

NONRACIALISM AS AN EDUCATIONAL AND WORLD VIEW: LESSONS FROM SOUTH AFRICAN TEACHERS

Alan Wieder†

I INTRODUCTION

In 1966, Robert Kennedy gave a speech at the University of Cape Town that is often recounted by progressive South Africans. In his speech, Kennedy simultaneously criticized apartheid power, although acknowledging racism in the United States, and offered hope for the majority of South Africans living under the apartheid regime:

I come here this evening because of my deep interest and affection for a land settled by the Dutch in the mid-seventeenth century, then taken over by the British, and at last independent; a land in which the native inhabitants were at first subdued, but relations with whom remain a problem to this day; a land which defined itself on a hostile frontier; a land which has tamed rich natural resources through the energetic application of modern technology; a land which was once the importer of slaves, and now must struggle to wipe out the last traces of that former bondage. I refer, of course, to the United States of America.¹

But any similarity between the South African and American pasts, at least legalistically, ceased eighteen years before this speech. While laws in the United States, specifically the *Brown v. Board of Education* cases,² the Civil Rights Act of 1964,³ and the Voting Rights Act of 1965,⁴ legislated the end of racial segregation, South African laws, such as the Population Registration Act,⁵ the Immorality Amendment

† Alan Wieder, Ph.D., is Professor at the University of South Carolina, College of Education and is also on the faculty of the University of Western Cape, South Africa. Wieder is an oral historian whose research includes a long-term study of school integration in New Orleans and an on-going project interviewing apartheid-era teachers in South Africa. His latest book is *Voices from Cape Town Classrooms: Oral Histories of Teachers Who Fought Apartheid*.

¹ Senator Robert F. Kennedy, Address at the University of Capetown, South Africa (June 6, 1966), at <http://www.rfkmemorial.org/RFK/affirmation2.htm> (last visited Oct. 3, 2004).

² 347 U.S. 483 (1954), *supplemented by* 349 U.S. 294 (1955).

³ 42 U.S.C. § 2000e (1964).

⁴ 42 U.S.C. § 1973 (1965).

⁵ Population Registration Act 30 of 1950.

Act,⁶ the Group Areas Act,⁷ the Black Education Act,⁸ the Coloured Persons Education Act,⁹ and the Indians Education Act,¹⁰ further legalized and empowered racial segregation and oppression.

As apartheid worsened in South Africa, however, resistance increased. Quite amazingly, this resistance expressed a foundational belief not in hatred toward whites, but rather in nonracialism, defined as the refusal to accept race as a means for policy or division. The vibrant spirit of nonracialism in South Africa led to the creation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and continues to nurture and forge the possibility of a truly democratic society. Conversely, even fifty years after *Brown*, the United States remains racist, with segregated schools and other rampant forms of racial division. This Article argues that the lack of nonracialism in the fight against racism in the United States is one of the factors contributing to continuing segregation, which exists despite the de jure proclamations of *Brown* and its progeny.

For South Africans who fought apartheid, nonracialism was reinforced daily as a tenet of struggle. By fighting the regime, apartheid resisters defied the government's racial policies and distinctions and proclaimed only one race: the human race. Nonracialism was evident in the lives of Nelson Mandela and his comrades, black and white,¹¹ who fought apartheid and were tried together in the infamous Rivonia Trial.¹² It was also evident in the lives of the many workers and teachers, young and old, who believed that race did not exist and apartheid

⁶ Immorality Amendment Act 21 of 1950.

⁷ Group Areas Act 36 of 1966.

⁸ Black Education Act 47 of 1953.

⁹ Coloured Persons Education Act 47 of 1963.

¹⁰ Indians Education Act 61 of 1965.

¹¹ Nonracialism is a major tenet of the African National Congress, the party of Nelson Mandela, which is now the controlling political party in South Africa. See *Mzabalazo: A History of the African National Congress* [hereinafter *Mzabalazo*], at <http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/about/umzabalazo.html> (last visited Oct. 3, 2004). It is also a major tenet of the Non-European Unity Movement (NEUM), a Trotskyist organization that includes many coloured teachers who fought apartheid and still question the inequalities in South Africa. See ALAN WIEDER, VOICES FROM CAPE TOWN CLASSROOMS: ORAL HISTORIES OF TEACHERS WHO FOUGHT APARTHEID 13 (2003); see also Baruch Hirson, *A Short History of the Non-European Unity Movement—An Insider's View*, SEARCHLIGHT S. AFR. 65 (1995) (detailing the history of the Non-European Unity Movement (NEUM)), available at <http://www.revolutionary-history.co.uk/supplem/Hirson/neum.html> (last visited Oct. 3, 2004). Both groups shared the mission of fighting the racism that was omnipresent in apartheid South Africa. See Hirson, *supra*; *Mzabalazo*, *supra*. Racism was so prevalent in apartheid South Africa that Bishop Desmond Tutu described the country as a "pigmentocracy." See DESMOND MPIOLO TUTU, NO FUTURE WITHOUT FORGIVENESS 91 (1991); see also WIEDER, *supra*, at 2–5 (discussing the racialism of South African society and politics during apartheid).

¹² For a thorough account of the trial and events leading up to it, see GLENN FRANKEL, RIVONIA'S CHILDREN: THREE FAMILIES AND THE COST OF CONSCIENCE IN WHITE SOUTH AFRICA (1999).

had to end.¹³ Many of South Africa's teachers took a nonracialist approach to education, joining pedagogy and politics by illegally integrating schools, hiring nonracial teachers, bending definitions of racial exclusion, and identifying themselves in terms of the struggle against apartheid.¹⁴ This Article describes specific incidents in the lives of teachers who not only fought the apartheid regime, but also displayed their strong belief in nonracialism. Drawing from the writings of Paul Gilroy,¹⁵ this Article analyzes South African nonracialism and the consequences of nonracialism's absence from American struggles.

II

SOUTH AFRICAN NONRACIALISM—AMERICAN RACIALISM

A. Teacher Interviews

Since 1999, I have worked on an oral history project interviewing teachers from each of the apartheid government's four designated ethnic groups: blacks, coloureds, Indians, and whites.¹⁶ The majority of interviewees were designated as coloured.¹⁷ I have spoken with teachers who began their teaching in the 1940s and taught into the struggle years of the 1980s, as well as teachers who first began teaching during the struggle.¹⁸ Although these teachers have different political affiliations, they all combined pedagogy and politics to fight apartheid and adopted nonracialism as a foundational belief in their struggle.¹⁹

¹³ Those South Africans who promoted nonracialism recognized that nonracialism does not equate to colorblindness. They understood the social, political, and economic constructions of race that were part of South Africa and the world, but they looked beyond it to a vision of society that was not defined by race. Many American scholars and activists have also acknowledged that racial equality does not equate to colorblindness. *See, e.g.*, SHELBY STEELE, *THE CONTENT OF OUR CHARACTER: A NEW VISION OF RACE IN AMERICA* 169–75 (1990); *BEYOND THE COLOR LINE: NEW PERSPECTIVES ON RACE AND ETHNICITY IN AMERICA* 2–4 (Abigail Thernstrom & Stephan Thernstrom eds., 2002) [hereinafter *BEYOND THE COLOR LINE*]. Even Martin Luther King's vision of a world in which people are judged by "the content of their character" was free of bootstrap philosophy that denied the existence of historical and present racism. *See* Martin Luther King, Jr., *Address at Lincoln Memorial, Washington, D.C., (Aug. 28, 1963)*, available at <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/Ihaveadream.htm> (last visited Oct. 3, 2004). For a critique of colorblindness in the United States, see ELLIS COSE, *COLOR-BLIND: SEEING BEYOND RACE IN A RACE-OBSSESSED WORLD* (1997).

¹⁴ *See infra* Part II.A.

¹⁵ Paul Gilroy, a United Kingdom native, is Professor of Sociology and African American Studies at Yale University. He has written extensively on race relations and the African experience in Europe and the United States. *See, e.g.*, PAUL GILROY, *AGAINST RACE: IMAGINING POLITICAL CULTURE BEYOND THE COLOR LINE* (2000).

¹⁶ WIEDER, *supra* note 11, at 3.

¹⁷ *Id.* at 3, 8–9.

¹⁸ *See id.* at 13, 73.

¹⁹ *See id.* at 5–6.

1. *Pedagogy, Politics, and Nonracialism*

Helen Kies began teaching in the late 1940s and was a member of Non-European Unity Movement (NEUM) and the Teachers' League of South Africa (TLSA),²⁰ both organizations that fought apartheid and continue to question the present South African government because it never became a socialist alternative to apartheid.²¹ Kies spent most of her career at Harold Cressy High School,²² a school that was well known for both academic excellence and anti-apartheid politics and was one of four coloured Cape Town high schools.²³ The school's reputation for anti-apartheid politics faltered during the struggle years of the late 1970s and 1980s, because Kies and many of her colleagues believed that marches and demonstrations were "activism for the sake of activism."²⁴ In fact, while the younger teachers respected Kies and her colleagues as teachers, they referred to them as "armchair politicians."²⁵ Still, the apartheid regime deemed Kies a struggle activist and imprisoned her for a short time in 1985.²⁶ Kies explained the nonracialist approach that drew the ire of the apartheid government:

We had to defend the children, make them understand what the rulers were trying to do, and why. And this meant providing political education as well. To counter the rulers' main objective, retribalizing to make their divide-and-rule policy possible and easier. Our main lesson was We Are One Human Race. There Are No Superior, No Inferior, Races. Cut out all the rubbish the rulers are trying to make you believe.²⁷

2. *School Integration and Nonracialism*

Jimmy Slingers began his teaching career in the 1970s²⁸ and was not a member of NEUM or the TLSA.²⁹ He later became a member of the South African Democratic Teachers Union, a large, more activist teachers union,³⁰ though he was neither a Trotskyist like the elders nor an activist like some of his peers or teachers who came of age

²⁰ *Id.* at 17.

²¹ *See id.* at 13–16.

²² *Id.* at 18, 21, 22.

²³ *See id.* at 21–23.

²⁴ *Id.* at 6; *see also id.* at 23 ("Most of the schools thought Harold Cressy teachers very conservative for trying to keep school going, not having the children out boycotting.").

²⁵ *Id.*

²⁶ *Id.* at 22, 24.

²⁷ *Id.* at 22.

²⁸ *Id.* at 96.

²⁹ *Cf. id.* at 73 (noting that the TLSA "had become somewhat silent" by the 1970s); Hirson, *supra* note 11 (stating that the NEUM was "inactive, if not dead" by the 1960s).

³⁰ *See* Interview with Jimmy Slinger (1999) (tape and transcript available at the Centre for Popular Memory, University of Cape Town, South Africa).

in the 1980s. Slingers is very honest about the privileged place of non-white teachers in their communities, as well as the racial prejudice of coloured South Africans towards black South Africans.³¹ At one point in his career, Slingers felt compelled to question his colleagues on their privilege and argued that it was necessary for teachers to join workers in their fight against apartheid.³² True to his commitment to nonracialism, as a school principal Slingers illegally integrated his school during the apartheid era:

[W]hen a school wanted to admit children of another race group they needed to apply to the department for permission, stating reasons. So our school had just refused. We said when a child applies to the school, it applies as a child and not as a black or as Coloured or as an Indian. And at the end of every term we had to submit a Quarterly Attendance Return. You also had to give a breakdown of enrollment. How many whites. How many Coloureds. In fact, we didn't have whites at the time—Coloureds, Indians and blacks. We always just gave the grand total because we said, "We have children at this school. We don't have Coloured children!"³³

3. *Hiring Nonracial Teachers*

Richard Dudley began teaching at Livingstone High School in the 1940s and retired in 1984, the year before massive school boycotts.³⁴ Livingstone was a highly rated school and Dudley was the de facto principal for many years, although he was never officially appointed.³⁵ School authorities told the school governing body: "Look, we know Mr. Dudley. We know that he's qualified for the position, but we also know that he has been fighting our policies all the time, and we are not going to pay him now for opposing our school policies."³⁶ Dudley not only stressed academic excellence and political awareness to his students, but was himself politically active in both NEUM and the TLSA.³⁷ His view of education was deeply nonracialist:

[W]e used to point out to [the teachers] that we don't have Coloured children at this school; we don't have African children at this

³¹ *Id.* at 98, 99.

³² *Id.* at 98.

³³ *Id.* at 101.

³⁴ *Id.* at 34.

³⁵ *Id.* at 41.

³⁶ *Id.*

³⁷ *See id.* at 13. Dudley retired from teaching to assume the presidency of the New Unity Movement, the reincarnation of NEUM—after the apartheid government banned NEUM—and he remains politically active today by challenging the government and seeking reparations for people whom the government forced out of their homes pursuant to the Group Areas Act 36 of 1966. *See* Interview with R.O. Dudley (1999) (tape and transcript available at the Centre for Popular Memory, University of Cape Town, South Africa).

school; we don't have Indian children at this school; we have boys and girls. And if you can fit in with the program that we have, and if you feel that you have any prejudices and you can leave them outside at the gate of the school and so on, you'd be welcome.³⁸

4. *Black Consciousness and Nonracialism*

Sedick Isaacs was a science teacher at Trafalgar High School.³⁹ Although he was designated as coloured by the apartheid government and had a white girlfriend, Isaacs belonged to the Pan African Congress, a black-nationalist political organization.⁴⁰ Isaacs explained his part in the struggle:

Well, first of all, it started with pamphleteering and getting people to various political meetings. Having some form of small study groups. And then during that phase we were passing out of the passive demonstrations to the more active demonstrations. And since I had a background in science and chemistry with a keen interest in explosives—remember I applied for the copper mines as the person who works with explosives. And during that time people needed to be trained and educated; trained in the use of explosives. I offered that and I ended up even making explosives.

I got caught doing that. We went out to the rural area to test it. We were driving back and one of my friends stopped, and just when he stopped the police picked us up. I think they were watching. I had a girlfriend who was white. The police were also watching me in terms of the Immorality Act. And I think that's partly why they might have been watching.⁴¹

As a result of his political activism, Isaacs was imprisoned for thirteen years on Robben Island,⁴² the same prison that housed Nelson Mandela.⁴³ While in prison, Isaacs continued his struggle against the apartheid regime, this time through education. Isaacs was a leader in initiating a prison-wide educational system in which prisoners set up classes—some official, but most covert—for anyone on the island who wanted to learn.⁴⁴

5. *Nonracialism and the Construction of Race*

Mandy Sanger became a teacher in the 1980s after being a student struggle leader during her high school years.⁴⁵ She learned

³⁸ WIEDER, *supra* note 11, at 38.

³⁹ *Id.* at 63.

⁴⁰ *Id.* at 64.

⁴¹ *Id.*

⁴² *Id.* at 51, 64.

⁴³ *Id.* at 51.

⁴⁴ *See id.* at 66–69. The prisoners came to call the educational programs that Robben arranged the “University of Robben Island.” *Id.* at 69.

⁴⁵ *Id.* at 150–51.

nonracialism from her parents and teachers,⁴⁶ and she challenged the racism of her coloured students after black students enrolled in Vista High School in the early 1990s.⁴⁷ Sanger equated teaching with community organizing, and she consistently organized both students and teachers at the schools where she taught.⁴⁸ Additionally, she was actively involved in the Western Cape Teachers Union, a nonracial union that was founded in 1985 to fight the apartheid regime.⁴⁹ Sanger commented upon the links between nonracialism and the construction of race during apartheid and beyond:

WE ARE NOT COLOURED! . . . To understand you need to understand the period in which we learnt our politics and within which our sense of identity was forged, yes forged! I started high school in 1976. Black consciousness was a dominant political discourse with a popular following in high schools. From birth I was taught to reject the notions of racial classifications, particularly the misnomer “Coloured.” Black is okay, as a political construct I’m black.⁵⁰

B. Lessons from South Africa’s Educators

The previous narratives serve to demonstrate how nonracialism influenced South Africa’s struggles against apartheid. Nonracialism created personal and public dynamics in South Africa that are now, in the post-apartheid era, raising the hope and possibility of a nonracist South Africa.⁵¹ Left-leaning South Africans, like the teacher-activists described above, integrated nonracialism into their lives and teachings during the struggle against apartheid. They also used nonracialism as a guiding principle in the creation of post-apartheid structures, such as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC).⁵² This commitment to nonracialism created a momentum within which

⁴⁶ *Id.* at 150–52.

⁴⁷ *Id.* at 157.

⁴⁸ *Id.* at 153–57.

⁴⁹ *See id.* at 72–73, 154.

⁵⁰ *Id.* at 5. Sanger was reacting to Alan Wieder, *Wedding Pedagogy and Politics: Oral Histories of Black Women Teachers and the Struggle Against Apartheid*, RACE, ETHNICITY & EDUC., July 2002, at 133–49.

⁵¹ Even Rian Malan, who predicted race wars, *see* RIAN MALAN, *MY TRAITOR’S HEART* (1990), has recently acknowledged the hope and possibilities in a nonracist South Africa.

⁵² The TRC was set up as an alternative to criminal justice for those who committed apartheid atrocities, offering amnesty “in exchange for a full disclosure relating to the crime for which amnesty was being sought.” TUTU, *supra* note 11, at 30; *see also id.* at 19–32 (discussing the TRC’s form of amnesty as an alternative to other options, including both blanket amnesty and Nuremburg-like trials for those who committed race-related crimes during apartheid). The TRC provided a forum for ethnic groups to come together, so people could publicly relate their tragic stories of apartheid oppression while also allowing perpetrators to express remorse and ask for forgiveness for their actions. *See* Erin Daly, *Reparations in South Africa: A Cautionary Tale*, 33 U. MEM. L. REV. 367, 372 (2003) (“Perpetrators of gross abuses of human rights would get complete amnesty In exchange, the victims would obtain reparations. In the process, the perpetrators would provide, and the

those South Africans who were not part of the struggle have begun to internalize the same spirit. Although racism certainly existed during the struggle against apartheid and remains in South Africa today, the society's strong belief in nonracialism has allowed individual South Africans of all ethnic designations the freedom to believe, in the words of Helen Kies, "We Are One Human Race. There Are No Superior, No Inferior, Races."⁵³

While the civil rights movement in the United States had elements of nonracialism,⁵⁴ the struggle for racial equality in America was never structured in nonracialist terms. Unlike the South Africans, who disavowed racial division in the interest of nonracialist equality, Americans, including those who fought for civil rights, grounded their struggle in racial separatism.⁵⁵ Intended to awaken the black consciousness,⁵⁶ this separatist approach has resulted in continued racialism.

Paul Gilroy's book, *Against Race*,⁵⁷ explains the continued race ideology in the United States, which honors racialism despite the hybrid American reality and the commercialization of black culture.⁵⁸ Gilroy's analysis addresses both white racism and black separation.⁵⁹ This analysis is important to a discussion of nonracialism because it prevents one from losing sight of prevailing racism, evident in overt public hate crimes, hate in academia,⁶⁰ and colorblindness used to

nation would receive, information that would help write its own history and thereby lay the foundation for its future.").

⁵³ WIEDER, *supra* note 11, at 22. Pam Hicks, a teacher in South Africa, exhibited this mentality, explaining that she was uncomfortable being identified as a white person teaching in a coloured school: "It was that kind of identification that we were working to destroy. In teachers' organizations we defined ourselves functionally according to which department's schools we worked in. That was the significant thing." *Id.* at 87. Hicks's colleagues accepted her as a comrade in the fight against apartheid. *Id.* In anti-apartheid South Africa, nonracialism ruled; people who resisted apartheid were not racially defined.

⁵⁴ Martin Luther King expressed the importance of nonracialism on several occasions. See RICHARD D. KAHLENBERG, *THE REMEDY: RACE, CLASS, AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION* 10 (1996) (explaining that Martin Luther King argued for nonracial ways to remedy past discrimination, instead of arguing for racial preferences); *A CALL TO CONSCIENCE: THE LANDMARK SPEECHES OF DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.* (Clayborne Carson & Kris Shepard eds., 2001).

⁵⁵ See, e.g., CLAYBORNE CARSON, *IN STRUGGLE: SNCC AND THE BLACK AWAKENING OF THE 1960s* at 3, 191–211 (recounting the decision by black activists to promote black separatism, rather than an interracial civil rights movement); *BEYOND THE COLOR LINE*, *supra* note 13, at 3–4 (suggesting that the decision to afford racial preferences—i.e., affirmative action—set the stage for a race-conscious form of equality).

⁵⁶ See CARSON, *supra* note 55, at 2, 192.

⁵⁷ GILROY, *supra* note 15.

⁵⁸ See *id.* at 207–37.

⁵⁹ See *id.*

⁶⁰ For an example of continued racism in academia, see RICHARD HERNSTEIN & CHARLES MURRAY, *THE BELL CURVE* 472–73 (1994).

disassemble school integration.⁶¹ Thus, although some academics assert that racism no longer exists in America⁶² and note the growing black middle class as proof of this lack of continued discrimination,⁶³ they ignore the increasing number of blacks living below the poverty line⁶⁴ and the increasing number of black children attending schools that are not only segregated,⁶⁵ but fail to represent the “equal” part of “separate but equal.”⁶⁶

While it is clear that white racism is the major cause of continued racialism in the United States, serious consideration of “raciology”⁶⁷ also demands an analysis of racialism amidst those fighting racism. Gilroy offers several reasons why many American civil rights advocates did not adopt a nonracialist approach, including the belief that separatism would foster solidarity and community among the oppressed and the use of race as a “currency” through which to accrue privilege.⁶⁸ More important to Gilroy, however, is that racialism represents a continuing racism that hurts everyone. Gilroy presents a plea that invokes discussion of racialism and school segregation in the United States:

⁶¹ MICA POLLOCK, *COLORMUTE: RACE TALK DILEMMAS IN AN AMERICAN SCHOOL* 140–46 (2004).

⁶² *Cf.*, e.g., Jamie L. Wacks, *A Proposal for Community-Based Racial Reconciliation in the United States through Personal Stories*, 7 VA. J. SOC. POL'Y & L. 195, 214 (2000) (arguing that [p]ublic acknowledgment of the phenomenon that many people dismiss racism as no longer a factor which affects the socio-economic status of minorities, even though racism is a factor, will convey the message that minorities should not engage in self-blame and non-minorities should not use race as a proxy for ability

(citations omitted)).

⁶³ *See*, e.g., Michel Rosenfeld, *Hate Speech in Constitutional Jurisprudence: A Comparative Analysis*, 24 CARDOZO L. REV. 1523, 1540 (2003) (relaying anecdote of hate-speech used to “dissuade members of [the] growing black middle class from moving into white neighborhoods”).

⁶⁴ *See* U.S. Census Bureau, *Historical Poverty Tables*, tbl. 24, at <http://www.census.gov/hhes/poverty/histpov/hstpov24.html> (last modified Aug. 26, 2004) (displaying gradual increase between 2000 and 2003 in poverty rate among the black community—defined as “black alone or in combination”—from 22.5% to 24.3%).

⁶⁵ *See* Gary Orfield, *The Resegregation of Our Nation's Schools: A Troubling Trend*, C.R. J., Fall 1999, at 8, 10 (labeling as “resegregation decisions” Supreme Court decisions from 1991 to 1995 holding that the desegregation orders of *Brown* were temporary, “authoriz[ing] piecemeal dismantling of desegregation plans,” and rejecting a lower court’s efforts at desegregation through magnet schools).

⁶⁶ *See id.* (“[T]here is considerable evidence that the resegregated schools of the nineties are profoundly unequal.”).

⁶⁷ “Raciology” is Paul Gilroy’s term for American and British societies’ practice of defining social, political, economic, and cultural issues in terms of race. *See* GILROY, *supra* note 15, at 12.

⁶⁸ *See id.* at 12–13. Gilroy critically referred to this latter reason as the “currency of race.” *See id.* at 12. This concept corresponds with the writings of Franz Fanon and South African I. B. Tabata on the use of race by some colonials to accrue privilege. *See* FRANZ FANON, *BLACK SKIN WHITE MASKS* (1967); I. B. TABATA, *EDUCATION FOR BARBARISM IN SOUTH AFRICA* (1960).

I am suggesting that the only appropriate response to this uncertainty is to demand liberation not from white supremacy alone, however urgently that is required, but from all racializing and racialogical thought, from racialized seeing, racialized thinking, and racialized thinking about thinking. There is one other overriding issue associated with these utopian aspirations. However reluctant we may feel to take the step of renouncing "race" as part of an attempt to bring political culture back to life, this course must be considered because it seems to represent the only *ethical* response to the conspicuous wrongs that raciologies continue to solicit and sanction.⁶⁹

In the new South Africa, raciology is not prevalent. In the United States, however, raciology is overwhelming, although sometimes silent. America has passed the proper laws requiring our children to attend school together, but still they do not. Issues of class and power are ever present, and although laws have been passed that have definitely made a difference, our tone and our spirit still define camps that divide, rather than bring us together. Whether race or class, or both, separate Americans is irresolvable. Defining nonracialism as colorblindness results in thwarting equality, rather than ending racism and disparity.⁷⁰ The United States has no history, desire, or plan of being a nonracial society. Americans do not intellectually think about the sameness amidst our differences, or the differences within our sameness.⁷¹ Instead, and in spite of, a growing black middle class,⁷² Americans continue to use race as a divider. Americans fail to acknowledge the racist horrors of the past or live nonracially in the present. In contrast, the South African adoption of nonracialism has prevented the new South Africa from defining itself in racial terms. Perhaps America could learn from the South African experience.

⁶⁹ GILROY, *supra* note 15, at 40-41.

⁷⁰ See COSE, *supra* note 13, at xxiii (suggesting that many "jurists, politicians, and others . . . confuse color blindness with blindness to discrimination[,] which only undermines real equality).

⁷¹ Cf. GILROY, *supra* note 15, at 125 (explaining that the concept of diaspora is incompatible with the raciological concept of essential and absolute identity, in part, because it "focus[es] attention equally on the sameness within differentiation and the differentiation within sameness").

⁷² See *supra* note 64 and accompanying text.