

# MINORITY REPORT

The Minority Issue: What is a “minority” anyway?

March 2011

*This paper aims to spread cultural awareness of the challenges facing historically disadvantaged and ethnically underrepresented groups in the IMSA community and the world as a whole. We believe that with the proliferation of knowledge through words, we can confront these stereotypes facing these groups and change commonly held misconceptions.*



Courtesy of <http://www.biojobblog.com/tags/innovation/>

## Racial Perceptions in Numbers

By: Novi Singh



In both popular and journalistic media, the topic of racial perceptions has become well known and highly focused on in recent years. The number of minorities in public office has been on

the rise, and the Obama administration's efforts to ease race relations, such initiatives to incorporate more minorities in Congress, have shed more light on the condition of minorities in America. However, trends in race-related incidents, as well as polls of the American public, seem to indicate that although racial perceptions are an important topic in politics today, there has been little change in the overall perception of the minority.

Gallup polls conducted in 2008 and 2009 on the level of American racism and the outlook

on future race relations indicate a neutral to pessimistic mindset. After the election of President Obama, more than 70% of Americans believed that race relations would improve. But today only about half as many believe improvement took place, 35% think that things have not changed, and 22% regard the situation as having deteriorated. Among blacks, about half as many believe that things have improved as those that think that there has been no improvement or that things have gotten worse, and among the white demographic

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# A Difference in Numbers: The Minority Debate

By Brielle James

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As I look at cities like Chicago and Atlanta, I find myself questioning the definition of a minority. According to Princeton University’s online dictionary, WordNet, a minority group is “a group of people who differ racially or politically from a larger group of which they are part.” The African-American population seems to be pretty large to me already! We don’t really seem to be the *minority* anymore. You can’t walk the streets today without seeing someone African-American.

But if this is so, then why do I see so few African-Americans at IMSA? Even though our numbers are increasing in America today, the number of African-Americans in gifted institutions, like IMSA, is still very low. I find myself asking the question, why is it that I see plenty of black children running around the playgrounds of Chicago, but as I sit amongst my peers in class I am the only African-American student? All in all, I’m wondering if we are starting to deviate away from the label of minority *out there*, than why are we still a minority *in here*?

Looking at the data, education in the black community is obviously a problem. A study done in 2009 by the U.S. Census Bureau showed that 17.2% of the black, or combined with black, population 18 years or older do not have high school degrees, compared to only the 14.1% of the general population. It is clear that having a higher degree pays off. In 2008, the average earning for those with an advanced degree was \$83,144 and for those with a bachelor’s degree was \$58,613. Compared to the average earn-

ings of people with only a high school diploma – \$31,283 – getting a higher degree seems like the way to go. However, despite these facts, African-Americans are still among the lowest in terms of percentage of individuals with a bachelor’s degree or higher; only 19% of African-Americans 25 and older have a bachelor’s degree compared to 33% of non-Hispanic whites and 53% of Asians.

The answer to why minorities have increased in the city, but not at IMSA is most likely multi-fold. One main factor of this difference may be social-economical, as an IMSA student suggested when asked her opinion on the issue. The African-American population makes up majority of the lowest economic bracket. As a result, schools in the black community are not held up to the standard that they should be and gifted students do not have access to many opportunities. The lack of awareness of educational opportunities in the black community also prevents many students from advancing ahead.

From the mentioned statistics, one may conclude that another possible reason is that a good portion of the black community does not value education as strongly as other races do. For some families, if students plan on excelling in high school or going to college they tend to focus on their jump shot, instead of improving their ACT score. Being raised in an urban environment, like the city of Chicago for example, can be difficult for young black children – not seeing others succeed around them, some will give up before they even try.

Whatever the reason, however – socio-economic, a lack of awareness, or value held towards education – African-American numbers need to increase not only on the street, but also in the classroom.

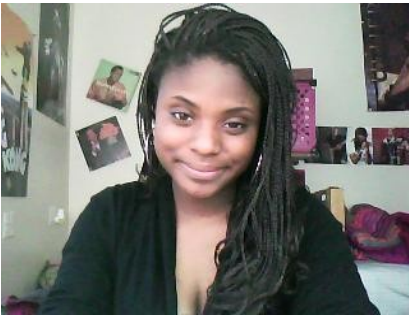
**“Even though our numbers are increasing in America today, the number of African-Americans in gifted institutions, like IMSA, is still very low.”**



# I have a DREAM

## (Development Relief and Education for Alien Minors Act)

By Ashley Jones



Recently, Immigration laws and policies have been the subject of debate. Much of the controversy in recent years has focused on the children of illegal immigrants.

The fourteenth amendment states, “All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the state wherein they reside.” Now, think back on the story of Elvira Arellano. She was an illegal alien mother who sought refuge in a Chicago church for an entire year in order to avoid being separated from her eight year old, a citizen of the U.S. as a result of the fourteenth amendment. After his mother was deported back to Mexico, eight year Saul Arellano remained in the U.S, attended school, and became an icon for immigration throughout the country. Stories such as that of the Arellano family bring into question, “Who should be declared a United States citizen?” The Development Relief and Education for Alien Minors Act (The *DREAM Act*) is one step-first proposed in the year 2001- to declare them as citizens.

The children of immigrants that are brought to America after being born in another country have little to no means, outside of their parents, to become legalized citizens of the United States; the current procedures put in place take several years and thousands of dollars. The act proposes that any minor that is not a legal U.S. citizen, be granted citizenship if they meet certain criteria. The minors must first have visible

proof that they arrived in the United States before the age of sixteen, have proof of residency in the United States for at least five years, be between the ages of 12

**“The [DREAM] act proposes that any minor that is not a legal U.S. citizen, be granted citizenship if they meet certain criteria.”**

and 35 when the bill is enacted, graduated from an American high school or obtained a GED, and be of good moral character. The immigrant minor would be granted conditional citizenship for the first six years by attending a

two year community college, two years towards a 4-year degree, or serve two years in the United States military. After the six years they would then be able to apply for a permanent resident status.



Courtesy of <http://americasvoiceonline.org/blog/entry/>

The bill was first introduced to Senate in 2001 and to the House of Representatives in 2009. On September 22, 2010 the act failed to gain approval in Senate only receiving 56 of the 60 votes required to pass. However, the majority leader of the Senate, Harry Reid, claimed that the bill will be included in and pass with the Defense Authorization Bill.

On September 24, 2010 for the first time in almost half a century, the Defense bill was voted down. Many people view the bill as way to help the Immigrant youth of America become productive and educated contributors to present day society; others believe that many issues regarding Immigration currently should be handled before any new legislation is approved. A new question arises with the unknown fate of the bill: is it morally right to deny people a means of bettering their lives?

# Discrimination by Numbers

By Kyle Glasper



One of the biggest mistakes I see today when talking about minorities is who, in fact, consists of those minorities. When I say minority, only a few groups come to mind for most people: African Americans and Latinos. Maybe this depicts the minorities of America; however one cannot tie those races to the word for it is not true for the rest of the world. With so many characteristics that can make an individual a minority, one cannot assign that term to a specific group. Being a minority is not simply having a different skin color than everyone else. A multitude of factors makes individuals and groups minorities.

Across the world minority groups exist, each differing from one another. Each lacks something from the majority, which results in their minority status. For some, the sheer mathematical difference between them and the rest of the population, like Blacks and Hispanics in America sort them into their own category. Out of the 307,006,550 people that reside in America, only 12.9% consist of African American and 15.8% derive from Latino descent, compared to the 65.1% of Whites (Gathered from the U.S. Census Bureau). However, for other locations around the world, religious practices or lack of power define minorities.

Regardless of why one holds the minority status, a question now comes to mind, ‘What is it

**“Being a minority is not simply having a different skin color than everyone else.”**

like being one?’ Throughout the world the answer varies, as places exist where the minorities get along just fine with the rest of the population like Italy. Additionally, one has to consider the other extreme of minority groups getting mistreated. The perception of those minorities leans toward malice and disrespect. Their culture, their values, every representation pertaining to the group is shunned and discouraged throughout the community. Internationally, more misrepresented minorities reside. Several places around the globe limit and reduce the rights of minority groups compared to everyone



Courtesy of : <http://www.foxnomad.com/2009/12/01/enter-to-win-a-prize-while-helping-support-passports-with-a->

else, for example the Chams, a group of people located in Cambodia.

The group has a specific language that they all speak, Cham. However, the light amount of Chams cannot compete with the vast numbers of Khmers. With the Khmers as the majority in Cambodia, they enforce their own language as the primary one. All throughout Cambodia, schools refuse to teach in Cham, even in areas that have a high concentration of Chams. Because of this, Cham families enroll their children in far off schools, directly out of their region.

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# Roma Evictions in Europe:

## Standard Protocol or Organized Discrimination?

By Ariyana Smith



According to the European Commission, the Roma, the largest minority group in Europe, make up about ten million people in Europe, which comprises roughly five to ten percent of Europe's population. This group has faced discrimination in prejudice laws, as well as bigotry and hatred from their fellow European brothers and sisters.

Across Europe, thousands of Roma are being illegally evicted from their homes by the government. Amnesty International claims that in many cases, families aren't even allowed to retrieve personal items before their houses are bulldozed and completely destroyed. In fact, many did not receive notification of the evictions until they came home, only to find their house turned into a pile of rubble. Thousands now wander the continent since being left homeless, destitute,

**A migrant worker returns to his village, only to find it destroyed.**



and without options because of the unlawful and unregulated evictions. Those who did receive housing were relocated to the outskirts of town into metal shacks and various other forms of substandard living conditions.

The real controversy in these evictions, though, stems from the accusation that most countries have evicted the Roma solely because of their ethnicity. The Australian, a European newspaper, reports

that the French Immigration Minister, Eric Besson, denied targeting the Roma specifically for evictions. However, leaked classified documents revealed that the Roma were considered a 'priority' in evictions, contradicting his previous statements. Many Roma families reported that passersby shouted racist remarks and committed violent acts during the destruction of the Roma homes. The majority of current residents responded with violent outcry in opposition of the Romas' relocation to their neighborhoods.

Amnesty International has openly condemned these actions since they violate European and international human rights standards. Several other organizations have presented themselves as allies of the Roma as well. Still, the Roma will continue to suffer injustice until the countries realize the inhumanity of their actions.

**"...the Roma will continue to suffer injustice until the countries realize the inhumanity of their actions."**

**"...in many cases, families aren't even allowed to retrieve personal items before their houses are bulldozed and completely destroyed."**



Courtesy of <http://www.firstorlando.com/Portals/1/Ministries/mission/Homeless%20Dinner.jpg>



Courtesy of <http://neumical.za.net/michael/?author=2>

# Don't ask, Don't tell ...or Don't Care?

By: Samir Shah



MINORITY REPORT Volume 3 Issue 1

## The issue:

Here in America, we pride ourselves with the freedom to speak freely, buy and sell (within reason) what we will, and connect with a higher power the way we please. Interestingly enough, the one right we are *all* not allowed to exercise is the opportunity to die for our country. The issue of homosexuality in the armed forces, an issue considered “unacceptable” to be openly discussed, has finally been brought to question.

## History of the Don't ask Don't Tell policy:

The discrimination of homosexuals in the armed forces is not a new topic of debate in the United States and in fact dates back to the Revolutionary War. Lieutenant Gotthold Frederik Enslin, released in 1778, was the first American soldier to be discharged from the army for sodomy. Since then, as homophobic tensions

escalated, there have been a number of purges of homosexuals from the United States Armed Forces. Under the Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy alone, over thirteen-thousand soldiers have been dismissed from the military.

Moving into World War Two, as psychological and medical fields became the frontiers of scientific research, homosexuality came to be defined as a disease. Richard von Krafft-Ebing describes homosexuality in his text, *Psychopathia Sexualis*, the authority on human sexuality before the defining (at that time) study conducted by Freud, as “a functional sign of degeneration, and as a partial manifestation of a neuro-psychopathic state, in most cases hereditary.” This idea pervaded into the era of World War II and soldiers were turned away from serving in the army because their “perverse” sexual orientation was seen as a pathology that could become a liability on the battlefield.

Discrimination against gays

**“...[During] World War Two, homosexuality came to be defined as a disease.”**

and lesbians in the armed forces had progressed to the extent that in 1981 the Department of Defense passed

Directive 1332.14 which stated that homosexuality is unconditionally incompatible with service in the defense of the Nation. From that directive, nearly seventeen-thousand soldiers were expelled from the armed services in that decade alone. However, by the end of the decade, the civilian discontentment with the Directive had grown so vast that in 1992, a movement to overturn the oppressive litigation was entertained by Congress. Success for gay and lesbian activists nationwide became a reality when in 1993, President Clinton ordered that the Directive be repealed and a new policy instated to end the discrimination against homosexuals in the armed forces. This new policy in which soldiers could only be discharged for partaking in sodomy became known as Don't Ask, Don't Tell.

## Current Movements to Repeal the Ban:

Private First Class Barry Winchell was beaten to death by a fellow soldier with a baseball bat while sleeping in the barracks. The papers described his death as a hate crime against homosexuals. A bystander was noted to have shouted, “Let him die! Let him

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# Racial Perceptions in Numbers

(Continued from pg. 1)

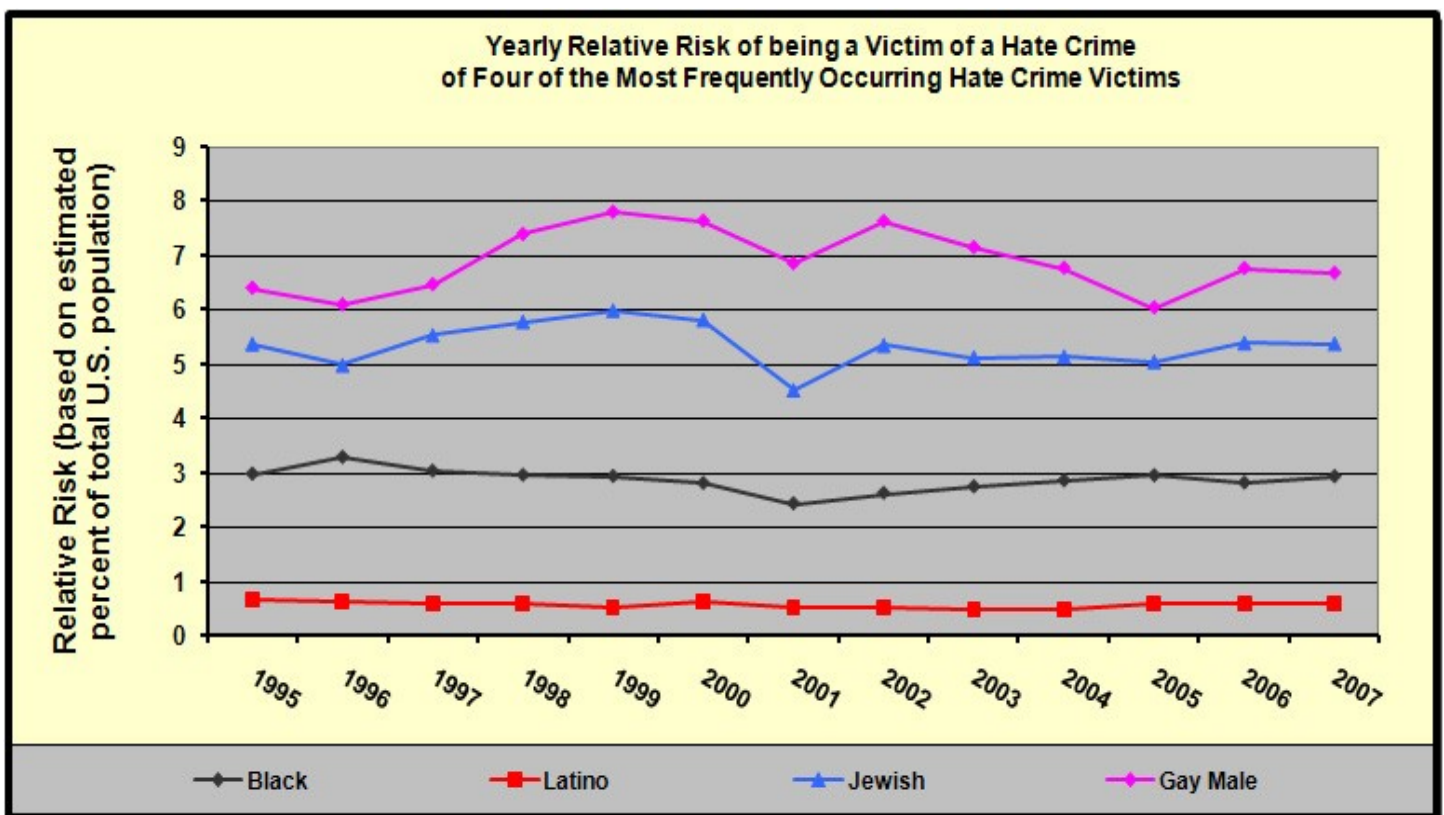
there is a larger portion that think conditions have not improved.

Other polls determined that the majority of Americans deem racism against blacks widespread, with upwards of 75% of blacks, 55% of Hispanics, and 50% of whites with this mentality. When asked whether race relations would improve or stay the same, 56% of Americans believed that they would get better while 40% said that they would not, a figure similar to that in 1963, the year of Reverend King's march on Washington. While the number of those that believed race relations would im-

prove had reached a high in 2008, the number had dropped in 2009, a trend which continues today.

By taking a look at the FBI's hate crime database from 2005-2009, we can see that the number of attacks remained relatively the same in some areas, while showing deviation in others. The sum of crimes against blacks and those against whites stayed constant, differing by a factor of less than 10%, while crimes against Asians increased by about 40%. Overall, hate crimes underwent a slight ascension in number and which points towards slightly more negative racial perceptions.

As shown by trends in America, racial perceptions have remained the same in some areas but deteriorated in others. Though an ever increasing number of minority issues is shown in public media, the general condition of minorities has not improved significantly.



Courtesy of : <http://www.trendsinhate.com/trends/hatecrimes/graph1802.jpg>



# Discrimination by Numbers

(Continued from pg. 4)

This example ties in perfectly with the situation with Latinos in America. Even in areas with a high population of Latinos, English remains the only spoken language, forcing the Latinos to have a hard time finding a school that speaks Spanish. Minorities still do not have complete freedom and rights as the rest of the population because of their differences in culture. Language divides the groups and only the majority seems to benefit, leaving the minority with hardships.



Courtesy of: <http://newsbusters.org/blogs/warner-todd-huston/2007/09/20/mexican-kids-daily-cross-texas-border-free-u-s-paid-education>

## Don't ask, Don't tell...or Don't Care?

(Continued from pg. 6)

die!” as the ambulance took PFC Winchell’s body away. Further investigation would show that the months leading up to this incident were filled with brutal harassment and abuse by fellow soldiers and Barry’s platoon sergeant, Sgt. Kleifgen, testified that, “A lot of the times, he was walking around down in the dumps” from the relentless verbal attacks of “faggot” and other homophobic epithets. This shocking story publicized the oppressive and in some

**“Under the Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell policy alone, over 13,000 soldiers have been dismissed from the military.”**

cases, fatal nature of the Don’t Ask Don’t Tell policy. In fact, Clinton, the founder of this amendment, openly stated that he believed the policy to be a failure. Democratic candidates Al Gore and Bill Bradley ran

on the promise that they would repeal the ban if

elected. On the contrary, the republicans held the majority in the government under Bush which maintained support for the policy. Universities across America began protesting the policy by not allowing recruiters on campus for ROTC and other enrollment programs. In fact, Don’t Ask Don’t Tell policy has been brought to federal court 5 times and once to the Supreme Court where it was decreed that the Universities that are found to be in a state of noncompliance with armed forces recruiters were liable to have their federal subsidies cut.

Following the terrorist attacks of September 11<sup>th</sup>, the war in Iraq, Afghanistan, and against Terror created a dire need for troops. Public opinion favored the libertarian stance as 79% of American adults voted in favor of allowing gays to serve openly in the United States armed forces in a Gallup poll taken in December of 2003. Obama sided with the public and incorporated the issue into his platform, promising to, “work with

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# Don't ask, Don't tell ...or Don't Care?

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Congress and our military to finally repeal the law that denies gay Americans the right to serve the country they love because of who they are” in his State of the Union Address in January. These bold words were put in action last month as the Democrats took initiative to repeal the ban. An amendment to the FY 2011 Defense Bill was proposed on the 27 of May. However, the motion was stopped in its tracks by a Republican filibuster lead by John McCain, falling short 13 votes from the necessary 60 to overcome the opposition. The movement was part of a revised Department of Defense bill that addressed homosexuality in the armed forces, immigration, and Pentagon spending.

## The Debate:

The main issue that is at hand is should homosexuals be allowed to serve in the armed services? By federal Law, all US male citizens ages 8-25 must register for the draft in the case that the demand for the military exceeds the supply of the reserve forces. The penalties for not complying included up to 5 years in prison and fines

up to 250,000 dollars. Therefore, if all male citizens are required to register, why not allow them to serve? Moreover, if a human being is willing to serve and make the ultimate sacrifice to his or her country, why not allow them?

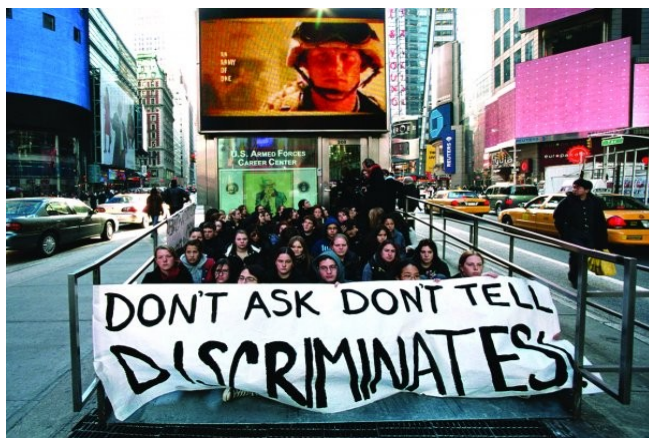
It is an undeniable fact that gays and lesbians have served in the United States Military in the past and many of them with distinction and great honor. Regardless, many ask the question: How can it be expected that the military be allowed to train, quarter, and deploy openly-admitted homosexuals? Without doubt, this would be a direct violation of the fundamental but unenumerated right to sexual privacy of the heterosexual majority. What advocates of the abolishment of the ban often do not understand is that there exists no constitutional right to serve in the United

States Military. Section 8 of Article I of the US Constitution states that it is the proprietary right of Congress to create qualifications and establish conditions for service in the armed services. The response is that by amendment 9 of the constitution, “the enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.” others retained by the people.” Laws that appear to infringe any rights of the American citizen must pass a test colloquially referred to as “strict scrutiny” meaning that they offer the “least restrictive means” of enforcing a necessary law that offer a “compelling interest” and are minimally rational.

Article 10 of the United States Code finds that it is the duty of the US Armed Forces to be prepared and prevail in armed combat should the need arise. The success of the forces is indisputably dependant on the moral and cohesion of the unit. It also finds that the standard of conduct is much more stringent

than what is expected of a civilian citizen and must be upheld at all times. It follows then, according to the Code, that persons whose presence in the force precludes the operation of an immediate and successful armed response must be excluded. Therefore, the Military’s rational process is that the presence of homosexuals in the Armed Forces would most certainly pose an unacceptable risk to the necessary standards of discipline, unit cohesion, and good moral.

The prohibition of gays and lesbians in the US Armed Forces is an unfortunate denial of the organic liberty of homosexuals to serve in the military. Herein comes the debate of the utility of law; do we compromise the liberties of the few (homosexuals) to better serve the majority (the general USA population)? The balance between what is right, safe, and real: that is for you to decide.



Courtesy of: <http://crooksandliars.com/sustie-madrak/dont-ask-dont-tell-repeal-decision-ki>

# Editor's Note:

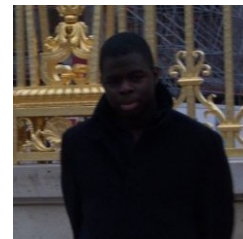
By: Bayo Bankole

Since time immortal man has devised ways to divide himself in order to take advantage of the fruits of the earth and his labor. Many of these divisions have been little more than convenient social constructs while others have been fantastically arbitrary. As a result, the nature of what is known as a 'minority' is constantly in flux. Currently the world is undergoing a massive repolarization, and ideas once known to be indomitable are now falling to the relentless charge of change. Improved communications have afforded previously isolated groups the ability to connect with each other in ways previously unheard of, development has reached places that have been ossified for centuries, human migration has now, again, become a topic of serious debate, and globalization has given rise to prosperity

as well as hate on a scale never before seen. All of these changes have put into serious doubt the status of the 'minority', regardless of how one chooses to define it. Now that the traditional definitions of who is poor and rich, powerful and strong, in need of assistance and obliged to help, no longer serve us well, we must seriously reevaluate and reconsider what we classify minorities as, and how we regard such classifications. We may all find ourselves to be minorities or we might discover, to our surprise, that none of us are.

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