

Holes in my identity

A friend of mine recently sent me this cartoon called "The Talk," on the left it showed a white kid with wide innocent eyes, whose dad was having a talk with him and there were cartoon speech bubbles of birds and bees floating above their heads. On the right there was an image of this little black boy with wide, fear filled eyes, having a talk with his dad and in the bubbles above their heads, was a gun and lady liberty ... I got the birds and bees talk ... from my white dad, never got the other one.

I was adopted by white parents and raised in an all-white, middle-class community and outside of my never ending identity crisis, my early life experience as a black American was extremely safe, extremely protected and extremely dismissed. When I was a kid, maybe eight, which was around the time that my racial differences were really starting to fuck with my head, I would try so hard to articulate my feelings to my mom and dad, but they just didn't have the experience or understanding to support me. There was this incident at school, where a kid was reading from a history book about Africa and he mispronounced the River Niger, you know how that ended, and all the kids turned towards me and snickered and my spirit just melted all over the floor.

I went home that day crying and my parents responded with, "Oh they didn't mean to hurt you," "When I was a kid, I had goofy hair and the kids made fun of me too." And my all-time favorite "Color. Doesn't. Matter."

(The MAN snaps his fingers.)

Dismissed!