

Week 7 Discussion Guide



Why is the “Personal” Political?

Redlining: *“Once you see it, you can’t un-see it...” & “Racial profiling can be camouflaged as spatial profiling.”* What was your first impression as you reviewed the concepts of redlining? Do you see evidence of redlining in your neighborhood, city or community?

Bryan Stevenson: *“And finally, I believe that, despite the fact that it is so dramatic and so beautiful and so inspiring and so stimulating, we will ultimately not be judged by our technology, we won’t be judged by our design, we won’t be judged by our intellect and reason. Ultimately, you judge the character of a society, not by how they treat their rich and the powerful and the privileged, but by how they treat the poor, the condemned, the incarcerated. Because it’s in that nexus that we actually begin to understand truly profound things about who we are.”*

Bryan’s messages to the world have been shared widely and for the most part accepted as an exhortation for change. What were your thoughts on his Ted Talk? It echoes his attitudes expressed in *Stone Catchers* (from Week 6), did you find your self nodding in agreement at any particular points of his presentation? What were some of those points?

School to Prison Pipeline: Alice asks a pointed question, *“Okay, you might say. But Chuck and Tim, kids like them, they’re committing crimes! Don’t they deserve to be in prison? Don’t they deserve to be living in fear of arrest? Well, my answer would be no. They don’t. And certainly not for the same things that other young people with more privilege are doing with impunity... Right now, we’re asking kids who live in the most disadvantaged neighborhoods, who have the least amount of family resources, who are attending the country’s worst schools, who are facing the toughest time in the labor market, who are living in neighborhoods where violence is an everyday problem, we’re asking these kids to walk the thinnest possible line -- to basically never do anything wrong... Why are we not providing support to young kids facing these challenges?”* How do Alice’s questions sit with you? Do you agree with her points? Regarding her message overall, what other ideas seemed to strike a chord with your perspectives, either in harmony or disagreement?

13th: For those able to watch the documentary, what were your reactions after finishing? There was footage of our current administration coupled with attitudes from ages ago, yet strangely parallel, especially the criminalization and unjust treatment of Black communities, active then and now. What parts do you feel like you already knew, what parts felt “eye-opening”?

Inequities in Child Welfare: The NABSW had much to say regarding inequities of that exist for Black communities, which points stood out to you? How did you react to the race-based differences in fee structures embedded in the child welfare system? In the video as well as the NPR article, there seemed to be an awareness that white babies were in “higher demand” than black, what came up for you when you learned about that? Regarding family preservation, did any of the 6 recommendations stick out to you, do you feel like you’d be willing to advocate for one or more of those changes?

Anti-Asian Laws:

“There is great diversity within Asian America and across Asian American history, but there are also significant similarities and connections. The experiences of previous generations shaped the world that Asian Americans live in today. Likewise, new immigration has helped us see the past in fresh ways. Both the diversity and the shared experiences of Asian Americans reveal the complex story of the making and remaking of Asian America. There is not one single story, but many.”

-Dr. Erika Lee via The Making of Asian America

“The history of Asian Americans has much to teach us about how all of us might get along with one another in the twenty-first century.” -Ronald Takaki

In his book *Strangers from a Different Shore*, Ronald Takaki challenges the notion that “American” equals “White.” The myth of Asians as foreigners and aliens is pervasive in American culture; and just as narrow in view. As Robin Diangelo reminds us in *White Fragility*, the fact there is no “White History Month” implies “White” is the norm for history.

What came up for you as you reviewed the Chinese Exclusion Act and the Japanese Internment Camps? History awareness should certainly include joy as well as acknowledgment of trauma. However, Asian Americans have often been excluded from American history as a whole. How do you think that kind of erasure shapes us, individually and as a community? As Asian Americans and as Americans overall? What are your thoughts on “America equals White”? How would you describe your personal process of dismantling that assumption?

Citizenship & Bastard Nation: What were your reactions as you read through Adam’s story? Although referring to different communities, how might Bryan or Alice’s presentation on justice speak to the environment Adam Crapser struggled to navigate? As you browsed through Bastard Nation’s website, what stuck out to you the most? Were you aware of the various basic rights that adoptees struggle to enjoy? [Follow along here](#) to stay up to date on the adoptee citizenship act.

Family, adoptee, parents, relatives and supporters... thank you for this. SOOO much has been accomplished this week. Please find a way to give one another a virtual hug & celebrate <3