

The Intersection of Marginalization Through Racism, Classism, Ethnicity, Sexuality and Other Factors in My Life

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Submitted to Dr. Harlow for SOC-115

Summary

My project is a historical biography that focuses on my childhood in Chicago; my experiences with racism, elitism and white privilege; and how this was, and still is, a reflection our society and our history. These experiences helped to prepare me for similar traumatic experiences I would face as a gay man and provides insight into the common connection with all those who are marginalized by society.

Challenges

The poetry allowed me to express so much. In reliving these experiences I was able to again feel so much. This allowed me to be open to the Spirit and express what is often so elusive. For me the Spirit moved me and I was a vessel to express what was flowing through me. The Spirit moves so many of us, when we listen and allow ourselves to feel. But then we have to choose whether to act upon it. I wouldn't say I was "most proud," but tremendously blessed.

Application

I have volunteered at the Religious Coalition in Frederick for five years. I have decided I would like to do social work for my remaining years. I currently drive Uber, which allows me to interact with people from all aspects of our society. I have been able to share the poetry with those our society calls "strangers" and help affirm others with their trauma. When we can give voice and share with others our trauma, we are no longer alone with the burden. A social worker is an integral part of helping others to see that they are still empowered, in spite of what the world has thrown at them.



General Education Connection

Communicate ideas in written, oral, and other modes as appropriate to a situation and audience. | Employ various thinking strategies to develop well-reasoned judgments. | Evaluate sources of information for accuracy, relevance, and reliability. | Explore issues through creative, interdisciplinary, and innovative approaches. | Identify their role as global citizens in a multicultural country and world.

Dr. Harlow suggested I do a historical biography as my assignment. She was familiar with some of my poems and writings, and we are both from Chicago. It never occurred to me to include poetry for the paper, so it was a surprising challenge and I am so glad I did. Hopefully the poems are able to convey the spiritual and emotional experiences to the reader in a manner that resonates with them.

The assignment allowed me to relive my childhood experience but now view them as an adult through the prism of sociology. The sociological concepts have given me the language to describe what I had experienced and in doing so was a reflection of Sapir-Whorf hypothesis. I did the most research on this paper at my time here at Carroll. Only this time it wasn't work, but a strong desire to bring together and express what had transpired, accurately, in my life and our society.

The paper and poetry allowed me to express my quest to illuminate social injustice, and hopefully speak to society in a manner that can be safely heard. It is when individuals decide to change and act on their own moral compass that change will truly come about. Hopefully my project will resonate with some and give them permission to act on what they already have inside. So often we need permission to act outside the bounds of societal norms.

Harriet Tubman wanted slavery to end but she didn't wait to act. Her actions did not end slavery but allowed so many to free themselves.

The Crosses They Burned

As The Spirit Moves Me

On our lawn
the crosses
they burned
As a child
the lesson
I learned
On that night
in my fright,
that we were not white
And what had once
been friendship
was now spurned

Sweet Sorrow

As The Spirit Moves Me

The small victories
In the never ending struggle
In which we refuse to surrender.