

# DOUBLE-SHOT OF CONSCIOUSNESS

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A "3-D NIA Statement for THE NIA STATEMENT OF PURPOSE PROJECT  
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## **Part: I Haiku**

Academe calls me  
Women of many colors  
I have a story

## **Part: II Essay**

### Graduate School Personal Statement

You do not become aware of social issues until they are brought to your attention. For instance, drunk driving is not a problem, until someone in your family is in an accident. Gang violence is not tragic until one of your friends is injured and AIDs is not an epidemic until your love one dies. Social issues such as these have power to open our eyes. However, what is more telling on our future is our reaction to these situations.

My eye-opening situation began the summer before my fourth grade year of school. During this summer, I became aware of the social issues behind race and ethnicity. One afternoon my family and I were out for lunch. I remember this afternoon particularly well because when we walked in the restaurant the hosting waitress did not greet any us. In fact, she purposefully continued to serve everyone else. We stood there for almost ten minutes as she went back and forth, squeezing her body in between ours as she past to serve other guests. It was not until my father approached her that she finally acknowledged our family. I did not understand at that moment why the waitress was not hospitable; I just assumed she was having a bad day. After awhile, I walked away and decided to go to the bathroom. When I came back everyone was gone and I started to worry. I looked all around the restaurant and then I finally saw them. My Hispanic father walking proudly as he held my black mother's hand. I admired the bond they had created over ten years. I smiled running towards them, but I immediately slowed down after I saw all the looks of disapproval people gave the two people I loved the most. I could not comprehend at the time why my parents' race caused so much discomfort and ultimately anger. It was then that I realized that the color of my family did not make us special but

different.

I approached my mother and told her that people were staring, seeing the hurt in my face she advised me that people fear and become angry at things they don't understand. She then said, "I don't want you to be like them, if you don't understand something find the answers because the worse thing you can do is become fearful and then angry yourself." This wisdom aided me through the majority of my life. Now when situations arise instead of shutting down I find myself fascinated. Instead of becoming angry, I inquire as to why race and ethnicity plays such a prominent role in our society.

My mother's words did not only affect my relationship with others but also my educational appetites. In classes tragic events in history triggered primarily by race and ethnicity captivated me. I questioned my teachers and challenged my classmates to go deeper into each event and to find the reasons behind our issues with racial and ethnic differences in our country. When I entered the University of Florida there were a lot of trials I went through my first two and a half years, both internally and externally. They affected my grades, but not my determination. I am the first person in my family to go away to college. In that period I learned how to deal with disappointments, family death, and being alone. That transition period shaped me into a mature and responsible adult and my grades has improved.

My sophomore year at the University of Florida began my interest in Sociology. I felt like I finally had a "space" to vocalize my observations about questionable things in our society, especially in reference to race and ethnicity. Each Sociology class conceptualized scientific methods used for addressing these issues. I also learned how to conduct intersectional analyses beyond just race and ethnicity. As my passion grew I desired a more intimate analysis with race and ethnicity, so I enrolled in several Women Studies courses focusing on those areas. Each women's studies course created an intense interest in conducting research on women of color in higher education.

To refine my researching skills I enrolled in an undergraduate research program at my university, Social Behavioral Economic-Alliance. This program allows me to gain first-hand experience. I explore my area of specialization, alongside a faculty member. My research focuses on The social influences that contribute to the attitudes African American female students have about attending a predominantly white university. My focus is on parental socialization, examining how parental influences affect African American female students. This qualitative study is administered through two focus groups with four undergraduate students in each. I facilitate the discussion on both personal relationships with parents and influences involved in the decision to attend a predominantly white university. Most universities primarily focus on students in their recruitment methods, but I believe parent's play a bigger role than most institutions acknowledge when students are making their college decisions. My study will provide information for university minority recruitment departments to aid them in understanding how to better recruit minority students by creating both parent/student programs.

My personal background and education in Sociology drives my love for research and desire to obtain a PhD. Stanford University's Sociology of Education program aligns with my vision for my research and future goals. I believe a man without a vision, is a man without a purpose. My vision after I receive my doctorate is to create a better awareness of race and ethnicity in higher education. Also better recruitment of minority students. I not only want to challenge students inside the classroom, but also create a path

for them to enter into these classrooms. I know how important it is to not only research and write for this particular field, but also to contribute to it. Along with becoming a faculty member I also plan on applying my research by working alongside minority recruitment departments to ensure better recruitment processes for students.

## **Part: III Spoken Word**

### **Double-Shot of Consciousness**

I'm tired of being your afterthoughts  
After you have thought through all your subjective truths  
To questions that still haunt me at night  
Academia calls me and I'm afraid to begin the fight  
The opposition, disinterest, indecision, and overall difference  
I am your "they", "them", and "other"  
From the conversations you have at your dinner table  
As you grab your silver spoon and began to eat  
I will never be apart of the majority  
And so I have to work twice as hard to prove my belonging  
Opportunity and privilege has always been knocking at your door  
While I had to catch two buses just to get the back door  
I fight...I am fighting...to stay alive, encouraged, undefeated....  
A women of many colors  
Who is going to inspire me  
Academia needs me and I have a story  
No, my mother wouldn't allow the ghetto to raise me  
But there were times it babysat me  
I am your "they", "them", and "other"  
The second grade trouble-maker  
In forth grade listed as gifted  
Something that could have been easily missed in,  
A class of 35 kids as I try to listen  
In seventh grade your advance  
Maybe by chance  
When I got to high school I was good, but never good enough  
The educational system had not failed me  
But I watched many of my friends fall through the cracks  
As I pick up a paper "NO Child Left Back"  
Was it meant for a mixed black inner-city girl like me  
Or is it just my double consciousness ringing  
I graduate this spring and I can't believe it  
Answering the call....the need....for me in academe...  
I wonder how they will view me...

Will I still be your "they", "them" and "other"  
A mixed black girl of many colors  
With a Hispanic father and Black mother  
Or will you see me...a women of God who fears the Lord, with a passion for Women  
Studies and Sociology  
I know I am your "they", "them", and "other"  
The ones you talk about around your dinner table  
Hoping one day I'll be apart of the "us" and "we"  
In pursuit of a PH.D...  
One day I'll stop and look to see myself through thee  
My double consciousness always ringing  
Measuring my soul by the tape of a world....  
That looks on in amused, contempt, and with pity....  
I don't want to be your "afterthought", "them", "they", or "other"  
Just a women of many colors  
With a story to tell...like many others.