

Short Paper Snippets
Psychology of Diversity : Fall 2005

- “I actually recall one time when I asked him why he was being mean to me, he said “you have to suffer for what your ancestors did to my ancestors;” shocked by this, I said that has nothing to do with you or I and there isn’t anything I can do about it now.”
- “The mere suggestion for the rebel flag to be removed brought out ignorance and hatred that I could never have imagined. The word “nigger” was thrown around like common vocabulary, and I felt like I had catapulted back in time to the Civil Rights Movement.”
- “There is nothing to be scared of in Australia . . . no rapes, no shootings, no muggings. Such a life would be, or at least should be, the revised American dream.”
- “However, with living in this area and being more social with the ‘townies’ rather than my own peers at Radford and Tech, I have definitely found myself realizing more that college is not for everyone and growing accustomed to the idea that people can do just fine without higher education.”
- “. . . I remember her telling me ‘you don’t play with anyone who isn’t the same color as you.’ I asked her why and the only explanation she gave me was ‘you just don’t and don’t ask anymore questions.”
- “Before meeting any homeless people, I believed they were all just lazy bums who didn’t try to look for jobs . . . many of them were not lazy people who didn’t want to work for a living, but they simply didn’t have the means to do so.”
- “I talked to them (homeless people) to find out what their story was, and they surprised me because I thought it was their entire fault for being in this horrible situation, but not all of them could be blamed.”
- “Yes, she did come from Saudi Arabia, the same country where most of the people who high-jacked the planes on 9-11 were from; yet she was not one of those people. My neighbors had and still have a hard time seeing that.”
- “After the terrorists’ attacks in September, things only got worse for Ramesh. His descriptions of everything from the way people would avoid eye contact with him to hurtful remarks that were shouted in public places made me realize the severity of this issue in the United States.”
- “I realized that, and even though for you it may be hard to tell which group I belonged to, based on physical appearances, it was evident that there were real cultural differences and Americans aren’t viewed in the best light from the perspective of the French.”
- “I learned that there was something wrong with the fact that we had moved into a neighborhood where an African-American family lived. Based on my mother’s reaction, this was the way I was supposed to react as well.”
- “I was told never to date a black boy, and when I switched to the public school system my mom would tell me to hide my lunch money, so the black kids wouldn’t beat me up and steal it from me.”
- “I’ve met some very good people at Radford who don’t look like me, but now I’m not scared to approach them; I want to learn about people who are different from me and find our similarities.”

- “He believed that African-American men wanted only to get what women pregnant. He made outrageous comment that night. I could not believe my smart father believed these things and wanted to yell at my brothers for telling me.”
- “As I have said before and will say again, I have never felt that white people have a culture. We have a past of ‘discovering’ this land, eliminating competition for this land, and creating a hierarchy of people according to the color of their skin or background.”
- “It makes me think about what we perceive as beautiful and important in American culture. We typically marvel at architecture and things built rather than things that were there since the beginning of time and which will always be there.”
- “People assume he is Chinese or Japanese, sometimes Korean. Once, somebody tried to speak Korean to him; and this weekend, we were actually asked to leave a bar because a bouncer told us that he was tired ‘of all these Chinese guys causing problems.’ Once a woman apparently mistook Rai for the man who does her nails, she came up to us asking him if it was time to have them done again.”
- “My parents started realizing that I had little to no appreciation for my heritage when I began constantly complaining about having to go there to visit family.”
- “I can clearly recall standing in the magazine aisle at the supermarket while at the beach and putting down my groceries to leave the store when I saw a Middle Eastern- looking man enter the store.”
- “He was just a genuine teacher who cared a great deal about everyone and who was always positive.”
- “We had ignored it for so long, but it was inevitable that after my mother knew his race we would break up, and we did shortly after.”
- “People would be so confused when he would talk about his sister, referring to me, then they would meet me and were like she is white.”
- “My dad once told me that he would most likely not attend the wedding either, he told me it was not that he did not like Brain as a person, he just could not deal with the fact that he was a different race than me.”
- “I think that if someone does not have a person of a different ethnicity in their family, they are missing out greatly on new opportunities.”
- “I used to be open to having a friendship with anyone, but since September 11th, I don’t think that a friendship could ever become of any Middle Eastern person and me. I still respect the fact the Middle Eastern people are human beings and I would not blatantly be hateful towards them, but I have drawn a fine line between respect and friendship.”
- “Of the four-percent of African-Americans that inhabited the county, the largest majority took up residence at the prison.”
- “If you were an outsider by any means: physical, mental, spiritual, political, or attitudes, then you were most likely to be stigmatized and categorized in an out-group.”
- “This experience opened my mind to how fortunate, yet unfortunate in a sense, I am to live in the United States. In Italy and Ireland, everyone was free acting and seemingly much more individualist.”

- “Growing up in a somewhat small town in central Virginia, everyone knows the rules. These rules are neither spoken nor written; yet they are or were strictly abided by. The main and most important rule to never break is having an interracial relationship.
- “This experience gave me the feeling of inhumanity that blacks and other racial minorities in my own hometown must feel when they are discriminated against. It is a feeling of anger, indignation, and disgust. It is a feeling that I am seen as a monster and an inferior sub-human who is not worthy to share a line or beach with my betters. It is a feeling of constant fear and vigilance, a life in a combat zone; where the edge of a building or a ditch may hold an unseen assailant and the shadows make the movements of aggressors seeking to do you harm.”
- “They would call me names like: ‘cracker,’ ‘creamy,’ and ‘whitey;’ often times I wondered if they even knew my name was Ashley.”
- “They were just showing a love for their own country. What’s wrong with being proud of their country?”
- “I went to the cop arresting Shaneka, and explained the situation of how she was just defending me and what had really happened. The cop apologized and said, ‘I thought it was just another angry black woman, you know how they start shit.’”
- “For most people, the only messages of race and ethnicity come from images of slavery, rap music, or the *Cosby Show*.”
- “Diversity shouldn’t just be a tool to bring two different groups together- it should also form bonds within each group. Diversity can only work when minority groups (and the majority) understand what their group is really about before they embrace others.”
- “After that night, I learned that Veronica had two different sides: one that was proud of her heritage, and one that was not.”
- “When I think about how this experience shaped my view of the Latin American ethnicity, I think about the risks they are willing to take to support their family, and I think about the struggle they go through to just try and provide.”
- “Most of the men that I worked with did this job for a living, making anywhere from \$9-14 an hour. For me it was just a job to make some money for the summer, while I had free rent and no bills to pay at my parents’ house. I couldn’t even imagine having to pay rent/mortgage and possibly car payments with my paycheck.”
- “We had ignored it for so long, but it was inevitable that after my mother knew his race we would break up; and we did shortly after.”
- “Besides these simple observations, what really got my attention was despite how little Panamanians had in materialistic value, like money, a car, land, cell phones, or the latest fashion, the people always seemed happy. They were happy to help you and talk to you. I was really impressed by this and it made me think of Americans as very unhappy spoiled people. I could not understand how we as a country are so better off in many ways, but as Americans never seem like we enjoy life to the extend that other cultures around the world do.”
- “Respecting a person’s culture and religion is totally different from respecting the people of that culture or religion. That’s the lesson that I learned from Rania, that no how open minded I thought I was, I could still learn a lot.”
- “For advice on how to better deal with his violent behavior, I went to a close friend of mine who is a teacher. However, the only advice she gave me was, “do not try so hard, he is black; what do you expect...The idea of white privilege has been foreign to me , due to the fact that I was never made to think

about it. If I told this same story about a white child, I sure we would not say, “What do you expect, he is white.”

- “The Mexican American community was portrayed by the Russians (immigrants) as being the lowest of the racial groups that they had contact with. Anytime something was stolen, the Russians always thought it was the Mexicans. While in this country, my friend S had his bike stolen. His first thought was to blame the Mexicans that lived behind him.”
- “I was taught that these people aren’t like us and they don’t eat the same foods and all they do is commit crimes and drink 40 oz. malt liquor. But, these people ate all the same side dishes as we did, all the same cuts of meat, they were drinking good beer, and every one of them had a southern twang in their voice that was relaxing and an energy you just want to be around.”
- “My friend looked really worried, and as his father, as it was, came into the room he yelled, “Who is this f***ing white kid.” I did not say a word, but he grabbed me by the arm, dragged me over to the front door, and threw me out.”
- “Just because I don’t understand another culture, it doesn’t mean that it’s dirty or wrong, it just means that it is not the same as mine. My father on the other hand, does not feel this way. He is a gun-toting patriot. He feels that I am against our country because I accept other cultures and do not agree 100% with our government’s current decision.”
- “It’s ignorant of me to feel this way and I’m sure I’ve missed out on meeting some decent people, but it’s hard to get over.”
- “As a child growing up in a town dominated by white ethnicity, I was unable to accept having a teacher who was African American.”
- “Living in Bedford did not help the situation, because I always felt like an outsider in my own racial group because so many people were prejudice. However, I have realized that slowly the racists are becoming the outsiders as society as a whole becomes more accepting of not only African Americans but also of other ethnic minorities.”
- “While observing I began to realize that I am very ethnocentric and most Americans are too. The fact that I was judging the Brits through my own perspective and viewing their differences as deficits made me take into consideration that I need to change my perspective and forget about comparing their society and culture with my own.”
- “I remember Adam and his friends said “It’s our culture. It’s the culture of British Columbia. Everybody smokes (pot) here.” I laughed when they said that, but I think it was one their cultures they grew up in. I met friends who smoked with their parents, who smoked since they were really small. I even had a friend say to me, “Don’t smoke cigarettes, it’s bad for your body. Smoke marijuana. It’s better for you.”
- “Community, I found, isn’t just a mythical realm relegated to the land of fairytales, it is alive and well.”
- “In the North, Southerners/rednecks have always been shunned and looked down upon as being racist, uneducated, slow and country.”
- “Like most people the only message of race and ethnicity came from images of slavery, rap music, or the Cosby show.”
- “That diversity shouldn’t just be a tool to bring two different groups together---it should also form bonds within each group. Diversity can only work when minority groups (and the majority) understand what their group is really about before they can embrace others.”
- “I really think that I was able to appreciate that they really were not that worried about how many days in a row they wore the same clothes or that they were going to have to go into the workforce around the age of 12 to be able to help their family with money.”
- “It was, and unfortunately still is, an almost trendy thing to jump on the bandwagon for criticizing and dishonoring Hispanics. I was shamefully on that bandwagon for a while, until I feel God opened my eyes and put exceptionally special people in my life, as well as a new sense of acceptance and a desire to learn.”