

Racial inequality

Sociology



Racial inequality In more ways than one racism has gotten better. The era before the 60's was characterized by prejudiced laws restricting colored people from their fundamental human rights. Black men and women were robbed off their dignity and rights to equal opportunities such as the right to freedom, the right to literacy, the right to vote, the right to own property, freedom of religion and above all the freedom of movement. This is evidenced in publications such as mark twain's huckleberry Finn, which is a book written a long time after the emancipation of slaves though it still reflects a society that is engraved in racial profiling. In the book, black men are referred to as Negroes, and they still call their employers master. For instance, in the book, a white man called pap is appalled when a black man goes to cast his ballot, and he vows not to vote as long as they are letting a black man do so. Black men are supposed to get out of the way if a white man is walking their way and if not they are shoved out of the way (Twain 38) Despite the negative, racist remarks in the book, the author still manages to use Huckleberry Finn's character to portray freedom of all races. This part of the book has received a lot of criticism from a section of the society that claims that Huckleberry Finn was a racist and that he portrayed racists' remarks in his connotations. However, with a critical and keen analysis you will find that huck overcame racism despite growing up in a world that openly condoned it. In the book, Huck meets a young black man by the name Jim and Huck manages to treat and acknowledge Jim as a human being with unique human qualities. Huck manages to humble himself to a black man and later on he does not feel remorseful for doing so. This despite the racist environment that he has been brought up in where families own, and sell slaves and in the process, they treat them with

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disrespect. Many other literature works depict a society that still refuses to recognize the equality of all men. In Eddy Harris's book, *Mississippi Solo*, the writer gives an account of his personal 99-day sail through the Mississippi river and his encounters while at it. As a young black man from St. Louis, the aim of this journey is so as to find his identity as a person and a black man. He desires to be treated from the content of his words and the action of his deeds and not from the color of his skin. *Mississippi Solo* depicts the journey of a young black man travelling to areas where no black man has ever dared to tread. His encounters with different people and cultures, some of whom appreciated him as a person while some who looked down upon him. He is haunted by hunters and the ghosts of slaves which is a representation of the society at that time. However, by the culmination of his journey, Eddy Harris had managed to acknowledge his spirituality and find his identity as a black man (Harris 45). Many opinions have been shared that inequality of races has been forgotten and now all races of the world are now equal. This is, however, not true since racism still exists. It may be more subtle, but, the truth is that racial equality is still a long way from home. For instance, the 2000 documentary film *Remember the Titans*, starring Denzel Washington as high school football coach in a school and a community that engages in racial discrimination. The community has two schools for both black and white children separately. However, the government in its effort to bring affirmative action, issues an order that because of resources the schools have to combine to be one school. The football team is, therefore, forced to incorporate both black and white players. This proves to be particularly hard for the players, and the situation proves to be even worse when they get a new coach who is black. The white students threaten to boycott the team if

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their previous white coach is not reinstated. Nevertheless after much training and practice, the team through its black coach (Denzel Washington) manages to embrace their diversity and achieve racial harmony. In their last game the titans, who are united despite their differences, manage to win the game. Another scene in the movie is where the team from the black school head out to eat dinner and the manager of the hotel chases them away because they are black. The only way they could get food is if they went round the back of the hotel. Such is the treatment that black people got from the predominantly white majority. There are many other scenes in the movie where black people and white people are finding it really hard to co-exist and to share common resources. Nonetheless, the new mixed school through the sports team manages to unite the society into starting to realize that they are indeed all human beings. There is still a long way to go since the community achieves racial harmony, but, the journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. The movie, remember the titans, is a perfect example to show how racial inequality and segregation may not exist according to laws and policies but which continues to do so. For us to claim that racial inequality no longer exists in the contemporary life would be a lie to ourselves. We still continue to see segregation in areas such as the education system, housing and health care. A society that is blind to skin color would be an ideal society but, ideal things are hard to come by. Racial diversity may be our strength, but, we as a society are yet to embrace this concept. Nonetheless, it is paramount to acknowledge that it is a journey and we are slowly getting there. Work cited Twain Mark. *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, London: Penguin Classics, 2002. Harris Eddy. Mississippi

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