

American Renaissance

There is not a truth existing which I fear or would wish unknown to the whole world.

— Thomas Jefferson

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How I Saw the Light (Part II)

More personal accounts of what led AR readers to racial consciousness.

I Want to Sob Like a Child for All We Have Lost

I was born in Oakland, California, in 1944 and raised in a lower middle-class area of the city. There was only one non-white family in the neighborhood, and crime was almost unheard of. For example, once a week I was required to accompany my aunt on an all-day shopping excursion to downtown Oakland. Before leaving, my aunt would open wide both the front and back doors to her home, in order to let in fresh air. Those doors were open for six to eight hours straight, and no one ever trespassed. The family car was always parked overnight with its doors unlocked and its windows rolled down. No one ever tampered.

Slowly, incrementally, the demographic and political profile of the city changed, and by the late '60s to early '70s, it was no longer the city I had loved. Oakland had become an unhealthy, dangerous place. My racial consciousness arose from the many experiences a white man must endure in the inner city.

It came, in part, from the owner of the neighborhood grocery store (a Chinese immigrant) being gunned down in front of his wife and three small children. And from the owner of the local liquor store (a Hungarian immigrant), shot to death while his wife pleaded for his life. And from John, the elderly owner of the local hardware store, being dragged into a rear room of his store, his lifeless form discovered several hours later, his skull having been smashed to bits with a hammer taken from his own inventory. And

from my arriving home from work one afternoon to find that everything I owned had been stolen from my duplex, with the exception of the rifle I kept hid-

and Haight-Ashbury, and also from having a large caliber revolver placed to my temple while being told, "I'm gonna blow your white m***** f***** brains out,

Honky!" My racial consciousness is a product of all of these things and so many more, the total weight of which I could no longer endure.

To my discredit I fled California in 1987. I've since lived in Las Vegas, Phoenix, San Antonio, and Tucson. With each move I've sought to restore the quality of life I was so privileged to enjoy as a youth. I have failed in my quest.

I want back my city!
My streets! My ocean!
I want back my schools,
my infrastructure, my
arts, and the compan-

ionship of like-minded citizens. I want the comradeship of similar people working together to achieve similar goals. And I once again want to stand atop the high ground just north of the Golden Gate and gaze toward the city in wide-eyed wonderment at the panorama my race created. And as I write this I want to drop to my knees, round my shoulders, and sob like an abandoned child for all we have lost.

Jim Fontes, Tucson, Ariz.

I Believed My Ancestors Were Bad

I would like to share my experiences of living in Los Angeles as a white teenager. My father has always tried to instill a love for my heritage and pride in the accomplishments of Europeans, even though everywhere else, I was be-

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den behind the water heater.

It arose in part from the endless stream of nonsense spewing from the mouths of the "oppressed:" Power to the people. Send a pig to heaven with a .357. Black is beautiful. Try black and you'll never go back. Keep it black 'til I get back.

"I want back my city! My streets! My ocean! I want back my schools!"

It arose also from the media making heroes out of local radical groups and individuals (who were nothing more than common street thugs): the SLA, the Soledad Brothers, the Black Panthers, Huey Newton, Eldridge Cleaver, Angela Davis—the list goes on and on.

It arose from the degenerates of my own race in Berkeley, the Castro district,



Letters from Readers

Sir — Jared Taylor's fact-filled examination of the history of *Brown v. Board* (July 2004) was a useful corrective to the mythmaking of our elites.

One point that cannot be emphasized too much is that during the 1950s and early '60s, whites outside the South supported the *soi-disant* civil rights movement because they thought it would not affect them. Indeed, prior to the mid-1960s, race relations were sometimes referred to as "the Southern problem."

So long as blacks were only seeking the abolition of Jim Crow in the South, so long as it was only in the South that white children were forced to attend schools with blacks, Northerners supported civil rights. They assumed its principles would never reach into their all-white communities. However, after those principles were enshrined in federal law by the 1964 Civil Rights Act, after Northern cities went up in flames during the "long hot summers" of black riots in the '60s, and after many thousands of Northerners fled their cities to escape the terrors of "integration," the truth was harder to hide.

Martin Luther King, Jr. who tried to bring his movement north in 1965, later admitted the hopelessness of fighting Northern whites: "I've been in demonstrations all across the South. But I can say that I have never seen, even in Mississippi and Alabama, mobs as hostile and as hate-filled as I've seen in Chicago."

Of course, most of those whites have long since decamped to white enclaves, but there has never been any real recognition of the North's hypocrisy in supporting a program of Southern "integration" which the North was unprepared

to accept for itself. Nor, for that matter, have most Northerners been willing to admit their own desire to live in majority-white communities.

Today, nearly all white Americans profess to support "integration" in theory, even as they carefully avoid it in practice. The legacy of liberal hypocrisy lives on, even as many "conservatives" (I cannot help but think of radio/TV host Sean Hannity) now strain to pretend that the civil rights movement was constitutional in principle and method.

Name Withheld, Washington, D.C.

Sir — The media recently celebrated the 10th anniversary of the murders committed by O.J. Simpson. In one report, I heard his trial referred to as "The Trial of the Century." I decided this term might be appropriate, not because it involved a "celebrity" or because it was televised, but rather because it was a foreboding glimpse into the future.

A predominantly black jury sat in judgment of a black man accused of murdering two whites. Would justice trump racial solidarity? Most of white America, with its smug belief in the concepts of blind justice and the rule of law, was shocked to hear the jury return after only four hours with a "not guilty" verdict, and by the subsequent celebrations by blacks. As black Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall once said to Justice William Douglas, "You guys have been discriminating for years. Now it's our turn."

As America continues to darken, and nonwhites become more overtly racist, there will be more opportunities for nonwhites to "take their turn" at the expense of whites. The Simpson trial was a warning that government "by the

people" does not work in a balkanized, multiracial society.

Brian Byrne, Irvine, Cal.

AR's commentary on the Simpson verdict can be found in the November 1995 issue—Ed.

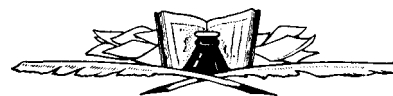
Sir — In the aftermath of Ronald Reagan's death, I think it is worth noting that Reagan, at least at one time, may not have been just a conventional conservative, but had a racial consciousness in the spirit of AR. I cite his condemnation of "welfare queens driving Cadillacs." He made the remark in the mid-1960s after Lyndon Johnson's disastrous Great Society greatly increased illegitimacy—especially black illegitimacy. I also remember that in the 1980 Carter-Reagan debate, when the subject of the minimum wage came up, Reagan claimed it should be low in any case but even lower for blacks since their unemployment rate was higher. He knew that employers would not hire blacks at the prevailing minimum wage because of their low productivity.

Jack Judson, Downers Grove, Ill.

Sir — I discovered your website last night and I find it superb—and also shocking. I live in Wales, UK (soon to be called Englandistan!), and we suffering Brits have had enough but don't know where to turn. Anyone who dares question asylum or immigration is a Nazi, scum, etc. The media are quick to condemn anyone who is politically incorrect, even firing them if they are in their employ. There are organizations that commit violence upon democratically elected British National Party (BNP) members and seem to be immune from prosecution. My country is governed by traitors and non-British politicians. Our cities have been burned by black rioters, with the 1980s seeing the worst, and racial tensions are still high in some areas. Bradford(istan) and Oldham, in the north of England saw huge [south] Asian riots in 2001 [see AR, July and September 2001]. Guess who received the blame? The BNP.

Keep up the great website—I'm hooked.

Tina Kerswell, Wales, Great Britain





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ing told the opposite. I didn't quite understand what my father wanted me to be proud of.

Until ninth grade, I believed my European ancestors were bad, that they were racist, and hated anyone unlike them. I believed this because it is what I was taught in school. It was all over the media, and I couldn't escape it. I did not think what I was hearing was wrong.

It wasn't until high school that I began to understand. Every one of my classes had an agenda to make white people feel bad about their heritage and ancestry. Being a blonde-haired, blue-eyed, Caucasian female in LA, I have encountered much racism. The students at my school were mostly blacks and Hispanics, and I began to dread having to go to classes and hear insults aimed at my people every day. I was always around people who are not tolerant of fair-skinned people, but I was supposed to have respect for them. I decided home schooling would be better for me.

I enjoy reading your publication. Both my father and I like to hear about other white men and women waking up and opening their eyes to the truth. I am proud to be white and I won't let anyone tell me differently. Thank you for helping our race.

Lindsay Gordon, age 16

“Racist” Feelings Were Something Immoral

I am 43 years old, an educated, self-employed professional working in a technical field in a large mid-western city. I first met black people in elementary school when they were bused from the black part of the city to our genteel

neighborhood school. My observations at the time, as a 4th, 5th, and 6th grader, were that the few black children tended to be loud, unruly, and not too smart. With the exception of one well-behaved black boy who applied himself, the others caused my teachers a disproportionate amount of the relatively little trouble they had in a 1960s middle-class elementary school.

I wish you could see the class photo of my 6th grade class—three rows of beaming white faces, two smiling black girls who were amiable but loud and dull-witted, and one large-for-his age, scowling black boy standing in the back row, half-turned away from the camera, with a classic case of “attitude.” He was also the class bully, and terrorized some of my friends and me. At this point I had already begun to form a poor impression of blacks but, as a child, I didn't think deeply about this.

As I went through high school, more and more blacks were bused to our school, and the pattern of classroom disruption continued. There were the outbursts of hallway fighting between blacks or between blacks and the tough whites from the poorer neighborhoods. I had two black friends, girls who were gregarious and reasonably studious. One became pregnant by a 15-year-old black boy when she was a senior. By the end of high school, my impression of blacks as dull-witted, irresponsible, loud and disruptive was pretty well set, but I still did not think in terms of racial consciousness. I didn't feel

comfortable around blacks, and I didn't respect any of the blacks I knew (except for one studious girl and the studious boy from elementary school), but I felt that being outspoken about my “racist” feelings was something immoral that had to be hidden, something I needed to grow out of.

As the years passed and I met more black people in college, graduate school, and in the workplace, my impressions did not change. There was the psychotic black woman in the dormitory where I worked as a residential advisor, who harassed the white women on her floor; the clique of black students who insisted on having a “blacks only” social organization funded with student government money; my advisor in graduate school, a black woman who taught in a graduate journalism program but was a poor speller and who could not finish paperwork by the necessary deadlines. In my field of computers, the few blacks I have met have been at best borderline competent.

By my mid-30s, I was firmly convinced that blacks are a problem for white society but I didn't see a moral justification for doing anything about it. I had



Can be both dangerous and educational.

never been exposed to anything like AR or a well-reasoned racist argument. I felt that my secret resentments of and poor opinion of blacks were personal weaknesses for which I would be answerable in the next life.

What changed my mind were two arguments.

I had arrived at a political view that was mostly libertarian: Give us back our freedom of association and we can voluntarily separate from troublesome blacks. Stop taking away our money to support indolent, sexually irresponsible blacks, and we will have fewer problems.

But then I read that whites will eventually become a minority in this country. Combine that with the fact that no majority-black or -Hispanic nation has ever maintained a society of the kind whites create, and it becomes a logical certainty that whites must politically and geographically separate themselves from blacks and Hispanics if we are to survive as a people.

The other powerful argument that convinced me a racist approach was necessary was evidence like that presented in *The Bell Curve*, that blacks are less intelligent than whites and more emotional and disruptive and crime-prone for genetic reasons. I used to think blacks' problems could be fixed with education or social programs, but I became convinced social programs can't work.

I began to search for web sites that had articles on these matters, and this is when I came across AR. I have concluded, based on the dispassionate, reasoned arguments I have found in AR and a few other places, that much as I would like to be an idealist, the reality is that whites simply must separate themselves from blacks in some manner that protects us as a people. I feel a sadness for the decent black people who through no fault of their own are part of a race that as a whole is unable to manage its affairs. I hope there is a way to order the world so that blacks can be free and prosperous and that people can have goodwill towards one another.

The only approach to race that has a chance of working is one that avoids histrionics and does not demonize others. One reason so many whites feel uncomfortable with racist ideas is their historical association with violence and white supremacy. The white man who blew up the black girls in that Birmingham church did a great deal of harm to the white race. Violence or shrillness will never convince white people who may well have doubts about blacks but think it is immoral to be "racist." Talking about "Jews" as the source of the problem smacks of Nazism—another violent movement that did us great harm.

I have made racial arguments to a few of my closest friends, and I know they can have an impact. Still, it takes time for people to give themselves permission to think in a racially conscious way. Even I am still not 100 percent comfortable

doing so. But the arguments, the facts, the studies—these, combined with personal experiences will eventually change enough minds to make a difference.

Anonymous

Forced Busing Began in Wichita

I was born in Wichita, Kansas, in 1958, and have always known blacks were different from whites: louder and more animated. Still, I did not think much about this until I went to junior high school in 1970. That was the year forced busing began in Wichita. Blacks beat whites for no reason, and shook them down for pocket change. It was shocking to us. The few blacks who had been with us in earlier grades were not that



Bused in for your enrichment.

way for the first month or two of school, but soon started acting like their 8th and 9th grade brethren.

My increasing dislike for blacks continued through high school. Blacks generally kept their distance in high school, but woe to the white who walked the halls by himself as the end of the school year approached. Blacks did not like taking final examinations. As exam days approached, they would look for a solitary white and beat him up. They would be kicked out of school and not take final exams, but would be passed on to the next grade.

I attended undergraduate school at Kansas State University. In junior high and high school the percentage of blacks has been 15 to 20 percent, but now it was two to four percent. This meant no more black-on-white violence, and I loved it. So did other whites from high schools with many blacks. Still, there were a few negative experiences. Once, at a lecture, a black man walked across most of a row purposely bumping into

whites and not excusing himself. When he came to a black student he excused himself.

Mike Sanders

I Needed to Find a New Career

I saw the light when I chose public education as a career relatively late in life. I had been a New Thought minister for 11 years, and converted to another faith. That meant I needed to find a new career, so I chose teaching.

One of the first things I learned was that in our jurisdiction you cannot give a black child an IQ test. I couldn't believe my ears. Once I overheard a black mother tell a friend, "Well, it's time to have another baby. The welfare's about to run out." When I went to graduate school to get a teaching credential, I was immediately cast into the world of multiculturalism and its doublespeak. I was told that the great disparity in test scores between white and black and Hispanic kids was caused by institutional racism. That did it. At age 52, I was not exactly wet behind the ears.

I was raised by a Southern mother in Southern California, and she always said there was a difference in capability between whites and blacks. I had always looked for evidence that she was wrong, but now I began to see the evidence that she was right.

Baker

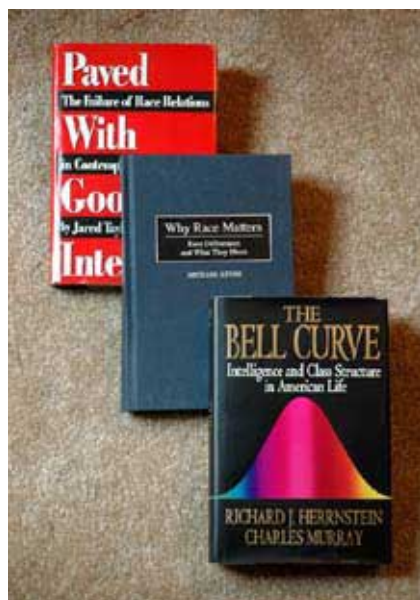
My Country is Marching Down the Same Path

It is relatively easy for me to pinpoint when my views began to change. The year was 1994, and I learned of a controversial new book called *The Bell Curve*, which was causing a stir even in Canada, where I lived. I had to read the book in order to satisfy my curiosity, even though it required a special order because the bookstores in Halifax, Nova Scotia, were not stocking it.

In 1994 I was 40 years old, so my opinions on practically everything were well established. I had grown up in a town, a province, and a country that were overwhelmingly white. Race had always seemed irrelevant, except as a way periodically to look down on the Americans for their race problems.

I was perplexed by *The Bell Curve*.

Could it be true? I had always known that intelligence played a role in life outcomes, but did the races really differ in average IQ? The evidence presented by the authors seemed undeniable. I could not let it rest, and thus my investigations began. I must say they were not easy. There is a tremendous amount of garbage about race put out by a never-ending supply of crackpots and morons. Thank God I accidentally stumbled upon AR.



Michael Levin, Philippe Rushton, Arthur Jensen, Samuel Francis and Jared Taylor became my tutors. Their scholarly articles and books became the core of my curriculum. To be sure, race does matter, and as I've come to learn, it matters a great deal. My country is marching down the same path as the United States. Non-white immigration is at record levels, and whites are already a minority in two of our three major cities: Vancouver and Toronto. With my awareness comes a profound sadness and sense of foreboding. My nation is changing in countless ways and no one seems to care. I can't help but envision a grim future for my grandchildren.

John McMillan, Nova Scotia, Canada

I Can't Say I am Completely Convinced

I do not agree with everything in AR, but your magazine has helped me streamline my thoughts. For the record, I am an immigrant, so I do not belong to the category of people you favor, but I can understand that.

I was born and raised in the most po-

litically correct country in the world, where multiculturalism and diversity (these terms together were called internationalism) were an integral part of a higher "religion" called Communism. Dissent was a crime and punished accordingly. That country was called The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and I think we can learn valuable lessons from its breakdown. Most Americans think Communism and the poor economy were the main reasons for the collapse of the Soviet Union. Those factors played a destructive role, but many do not realize that the policy of "internationalism" had a major influence on the disintegration of a once powerful and feared country.

When the Bolsheviks came to power, Lenin stated that "every nation has the right to self determination." What he meant was not independence, but that all parts of the happy Soviet family could preserve their culture, traditions and language as long as they embraced Communism. You will find striking similarities between Lenin's teachings and the views of today's proponents of diversity. For about 70 years the impression was that this policy worked, and at the end of the 1960s, I believe, it was declared that a new entity, the Soviet People, had come into being and that the national question had been solved.

In the mid-1980s after I graduated from university I had to travel a lot on business. I talked privately to many people in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Ukraine and other former Soviet republics and found that they had an unfavorable opinion of Russians. Some hated Russians outright. At the same time many Russians referred to other nationalities as "low-lives." However, "nationalism" was a severely punishable crime. All people are brothers and brothers don't hate each other. Period.

When Communism fell, one of the first things that happened was that every Soviet Republic declared independence from Russia and formed its own *national* state.

It is important to note that the majority of newly independent countries realized they would *not* be better off economically. The Soviet economy had been very tightly integrated to ensure that none of the republics could gain economic independence. In many cases the economies of those countries deteriorated badly, but people still felt they could manage themselves better as nations. After independence, they started

to persuade Russians either to leave their countries or assimilate, learn their language, and accept their culture. There was no more talk of internationalism.

Significantly, there were not as many racial, ethnic or even cultural differences among the nations of what was known as the USSR as there are between whites and blacks in America. Russians, Ukrainians, and Belorussians are all Slavs, they have similar languages and the same religion. But even for these groups, there were enough differences to warrant separation.

When I lived in Russia, I was an avid listener to the Voice of America, and was under the impression that the situation in the United States was completely different. The many ethnic groups and races all considered themselves American, spoke one language and shared the



The father of political correctness has countless progeny in America.

same culture, traditions and history. When I brought my family to the USA, I considered myself lucky to be here, and I did not think too much about what was happening in this country. Only later I started to notice things that did not seem to be quite right.

It was not any major event that altered my views, but small things. When we came to the US my son was four and didn't speak English. When he went to kindergarten I immediately was offered all sorts of special programs for him. I insisted that he be treated the same as any other kid. The school administration told me we needed to preserve his language, culture and traditions. After a couple of meetings with teachers they finally backed off and in six months my son spoke English as well as any other kid in his class. I had to go through the same thing when my younger son en-

rolled in school.

When we bought a house it was in a nice, well-kept neighborhood, but after four years things slowly started to change. My next-door neighbors sold their house to Sikh immigrants from India. I found I couldn't open windows or enjoy our rose garden anymore because of the incredibly strong smell of curry in the air. To make things worse, they were cooking in the garage with all the doors open. After some hesitation, I politely explained that although I respect their right to cook and eat whatever they want, they in return should respect my right not to smell what they are cooking. They called me racist, fascist and Nazi. I was shocked.

I talked to other neighbors about this. Some agreed with me, but said nothing can be done; others said it did not bother them; others called me a Nazi racist again. As the neighborhood became more and more colorful, more and more problems arose. I started to think about this disharmony. I could not find any satisfying answers in the mainstream media, because according to them it was me—an intolerant bigot—who was the problem! I discovered your publication and subscribed to it. I also bought some politically incorrect books and started to study the problem. I can't say I am completely convinced yet by your point of view, but I guess I am still at the beginning of my path to understanding the racial problem. I have learned one thing: Diversifying society brings nothing but harm.

Americans should take a closer look at what happened in the USSR, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia. Oops! I forgot there are no such countries any more. My sincere hope is that nothing like that will ever happen here.

Sergei, Sacramento, Calif.

Roaches Crawled Freely About

I am probably the only AR subscriber who graduated from a historically black college (HBC), but I really can't say that made me "see the light." I was treated very fairly, and overall my time there was positive. Of course, I didn't realize then how academically sub par the school was, and I certainly wouldn't choose an HBC if I decided to continue my education.

After leaving college I went into law enforcement, and it was there that real-

ity hit me like a club over the head. I realized that all those doubts about blacks I had in the back of my mind were there for a good reason. Despite my college experiences with black people, I had never gone into their neighborhoods and



homes. I had never been in homes where roaches crawled freely about, eating food that had obviously been lying on the floor for days. I could never have imagined going into the home of a nearly blind 90-year-old black man who called police because his granddaughter had come over and stolen his Social Security money. I could never have imagined responding to an armed robbery call and discovering the white female convenience store clerk who had confronted the black juvenile female shoplifter in her store, and had gotten the entire side of her mouth cut open with a box cutter—her teeth were clearly visible. And it is hard to describe the anger I felt when I watched a young white mother cry because the black man who had just burgled her home had stolen her video camera and all the precious, irreplaceable tapes of her daughter.

But what I really could never have conceived of before becoming a police officer was the complete lack of guilt and remorse for the terrible acts blacks seem especially capable of committing. I can honestly say I have met some characters whom I consider to be beasts without souls.

When that July 1995 issue of AR arrived in my mailbox—unsolicited—it was like discovering hidden treasure. Here at last were articulate people putting into words what I had known for years to be true, but was constantly told by the establishment media was not true. I still think the cover story, "The Morality of Survival" by Michael Masters, was one

of the best ever. And through reading AR I discovered authors like Richard McCulloch, whose books make the moral case for racial consciousness as well as anyone. So sixteen years of police work, many books by racist authors, and of course, AR, have me "seeing the light" quite clearly.

Anonymous

Proud to be Gay and Proud to be White

Like the Jewish reader who wrote of his racial awakening in Part I, I am a member of a minority group that is assumed to "belong" to the left. As a lesbian, I am supposed to be glad to be a band in Jesse Jackson's rainbow. And for most of my life, I believed the left's rhetoric about identity politics, voted Democrat, and supported the liberal agenda.

Growing up in Los Angeles, I attributed the racial conflicts I experienced to black oppression—when blacks called me "blondie" and pushed me around, they were venting legitimate frustration, given their history as victims of the system. When Watts burned, I watched the smoke rise over East LA from the front



lawn of my parents' working-class home. And, again I rationalized: Years of police brutality had caused the riots, not the blacks themselves. When affirmative action was put in place and blacks were given preference over more qualified whites, I acquiesced. We owed them that much. Even as late as the 1980s I was still buying it. Like most gays and most blacks, I voted for Bill Clinton.

But slowly, my attitude began to change. Although there were many, I can think of three specific events that finally pushed me out of the rainbow. The first

was President Clinton's speech about the demographic future of America in which he rejoiced at the impending demise of the white majority. Although I rejected my own reaction at the time as racist, the words that came to my mind were "traitor to his race." I ignored my gut reaction and filed it away.

The second was a job I nearly lost out on because I was white. The man who hired me told me in confidence that although he wanted me for the position, he had been instructed to hire a "person of color." To his credit, he disobeyed his supervisor, ignored this directive, and hired the most qualified candidate. A white friend wasn't so lucky. During a job interview she was told, without apology, that only blacks would be hired.

And third—an outcome that made so many of us question our assumptions of race—was the O.J. Simpson verdict.

As a lesbian, I have never experienced discrimination on the job, and I can count on one hand the number of times I have been verbally harassed because I am gay. As a white person it has been an entirely different story. I have white lesbian friends who have been raped by black men; white gay male friends who have been beaten up by Hispanic gangs (in one case my friend died); and numerous straight white friends whose "quality of life" has been reduced by blacks and other people of color.

I am still uneasy with many aspects of the Euro-American movement as I try to reconcile being a proud gay person with being a proud white person. But when push comes to shove, my guess is that race trumps sexual identity, and that I'm not the only gay on your subscription list.

Name and city withheld

The Whites Let Out a Collective Gasp

I grew up in largely white suburbs in the Midwest and South. While there were always a handful of blacks and other non-whites in the public grade schools I attended, they were for the most part no different from my fellow whites. In behavior, dress, speech and socioeconomic background, we were all pretty much the same; it was in the early to mid 1970s, and I don't believe any of us children were really conscious of race.

That changed dramatically in high school. I went to a school in suburban

Atlanta that was virtually all white—typical suburban children from typically suburban families. At first, there were few blacks, and again, other than their skin color, they were pretty much like the rest of us. Then DeKalb County started something called the "Majority



Good training for assistant principals.

to Minority" (M to M) transfer program, a voluntary desegregation plan whereby any student could switch schools if it meant leaving one where his race was the majority and going to one where it was a minority. The program was open to whites as well as blacks—I knew one white student who transferred to a black school to play on a better basketball team—but M to M basically meant blacks transferring to white schools.

These were not the blacks we white suburban kids were used to. They came largely from the Atlanta part of DeKalb, or from the black southern portion of the county, and came by the busload. They most definitely did not dress, talk or behave like us, or the blacks we knew and with whom we were comfortable.

The difference was driven home by an incident one day in the cafeteria when two M to M black girls started arguing. They were soon screaming at each other, using the most vile language imaginable, and then they started fighting. At school I had never seen anything more than a scuffle, but this was an intensely violent "street" fight. The girls—15 or 16 years old—were punching, kicking, pulling each other's hair, and *clawing* each other as if they meant nothing short of murder. None of us had ever seen anything like it. The white children sat in stunned silence, our mouths practically hanging open. The idea of breaking up the fight never occurred to us, although if the girls had been white, someone would surely have stepped in.

One of our assistant principals—a

very large black man who was a former college linebacker—ran out of his office and got between the girls. This did not end the fight. As he tried to separate them, they both attacked him with the same animal ferocity. One of the girls picked up a cafeteria chair and swung it at his head. He ducked, but a leg caught him on the forehead, opening up a nasty gash. The whites let out a collective gasp. None of us could have imagined striking a school official, much less hitting him with a chair. In her rage, this black girl had lost all fear and, it seemed to us, something of her humanity as well. The assistant principal wrestled the chair from her and managed to get his arms around her while other administrators dealt with the second girl. They hauled the girls off and, as I recall, we never saw them again.

Although the fight lasted just a few minutes, it had a profound effect on many of us. I believe most of us learned our first lesson in racial consciousness that day. We no longer saw blacks as just like us, only darker. They—particularly the M to M blacks—were different: profoundly alien and potentially dangerous.

The M to M program itself seemed to awaken a racial consciousness in our parents. As the school got more M to M transfers, whites began to leave. White families with children in public schools began moving to other, more distant whiter counties. Blacks bought their homes. As more blacks moved into the area, the schools became blacker, prompting still more whites to leave. When I left that part of DeKalb County in the early 1980s, it appeared to be 90 percent white. Within a decade, it was perhaps 40 percent white. I would imagine the figure today is closer to 10 percent.

Stephen Webster, AR Assistant Editor



Share your story!

Part I of readers' accounts of racial awakening appeared in the May 2003 issue, and a final installment will be published before long. There is still time to tell us how you saw the light. Please send electronic text to TheLight@AmRen.com and hard copy to our PO box. Name and city are not required.

Ancient Insights Now Forgotten

Booth Tarkington (1869 - 1946) was an Indiana novelist who won Pulitzer prizes for *The Magnificent Ambersons* (1918) and *Alice Adams* (1921), but is best known for three books about a middle-class boy named *Penrod*. The first of the series, titled simply *Penrod* (1913), contains an incident in which the boy's eyes are opened in much the way those of the previous contributor's were opened years ago in a high school cafeteria. Tarkington was a liberal for his time, but wrote before delusions about race had become quite so well established.

Penrod, age 11, has struck up an acquaintance with Rupe Collins, a tough guy and bully from the other side of the tracks. *Penrod* is fascinated by Rupe's swaggering ways and starts imitating them. Rupe likes to put his face right up to someone else's and threaten violence, and *Penrod* has tried this on his friend Sam Williams, and on two Negro playmates, the brothers Herman and Verman, who live in a nearby alley. They take it cheerfully, but when the bully himself gives Herman the look and threatens violence, the results are different:

"You ole black nigger," Rupe said venomously to Herman, "I'm agoin' to—"

But he had allowed his nose to remain too long near Herman's. *Penrod*'s familiar nose had been as close with only a ticklish spinal effect upon the not very remote descendant of Congo man-eaters. The result produced by the glare of Rupe's unfamiliar eyes, and by the dreadfully suggestive proximity of Rupe's unfamiliar nose, was altogether different. Herman's and Verman's Bangala great-grand-fathers never considered people of their own jungle neighbourhood proper material for a meal; but they looked upon strangers—especially truculent strangers—as distinctly edible.

Penrod and Sam heard Rupe suddenly squawk and bellow . . .

Then they separated—and battle was on!

How neat and pure is the task of the

chronicler who has the tale to tell of a "good rousing fight" between boys or men who fight in the "good old English way," according to a model set for fights in books long before Tom Brown went to Rugby. There are seconds and rounds and rules of fair-play, and always there



CHAPTER XXIII

COLOURED TROOPS IN ACTION

is great good feeling in the end . . .

But, when Herman and Verman set to, the record must be no more than a few fragments left by the expurgator. It has been perhaps sufficiently suggested that the altercation in the stable opened with mayhem in respect to the aggressor's nose. Expressing vocally his indignation and the extremity of his pained surprise, Mr. Collins stepped backward, holding his left hand over his nose, and striking at Herman with his right. Then Verman hit him with the rake.

Verman struck from behind. He struck as hard as he could. And he struck with the tines down. For, in his simple, direct, African way he wished to kill his enemy, and he wished to kill him as soon as possible. That was his single, earnest purpose.

On this account, Rupe Collins was peculiarly unfortunate. He was plucky and he enjoyed conflict; but neither his ambitions nor his anticipations had ever included murder. He had not learned that an habitually aggressive person runs the danger of colliding with beings in one of those lower stages of evolution wherein theories about "hitting below the belt"

have not yet made their appearance.

The rake glanced from the back of Rupe's head to his shoulder; but it felled him. Both darkies jumped full upon him instantly, and the three rolled and twisted upon the stable floor, unloosing upon the air sincere maledictions closely connected with complaints of cruel and unusual treatment; while certain expressions of feeling presently emanating from Herman and Verman indicated that Rupe Collins, in this extremity, was proving himself not too slavishly addicted to fighting by the rules.

From the panting, pounding, yelling heap issued words and phrases hitherto quite unknown to *Penrod* and Sam . . . Appalled, the two spectators retreated to the doorway nearest the yard, where they stood dumbly watching the cataclysm.

The struggle increased in primitive simplicity: time and again the howling Rupe got to his knees only to go down again as the earnest brothers, in their own way, assisted him to a more reclining position. Primal forces operated here, and the two blanched, slightly higher products of evolution, Sam and *Penrod*, no more thought of interfering than they would have thought of interfering with an earthquake.

At last, out of the ruck rose Verman, disfigured and maniacal. With a wild eye he looked about him for his trusty rake; but *Penrod*, in horror, had long since thrown the rake out into the yard. Naturally, it had not seemed necessary to remove the lawn-mower.

The frantic eye of Verman fell upon the lawn-mower, and instantly he leaped to its handle. Shrilling a wordless war-cry, he charged, propelling the whirling, deafening knives straight upon the prone legs of Rupe Collins. The lawn-mower was sincerely intended to pass longitudinally over the body of Mr. Collins from heel to head; and it was the time for a death-song. Black Valkyrie hovered in the shrieking air.

"Cut his gizzud out!" shrieked Herman, urging on the whirling knives.

They touched and lacerated the shin of Rupe as, with the supreme agony of effort a creature in mortal peril puts forth