

Racism – social issues essay sample

[Sociology](#), [Racism](#)



Racism is something we have all witnessed and perhaps experienced. In “The Kind of Light That Shines on Texas,” Reginald McKnight creates a storyline where the main character, Clint, is living in a predominately white culture and experiences discrimination among many of his white peers. They question him on his characteristics, such as his hair and why/how he combs it. As a result, Clint feels like he should distance himself from his African American classmates.

He puts his best effort to always perform well in school, follow all the rules and dress remarkably neat to prove that not all African Americans are the same and that they should view Clint as a person and not as a label.

McKnight uses Mrs. Wickham’s actions, dialogue and the student’s responses to symbolize the racism that existed within the school system and how challenging it can be for students of color.

Mrs. Wickham’s actions and dialogue in the story reveals her dislike towards people of color. This is clear because Mrs. Wickham fabricates inappropriate comments towards the African American students in front of the whole class. One example of this in the story is when Mrs. Wickham says, “ I just want to share with you all, a little riddle my daughter told me at the supper table th’other day. Now where do you go when you injure your knee?

Why, to Africa, where the knee grows” (2). This quote shows the lack of support students of color have with their advocates because of their prejudice against people of color. It also implies that students of color do not have a safe place to go to. Living in the 60’s and in Texas, it is already hard for people of color to step foot out of their homes and not be ridiculed. Now,

students cannot even attend their school without having the feeling of neglect and feeling like an outsider. The idea that racism existing within a school system can be challenging for students of color is important because it is unrealistic for them to be able to learn in a racial bias atmosphere.

Through Clint, the author shows that racism leaves a negative impact on a person's life and may have them feel apologetic about who they are. This is clear because Jack Preston assumes that Clint should feel ashamed of Marvin because they share the same skin color. One example of this in the story is when Clint thinks, " No, but I meant yes. Yes, if you insisted on thinking us all the same. Yes, if his faults are mine, his weaknesses inherent in me...

I was ashamed. Ashamed for not defending Marvin and ashamed that Marvin even existed" (3). This quote shows that racism can cause individuals to have a hard time embracing their race for the fear of being teased. Clint also specifically used the word " ashamed" shows that he feels guilty about being African American and being associated with other people who are also African American. The idea that racism being set in a school system can be challenging for students of color is important because it can result in students rejecting their own culture and values.

This story demonstrates a clear example of the difficulties and complications students of color go through when racism is embedded in the teachers and school system. Some of the challenges that students of color face are not being able to succeed in school while being surrounded by discriminatory people and feeling shame about their family traditions and heritage.

Although this story is fiction, racism does indeed exist. Racism is one of the

most important social issues of the modern world. Whether it is on social media or in the educational system, people of color constantly encounter judgemental comments about their culture and lifestyle.