

Breaking Through Illusion, by Adrienne Rich

1 When those who have the power
2+3 to name and socially construct reality
4 choose not to see you
5 or hear you,
1+4 whether you are dark skinned,
2 old,
3+5 disabled,
4 female,
5 Or speak with a different accent or dialect than theirs,
3 when someone with the authority
1+4+5 of a teacher, say,
2 describes the world
3 and you are not in it,
1+4+5 there is a moment
2 of psychic disequilibrium,
2+3+4+5 as if you looked in a mirror
1 and saw nothing.

1-5 I dream of a day

1+2+3+4 where I can sit in a classroom

1+2+3 and not represent a whole race

1+2 where my passionate words are not mistaken

1 for an angry black person.

2 I think with the type of school that we are it is important that we talk about racial issues.

4 Talking about race separates us.

5 I never saw a difference between races until I came here.

1+3 It is very unsettling that the majority of the people here nearly hide the fact that others with different languages, races, classes, majors, religions, and cultures even exist.

4 I find these conversations difficult to have,

2 but there are many things left unsaid and unheard otherwise,

1+2 making it critical to discuss race and identity.

4+5 Stop making everything about race.

3 Race is still an issue.

2+3 It cannot be over-looked.

1+2+3 We as a school need to talk about it.

4 Not all people are perpetrators in the injustices of racial hierarchies,

2 yet all people are victims of it.

1-5 Privilege and oppression are two sides of the same coin.

Excerpts from *Screams from the Sidelines: An Anthology of Wheelock Voices*
Compiled by Jenne Powers' Spring 2015 Writing as Social Action Course

1-5 Topics of racial diversity often lead to silence from white students.

1 "She's pretty, for a black girl."

2 The words came out of her mouth,

2+3 not mine.

3 And yet I sat silent,

4 unintentionally perpetuating her words,

2+3+4 not mine.

5 Not saying anything meant saying anything was OK.

1 The words came out of her mouth,

1-5 not mine.

3+4+5 But I sat

4 Silent.

1-5 Her words might as well have been mine.

3 Students of color should not need to feel like they are alone on this campus,

1-5 but white silence does just that.

*****Amnesty: Toxic fear mongering pushing back human rights**

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/02/amnesty-toxic-fear-mongering-pushing-human-rights-170222035848255.html>

1+2 Toxic fear mongering by anti-establishment politicians,

3 among them US President Donald Trump

4 and the leaders of Turkey, Hungary and the Philippines,

1+2 is contributing to a global pushback against human rights,
5 Amnesty International said.

1 When it released its 408-page annual report on

1+2 rights abuses around the world on Wednesday,

1+2+3 the watchdog group described 2016 as

1+2+3+4 "the year when the cynical use of 'us versus them' narratives

1-5 of blame, hate and fear took on a global prominence to a level not seen since
the 1930s",

2 when Adolf Hitler rose to power in Germany.

3 Salil Shetty, the group's secretary-general, said:

1-5 "A new world order

1+2+3+4 where human rights are portrayed as a barrier to national interests

1+2+3 makes the ability to tackle mass atrocities dangerously low,

1+2 leaving the door open to abuses reminiscent

1 of the darkest times of humanity.

Excerpt from : *Seeing Beyond Our Differences*, by Sheri White

This I Believe NPR

1 Some of us are men,

2 some are women.

3+4 Some are gay,

1+5 some are straight.

5 Some are young, some old.

1 Some are Christian,

1+2 some Jewish,

1+2+3 some Muslim,

1+2+3+4 Hindu,

1+2+3+4+5 Buddhist and some atheist.

5 Some of us are short,

4 and others tall.

3 Some right-handed,

2 some left-handed,

5 some disabled.

All: We have lots of differences;

4 we are all unique.

2+3 But deep down inside us,

4+5 down in our DNA,

All: we are 99.9 percent the same.

2 And I believe we need to remember that.

*Note to Democrats, by Byron Williams (HuffPost)

1 Who is truly marginalized in America?

2. How are you defining it?

3. Is your definition based on economic factors, education or zip code?

4. Perhaps if you sought to answer that question authentically,

5+1 you may create a different coalition going forward —

2+3 a multicultural alliance based on shared economic and social aspirations.

4. How long will groups be pitted against each other

5+2 with similar social locations,

3+1 separated only by the percentage of melanin in their skin

5 or XY chromosomes?

1 The task before you is to reclaim the spirit of the words echoed by Martin Luther King:

All: “We may have come on different ships, but we’re all in the same boat now.”

Excerpt from: *Energized by Paradox*, by William Shutkin

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1 So why do I continue to subject myself to this sort of thing?

2+3 The answer is simple:

4 Disrupting my comfort zone, bombarding myself with challenging people and situations—

5 this is the best way I know to keep growing.

2 And to paraphrase a biologist I once met,

All: if you’re not growing, you’re dying.

3 So maybe I’m not the best (at something)

1 but that's okay.
5 The discomfort,
4 the uncertainty,
1+3 the physical and mental challenge that I get from (it) —
3 all the things that too many of us spend our time and energy trying to avoid—
2 they are precisely the things that keep me in the game.

**Excerpt from: *Being Content with Myself*, by Kamaal Majeed

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1+2+3 My skin color has done nothing to change my personality,
4+5 and my personality has done nothing to change my skin color.
1 I believe in being myself.
2 I believe that I—
1+3 not any stereotype—
4 should define who I am and what actions I take in life.
5 In high school,
4+5 popularity often depends on your willingness to follow trends.
3 And I've been told that it doesn't get much easier going into adulthood.
4 But the only other option is to sacrifice my individuality for the

satisfaction and approval of others.

2 Sure, this can be appealing, since choosing to keep my self-respect intact has made me

3+4+5 unpopular and disliked at times,

1 with no end to that in sight.

5 Others' being content with me, though,

All is not nearly as important as my being content with myself.

**Excerpts from *CITIZEN*

1 You are in the dark, in the car, watching the black-tarred street being swallowed by speed;

2 he tells you his dean is making him hire a person of color when there are

All so many great writers out there.

3 You think maybe this is an experiment and you are being tested or retroactively insulted

4 or you have done something that communicates this is an okay conversation to be having.

All Why do you feel okay saying this to me?

1+2 You wish the light would turn red or a police siren would go off so you could slam on the brakes, slam into the car ahead of you,

1+2+3+4 be propelled forward so quickly both your faces would suddenly be exposed to the wind.

5 As usual, you drive straight through the moment with the expected backing off of what was previously said.

2+3 It is not only that confrontation is headache producing;

4+5 it is also that you have a destination that doesn't include acting like this moment isn't inhabitable,

3+4+5 hasn't happened before,
2+3+4+5 and the before isn't part of the now
All as the night darkens and the time shortens
1 between where we are and where we are going.

**Excerpt from *CITIZEN*

All A woman you do not know wants to join you for lunch.

1 You are visiting her campus.

2 In the cafe you both order the Caesar salad.

3 This overlap is not the beginning of anything because she immediately points out that she,

3+4 her father,

3+4+5 her grandfather,

1 and you,

All all attended the same college.

2 She wanted her son to go there as well,

3 but because of affirmative action or minority something-

4 she is not sure what they are calling it these days

5 and weren't they supposed to get rid of it?-

All her son wasn't accepted.

1+2 You are not sure if you are meant to apologize for this failure of your alma mater's legacy program;

3+4 instead you ask where he ended up.

5 The prestigious school she mentions doesn't seem to assuage her irritation.

4 This exchange, in effect, ends your lunch.

All The salads arrive.

Excerpt from *CITIZEN*

1 When you arrive in your driveway and turn off the car, you remain behind the wheel another ten minutes.

1+2 You fear the night is being locked in

1+2+3 and coded on a cellular level

1+2+3+4 and want time to function as a power wash.

5 Sitting there staring at the closed garage door you are reminded that a friend once told you there exists a medical term-

2 John Henryism-

All for people exposed to stresses stemming from racism.

1+2+3 They achieve themselves to death

4 trying to dodge the build up of erasure.

3 Sherman James,

1 the researcher who came up with the term,

2 claimed the physiological costs were high.

All You hope by sitting in silence you are bucking the trend.

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2+3 and the 'self self.'

4 By this she means you mostly interact as friends with mutual interest

5 and, for the most part, compatible personalities;

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2 her white self and your black self,

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4+5 arrive with the full force of your American positioning.

1 Then you are standing face-to-face

2 in seconds that wipe the affable smiles right from your mouths.

All What did you say?

2 Instantaneously your attachment seems fragile, tenuous,

2+3+4 subject to any transgression of your historical self.

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but there are many things left unsaid and unheard otherwise,
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