

RACISM

& HOW IT'S ADAPTED WITH THE TIMES

“CAUSE TIMES, THEY ARE A CHANGIN’”

Klaria Holmes | Opinions Editor

In the 1800s, it looked like the slave trade. In the 20s-30s, it looked like barring blacks from their basic human rights. In the 60s, it looked like vicious cycles of segregation, blacks being hosed and chased by dogs for fighting for the most basic human rights, and protests.

Now? It looks like the face of our country, societal views, and in its smaller form, a red hat that preaches a sort of xenophobic hate.

In less than 50 years, we went from barring a black student from attending a school in our own town to electing a black president for two consecutive terms.

But alas, these were just mirages to the millions of blacks starving from thirst in a metaphorical racist desert.

As we move closer to a time where political correctness and sensitivity are starting to control all aspects of our lives, racism and racists alike have been forced to find more covert ways to rear their ugly head.

Nowadays it looks like calling the cops on black people minding their own business, not returning phone calls to interviewees with names that sound “too ethnic”, having to publicly outlaw lynching—all in 2018 no less.

We saw a scary, steady uprise in police-civilian shootings and also a steady decrease in convictions for those same police. We saw two black men publicly lynched in Ohio. We saw acts of blatant and covert racism everywhere.

It's time to call a spade a spade; racism hasn't left us, it's just adapted to the times. And we've let it.

While yes, we have made tremendous strides as a country, it's important not to forget that just last week an Alabama newspaper stated he believed it was “time for the KKK to night ride again.”

It's important we don't forget that our own town held one of the largest confederate rallies in the country, the irony of it being held during black history month isn't lost amongst most of us.

Don't get me wrong, America has tried very hard to improve race relations, and it's admirable, but the changes they've made are the bare minimum to equality as one can get in America, especially as an American citizen.

In 2016, America gave a platform—and thus a sense of power—to bigotry, hatred, xenophobia, misogyny when they elected the 45th President.

That election brought major changes to how American citizens and the world sees our country, extremely polarized

our country, and pushed our progress backwards. In November 2016, it seemed like after we'd just taken two steps forward, some of us pushed the country 15 steps back.

One of the reasons racists feel justified in their racism is because the leader of our own country feels as though he can say anything about anyone. If the leader of the free world can spew hate speech, that only fuels the fire for racist citizens to do the same, all under the guise of their first amendment rights.

Nowadays, it's easy for the general population to drown out the cries of minorities when they talk about sensitive, racially charged issues with phrases like “we've come so far” or “dwelling on the past isn't effective.”

While both of these statements carry some weight of truth to them, to truly understand racism you must realize the many faces it has taken.

Racism still exists. A black president didn't fix it. Granting blacks the things they marched, sat at restaurant counters and prayed for didn't fix it.

Thinking of racism as a “fixable” issue is naive to say the least because you can't alter someone's thoughts. There will always be someone somewhere with a sense of entitlement that feels as though they're better than their minority counterparts.

On the other hand, you can attempt to fight it.

For starters, we need to stop sending out the wrong messages.

This post-civil rights movement era we're living in has built this portrait that tells blacks to adapt and assimilate rather than embrace their blackness. Assimilation, also referred to as “code-switching” is taught so that you they don't have to change their racist views. You shouldn't have to change things that are out of your control for someone else to be comfortable.

History has shown us time and time again that America has an anti-black attitude, and as the times have changed it has been forced to adapt to the times we're living in.

Exercise your right to vote at every election. Racist practices continue with racist people that have power. You can't stop them being racist, but you can take away their position.

History has shown us time and time again that America has an anti-black attitude, and as the times have changed, it has been forced to adapt to the times we're living in.

From slavery, to Selma, to where we stand now as a society that condemns minorities yet seems to praise racists, we've come a long way, but we have just as long to go.

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