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Race essay

*"Do not ghettoize society by putting people into legal categories of gender, race, ethnicity, language, or other such characteristics"* - Preston Manning

Throughout my life, I've been told about how amazing my country is, “America, the land of the free. In America you can be anything,” that is what people have told me and when I was younger, I bought it. I used to think that America had no flaws, that we had evolved, passed all the wrongdoings and learned from our mistakes. As I got older and started to learn more about America through news articles, television and school. And, I opened my eyes. I realized that although we claim to have changed, have we changed at all? Can you say that people no longer look at others differently because of their skin color? Can you no longer say that others assume things about others because of how they dress? The answer is no.

One thing I have always been curious about is race. I never understood why we as a society decide to categorize people based on their appearance. Especially why we treat those categories differently, our society has nothing to gain from it.I have only been exposed to the real act of racism a few times. But when these times occurred I found them very memorable. Last summer, my family and I decided to go visit my grandmother and uncle who live in the small town of Hoosick Falls in upstate New York. We usually see her once a year because plane tickets are very expensive and we can’t afford to go more often. I love my grandmother but sometimes I can’t stand to be around her because she is a very intense person. In the past few years, I’ve found it especially hard to be with her because she supports Donald Trump and shares a lot of his beliefs. She has also started watching *Fox news* and I would say it has somewhat “brainwashed” her. My father can’t even be in the same room with her without an argument breaking out.

One evening, my family decided to go out to eat dinner together. One the way to our car we passed a bar and two middle-aged black men were standing outside a bar. I thought nothing of it, but when I turned to my grandma to ask a question I saw she had a sour disgusted look on her face, such as she had eaten something rotten, and said to my mom “Look what this town has become” with an annoyed tone, I couldn't breath, I was astonished. I felt my face getting red, I couldn't believe she would say such a thing. They had done nothing wrong, they hadn't even looked at us and she was talking about them like they were dirty barnyard animals. I wanted to yell at her, tell to respect others, but I couldn't. She was my family, and I was supposed to respect her. So, I took a deep breath and continued walking. Later that night my mom spoke to me alone and said “ Your grandmother is a very old fashioned person and there is not a lot of diversity in this town, you just have to ignore her, or change the topic.” I understood what she was talking about, but I still felt that this was wrong. How could I not stand up to her? It was wrong.

That was not the first time this has happened, later that week when me my grandmother and my father were driving to the next town over.In the car, my dad and my grandma started to argue about politics. My father brought up Donald Trump and said that his thoughts about immigration were ridiculous and unreasonable. Of course, my grandmother disagreed with him and they started arguing. I overheard my grandma saying things like “Immigrants are dirty” and “They are the reason that our country has become so violent and dangerous” She honestly believes that all of our country's problems are caused by others. They stopped talking to each other and there was a tense silence hovering around us. I felt hot tears pool in my eye and roll down my cheeks. I couldn't believe what she had become, to be so blind to blame others for your own mistakes. Or to believe the news they hear or read without checking for false news and not be open to other ideas. Overall I think our society needs a big change, and that will never happen if we continue to spread fake news and try to brainwash people to win favor. We need to start a new system where everyone is accepted for who they are on the inside, not the outside.

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