence led to protests. Calls for similar reforms were trotted out in response to the brutal police beating of Rodney King in 1991 and the rebellion that followed, and again after the killings of Michael Brown and Eric Garner. The final report of the Obama administration's President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing resulted in procedural tweaks like implicit-bias training, police-community listening sessions, slight alterations of use-of-force policies and systems to identify potentially problematic officers early on.

But even a member of the task force, Tracey Meares, noted in 2017, "policing as we know it must be abolished before it can be transformed."

The philosophy undergirding these reforms is that more rules will mean less violence. But police officers break rules all the time. Look what has happened over the past few weeks — police officers slashing tires, shoving old men on camera, and arresting and injuring journalists and protesters. These officers are not worried about repercussions any more than Daniel Pantaleo, the former New York City police officer whose chokehold led to Eric Garner's death; he waved to a camera filming the incident. He knew that the police union would back him up and he was right. He stayed on the job for five more years.

Minneapolis had instituted many of these "best practices" but failed to remove Derek Chauvin from the force despite 17 misconduct complaints over nearly two decades, culminating in the entire world watching as he knelt on George Floyd's neck for almost nine minutes.

Why on earth would we think the same reforms would work now? We need to change our demands. The surest way of reducing police violence is to reduce the power of the police, by cutting budgets and the number of officers.

But don't get me wrong. We are not abandoning our communities to violence. We don't want to just close police departments. We want to make them obsolete.

We should redirect the billions that now go to police departments toward providing health care, housing, education and good jobs. If we did this, there would be less need for the police in the first place.

We can build other ways of responding to harms in our society. Trained "community care workers" could do mental-health checks if someone needs help. Towns could use restorative-justice models instead of throwing people in prison.

What about rape? The current approach hasn't ended it. In fact most rapists never see the inside of a courtroom. Two-thirds of people who experience sexual violence never report it to anyone. Those who file police reports are often dissatisfied with the response. Additionally, police officers themselves commit sexual assault alarmingly often. A study in 2010 found that sexual misconduct was the second most frequently reported form of police misconduct. In 2015, The Buffalo News found that an officer was caught for sexual misconduct every five days.

When people, especially white people, consider a world without the police, they envision a society as violent as our current one, merely without law enforcement — and they shudder. As a society, we have been so indoctrinated with the idea that we solve problems by policing and caging people that many cannot imagine anything other than prisons and the police as solutions to violence and harm.

People like me who want to abolish prisons and police, however, have a vision of a different society, built on cooperation instead of individualism, on mutual aid instead of self-preservation. What would the country look like if it had billions of extra dollars to spend on housing, food and education for all? This change in society wouldn't happen immediately, but the protests show that many people are ready to embrace a different vision of safety and justice.

When the streets calm and people suggest once again that we hire more black police officers or create more civilian review boards, I hope that we remember all the times those efforts have failed.

Forget "Looting." Capitalism is the Real Robbery.

by William C. Anderson

Tags: *Racial Justice, Anti-Capitalism, Forms of Protest*

Summary: *Understanding that looting is a necessary form of protest and that large corporations loots more than any protests ever could.*

To read online, visit:
https://truthout.org/articles/forget-looting-capitalism-is-the-real-robbery/

This morning the president of the United States threatened state-sanctioned murder in response to "looting," laying bare the way in which white supremacy, capitalism and the state work together to violently repress people who defend Black life.

But Trump's angry outburst is not the only blatantly racist response we should be interrogating. We also must confront the way in which both conservatives and liberals have responded to the Minneapolis uprisings by condemning "looting."

Protesters in Minneapolis and around the country are rising up against a lynching and state violence. How should we respond to a lynching? Should our goal simply be to publicize it, in the hope that such publicity will generate condemnation and prevent future lynchings? This logic is flawed, in part, because lynchings thrive off of spectatorship. For white supremacists, the act of killing is also an act of fellowship and opportunity for indoctrination.

Simply spreading images of racist killings and asking the state to stop killing us is not going to stop them. (In fact, while it's important to publicize the fact that these killings are occurring, sometimes the spread of such images also galvanizes white supremacists.)

And so, for some who oppose racist killings, watching the videos, waiting to vote, and marching in protest feels like enough. But for others, more intervention is needed. The murder of George Floyd by Minneapolis police comes on the heels of the killings of Ahmaud Arbery in Brunswick, Georgia, and Breonna Taylor in Louisville, Kentucky. These killings were committed by current and former law enforcement. Understandably, outrage is growing.

We should expect uprisings. We should expect property to be damaged, as people rise up against the racist systems complicit with racist violence. Many of the people taking part in these revolts have decided that respecting property is not more important than respecting Black life. There is an awareness that if the law doesn't respect Black life, then the law itself cannot be relied on for protection or given undeserving respect. So, as protesters are being accused of "looting" and

"rioting" in Minneapolis or anywhere else, this time demands that we reflect on the systematic robbery of Black America.

Corporations in the United States, again, have walked away with an unprecedented and astronomical amount of money in 2020. With no accountability in sight, there was little to no opposition to their monumental robbery. They were handed trillions. Politicians working in service to the corporate elite — and afraid of appearing opposed to a deal that would largely benefit Wall Street — pushed it through. Of course, the deal left many vulnerable people in the dust. No changes were made after the unresolved debt crisis of 2008 that brutalized people around the world with the starvation we know as austerity. Cuts to social needs have fallen on the public undeterred while the rich continuously grow richer than they've ever been.

Now, protests breaking out throughout the nation in response to police brutality foreshadow what's to come. People are likely to take, break and fight because conditions remain miserable. It should not be surprising. Still, the "looting" by the oppressed will always be condemned more than the structural robbery that's long taken place under capitalism.

There's this idea that the perpetrators of crises, rather than their victims, deserve our sympathy when their profits decrease. After at least 100,000 people in the U.S. — disproportionately Black, Native and Latinx people — have died from a merciless pandemic, this absurdity is still being trafficked through the media. The corporations that do not pay people a living wage and who are benefiting from skyrocketing prices amid disaster are not deserving of pity. For those of us whose stability is much more uncertain, one missed paycheck could mean eviction, imprisonment or hunger. These circumstances are increasingly common as unemployment reaches levels not seen since the Great Depression. At least 40 million people in this country are out of work, and people in need are being effectively robbed by the rich.

As they lose their jobs, people are also being robbed of health care — a vulnerability that will kill people and their family members. People have also been robbed of a safe place to live free from state violence, where they can breathe clean air. People have watched the tax money they paid be given away, time and time again, after being told it would come back to workers, but it never does. For Black America, there are more than enough prison beds, but not nearly enough hospital beds for a population that's being disproportionately crushed by institutional oppression. So, of course, with little to no real infrastructure to protect people who the government has long neglected and abandoned, there will be uprisings and people will take things. They will take because of what's been taken from them: safety, security, housing, education, food and even their ability to vote. And, of course, protesters are being robbed of the right to express their anger.

This conversation about "looting" always repeats itself. During virtually every Black uprising that has taken place and shaped this country in the last century, the narrative has remained the same. White supremacist assaults on the Black community were dubbed "race riots," and Black protesters' self-defense has been framed as senseless violence. People lament the destruction of property because they've bought into the idea that it's another wrong being committed on top of any given white supremacist violence that caused it all. But stealing because you're being sucked dry by a system that has rendered you disposable is not the same as the ritualistic racist murders of Black people by white supremacists. Decades of "looting" stores during uprisings can't measure up to what Wall Street has looted through the financial crises it creates.

They are certainly aware of their crimes. Hedge fund capitalists who amass endless amounts of money through slush funds and financial manipulation have many avenues to escape accountability. As the U.S. military prepares for "civil disturbances" and buys riot gear, it's clear they know that not all people will accept atrocity. In a nation that has never gotten past the civil war it fought over a wealthy class not giving up slavery profits, defending the wealthy is a tradition. The same people who created and currently benefit from the current crisis are intentionally mismanaging plenty of other parts of our existence.

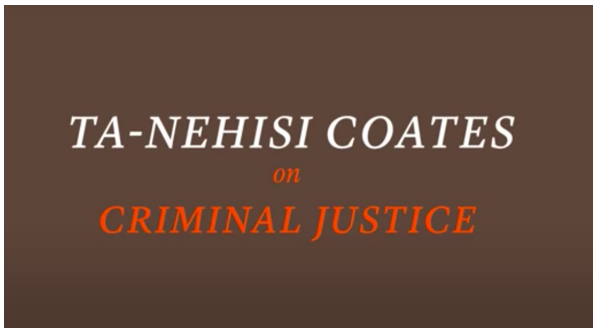
Those interested in liberation should not condemn protesters' so-called "rioting" and "looting." Rather, we should be doing all we can to free the imprisoned protesters in Minnesota and wherever else uprisings occur. The robbery we should concern ourselves with is the theft perpetrated by a system that creates desperation where people in need have to go and take for themselves what should be a guaranteed right. Capitalism encourages thievery from the top down. Writing about the Haitian Revolution, the great writer C.L.R. James once said, "The rich are only defeated when running for their lives." It has certainly been the case time and time again throughout Black history: People have overcome insurmountable odds to claim victories. How should we answer the question, "What do we do in response to a lynching?" We must make the very system that enables it run for its life.

The Enduring Myth of Black Criminality

by Ta-Nehisi Coates

Tags: *Historical Racism, Criminal Justice System, Black Criminalization*

Summary: *A video looking at the U.S.'s anti-Black racism and view of Blackness as criminal.*



To watch online, visit:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cQo-yYhExw0&feature=youtu.be

13th

by Ava DuVernay

Tags: *Racial Justice, Prison Abolition, Slavery*

Summary: *Understanding how slavery has never really disappeared in America, how Black Americans have been criminalized in order to continue slavery*

To watch online, visit: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=krfcq5pF8u8

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.

Glossary of Terms

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.

Assimilationist: A person or system that believes a particular racial group culturally or behaviorally inferior to the dominant demographic and supports enrichment programs for their development into the mainstream

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 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.

Microaggression: Everyday verbal, non-verbal, or environmental acts that communicate hostility or prejudice, whether intentional or not, and are aimed at people solely based on their marginalized identity.

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.)

Panethnicity: A term used to group several ethnic groups under a broader ethnic category, often based on language, geography, cultural origins, or racial similarities.

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.