

The SATO Scoop

USY's Monthly Social Action/Tikun Olam Newsletter

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Letter from the Editor

Racial inequality is an incredibly difficult issue to capture. How do we understand the prejudice within one's head? How do we find qualitative data about how this prejudice manifests itself? How do we change inherent racism?

The answer is that there is no easy or correct way to accomplish any of those things. Yet, I believe that this topic cannot go ignored, especially with the recent media coverage of police brutality and subsequent reactions.

In this issue of the Scoop, I hope to shed a little light on racism and racial inequality. It is a problem that plagues not just Baltimore and Ferguson, but entire countries including the US and Israel.

Even if we cannot change racism as a whole, we can change our own behavior and shed light on these problems for others. So please, keep reading and let's explore together the depths of racial inequality and the small steps we can take to remedy it.

Hannah Smith
The SATO Scoop Editor

In this issue:

Racial Inequality (p. 2, 3)

- What is racial inequality and how does it present itself?
- What are the statistics behind this issue?
- What can you do about it?

Meet Your IGB



Hi! My name is Sophie Sigel and I'm from a small town called Oak Park, California, that's just outside Los Angeles! I just finished up my term as Regional President over in Far West, where I grew up, and where I found my passion for SATO. I was on SATO Regional General Board, and worked as the coordinator for Far West's special needs buddy program, Hevrah. I believe that everyone who wants to put in a little extra effort has the capability and aptitude to help repair and change our world! I'm a very firm believer in "paying it forward" and the ripple effects that come from good deeds. I'm out-of-this-world excited to see what my term on IGB will bring, and I can't wait to be a part of making a difference!

*"Alone we can do so little;
together we can do so much."
-Helen Keller*

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RACIAL INEQUALITY

Racial inequality is not a hidden issue. It has arguably been a defining problem for modern America since the civil war, through the civil rights movement of the 60's, and into the current day. With this movement, the nature of the discrimination has been progressing from one of personal prejudice held in individuals to an inequality of industry and procedures.

Personal Prejudices and Ignorance

In poll conducted by Gallup, **“83 percent of white Americans said that factors other than discrimination were to blame for African Americans’ lower levels of employment, lower incomes, and lower-quality housing”** (Foreign Affairs). This statistic demonstrates the ignorance many of us carry about the causes for inequality. It is not laziness that prompts the inequality in poverty rates. **It is not a lack of effort that creates the education gap. It is history.** We are making progress, but the discrimination of the previous generation creates set-backs for the current ones. It is estimated that 70% of black-white wage disparity in 2006 for young men was due to differences in educational achievement (Foreign Affairs). Yet, **minorities are still more likely to be suspended, to be taught by lower-paid teachers, and to have less access to math and science courses** (Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights). One form of inequality prompts another.

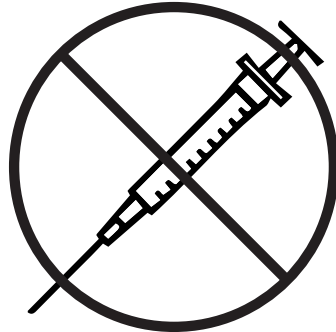
“Racism without racists”

We also face the issue of inherently racist systems in America. But, how can we fix this problem? One answer is a change in legislation. **In the criminal justice system, the laws of the Nixon era encouraged a greater number of arrests, allowed children to be tried as adults, and lengthened sentences – all while the industry of America was struggling.** This created a disproportionate burden on minority communities and created a ripple effect as children of convicts were raised in foster homes, and turned to crime or fell into poverty themselves. Legislation is flexible, it has been written and it can be unwritten. We can also offer stress tests to recognize where discrimination exists. Following the banking sector, who initiated these already, governmental industries and private companies can use these tests to gather information on the discrepancies between minorities and whites within their companies or communities. This information can be used by non-profits and the government to offer programs designed to remedy these.

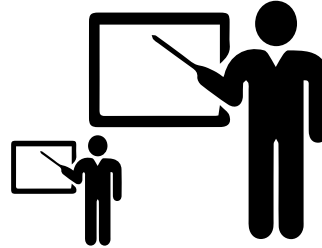
THE FACTS



In 2012, 51% of Americans expressed anti-black sentiments in a poll; a 3% increase from 2008.



African-Americans comprise only 13% of the U.S. population and 14% of the monthly drug users, but are 37% of the people arrested for drug-related offenses in America.



Black students are more than four times as likely as white students to attend schools where one out of every five teachers does not meet all state teaching requirements



The U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics concluded that an African American male born in 2001 has a 32% chance of going to jail in his lifetime, while a Latino male has a 17% chance, and a white male only has a 6% chance.

Sources:
dosomething.org
nytimes.com

THE SOLUTIONS

- 1** Recognize that racial discrimination exists.
- 2** Don't use racial slurs in everyday speech, and encourage your friends to avoid them as well.
- 3** Keep an open mind. Try not to judge people at first glance; give yourself a chance to get to know them as a person.
- 4** Read about racial inequality from people who have experienced it personally. Being educated can never hurt.
- 5** Host discussions or events at school to talk about racial discrimination in your school community and how to remedy it. Sometimes just talking about problems on a small scale can create potential answers.