

Organic Diversity



I grew up in Las Vegas in the 1960s and 70s. The Vegas of today bears little resemblance to Old Vegas. So, if you aren't a Las Vegas native over 50, what I'm about to tell you may come as a surprise.

Back then, Las Vegas was a medium-sized town (less than 200,000 people lived there). It was ethnically diverse, a unique type of American melting pot. In my neighborhood on the East Side (today in the center of the Valley), I had a variety of neighbors (all living within 5 square miles), Italians, Northern Europeans, Jews, Christians, Mormons, Hispanics, and a few Black and Asian families.

My parents were old school Depression era people, so they had inherited some prejudices, but I was never taught to like or dislike someone because of the color of their skin, or their religion, or economic status. From elementary school on, I had all sorts of friends from all kinds of backgrounds.

Was Old Vegas a paradise of ethnic and social tranquility? No. We had issues. Forced busing brought Black kids from the Northside into my high school. That was hard – for the Black kids. They were generally from less economically advantaged households. They felt alienated when they saw us pulling into school in our newer cars and talking about our trips to LA or where we were going to college. Sometimes the Black students that lived on our side of town had conflicts with the Northside Black kids.

I learned much about the world from Old Vegas' ethnic and cultural diversity. My baseball teams had Cuban kids on them who had come to the USA floating on rubber rafts across the Gulf of Mexico. They could barely speak English, but they were great ballplayers. Their parents were wonderful too. To this day, I love Cuban sandwiches, but I've yet to taste any as good as those I ate at my friend Machi's house in 1973.

Today when I hear Progressive pundits promote "Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion," part of me says, "Yes! That's exactly right. We need more DEI." My life has been enriched by knowing and

befriending people who don't look like me and come from different backgrounds. I wish everyone could have those experiences.

But the DEI of today is not organic, at least the kind of DEI being shoved down our throats by the Woke crowd. The DEI that people like Alexandria Ocasio Cortez and her ilk promote is victim based DEI. You're either an oppressor or the oppressed. That type of rhetoric only separates people; it does not bring folks together. It's not organic; it's contrived. It promotes only division, not diversity.

I've seen firsthand the generationally destructive effects of systemic racism. For most of our country's history, Blacks and other minorities (over the last two centuries, at various times, Catholics, Italians, Greeks, Hispanics, Asians, etc.) have been mistreated by the White majority in America in a variety of ways, both socially and economically. To deny that is to deny reality.

So, how do we address this historical sin? By blaming the great-grandchildren of the racist oppressors? By condemning the country that, for many immigrants, was their saving grace, their one opportunity to improve their families' lives? That's not only morally wrong, it flies in the face of human nature.

The way to address the lingering effects of systemic racism is to publicly proclaim that racism must become a thing of the past. Our aspiration must be to transform our nation into a color blind society, one that respects people's faith and traditions while doing our best to ensure that the liberties of every American citizen are protected.

We've come a long way in the past fifty years, but we still have more to do. The so-called Black Lives Matter movement, the 1619 Project, and all the rest of that racist claptrap does not help.

Do you want to end racism? I do. Then we must stop categorizing, judging, and dividing people by race. It's as simple as that. Hating White people because of their ethnicity is just as evil as hating Black, Brown, Asian, etc., people because of their race. Period, full stop.

Don't buy into the argument that we must all be separated by immutable characteristics. That's a lie from the pit of hell.

Don't believe the Progressive propaganda that America is inherently evil, or was founded on White supremacy, or that we should elevate people based solely on their sexual or gender preferences.

Love your neighbor, love your family, and be a productive, healthy, non-hater member of our society. Reject the call to return to racism and embrace a future where human beings are simply human beings, all endowed with dignity and deserving of respect.