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Period 3

College Essay, Prompt 4

### How We See Race and the Color Blind Theory

I am undeniably a person of privilege. Some may read that statement and think, 'Maybe she's wealthy,' but what I am talking about is something much deeper than wealth. When I say I have privilege I mean that I have white privilege. I have lived my life never facing racial injustice, been bullied for the color of my skin, the way I talk, or the characteristics tied to my race. No one has ever coined terms against me or spit derogatory racial terms in my face.

So, some may ask 'Well, why do you care so much if racism doesn't affect your life?' This is partially true. I have never experienced racism first hand, but I am affected by racism. For all my life I have been taught that all races may be different but are equal. If we are equal then why am I seeing such a disconnect in society? We are living "equally" but live our lives separately.

Everyone's experience is different, but we cannot dispute the facts. As a white person I am more likely to get a job, live in adequate housing, make headlines if I go missing, and more likely to avoid sentencing if arrested. I am more likely to "get out" of my small town than someone trying to get out of the projects. I am more likely to get into college and hired as an employee. This is partially because I am white.

We as a society, maybe even subconsciously, demean the colored minority. Think of every derogatory thing you ever heard from the people in your life. Maybe you've never said the

“n” word for example, but you’ve heard some common phrases. My friends have said “Yeah, he’s black, but he doesn’t *act* black, you know?”

No. I don’t know.

As I get older race has become an ever growing topic. At the age of five I sat in class before Martin Luther King day and drew a picture. The teacher said, “Draw a picture with you and other kids. Color them black, brown, red, anything you want! ” Years later, in fourth grade, I listened to a small passage of Martin Luther King’s “I Have a Dream” speech. I remember feeling my blood boil as my teacher tried to explain segregation to the class and every single year onwards I would ask, “But why did they do that? What made them so different? I’m just like them.” But here lies the problem - I’m not just like them.

Children are taught at a young age that we should be “blind to color.” But we cannot do that. We cannot be blind to color while color still makes a profound difference. We should be taught that yes, white people have more opportunity compared to colored people, and yes, white families make thousands of more dollars in income compared to the average black family. White people can ignore the racism problem because from our vantage point it is not necessarily a problem.

I do not stand for that though. I consider every life equally as valuable as the next. I sit in my classrooms, my bedroom, in front of the tv and all I see is racial injustice . I see police brutality and white people making up the majority of what we see in the media. “Maybe it’s all just the media causing havoc,” critics say. My response? If it weren’t a real problem why are people getting upset over it? Why is it so relevant in the lives of so many people?

I am a white woman who sees race as an issue, and by the end of my life I don’t want to see it as an issue anymore. People like me who are not blind to color, but indifferent about it, will change the way society treats every shade.