

Special Thanks to Mrs. Trackman and Dr. Hernandez

Minority Report

6

writers share their take
on minority issues in our
community

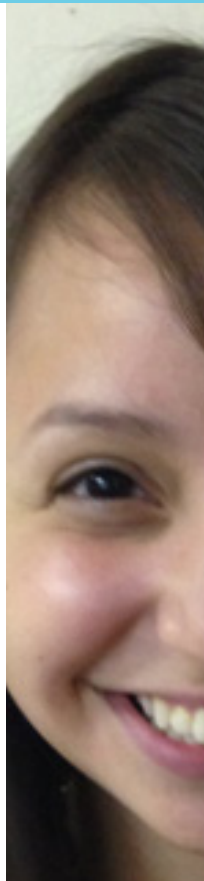
Winter
Edition
2014

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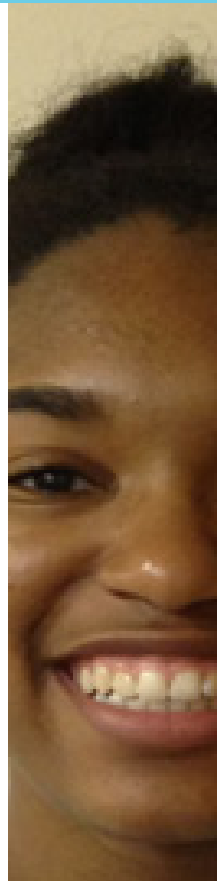
Taken by Deborah Park



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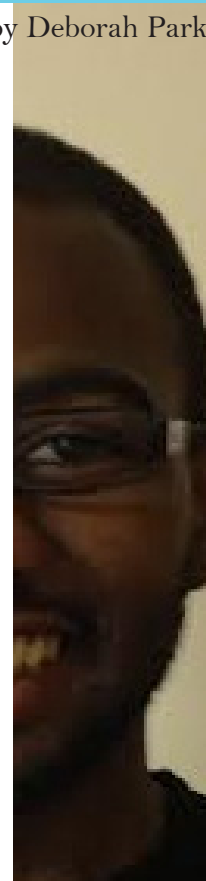
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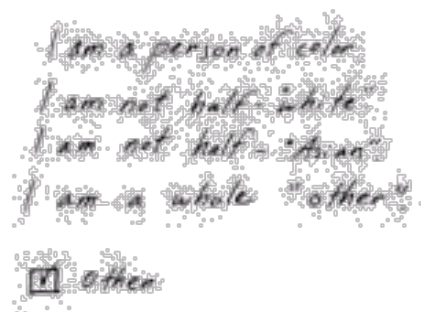


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Not Your Halfie



An image from Kip Fulbeck's "The Hapa Project", a collection of photos of part-Asian individuals.

My first encounter with the word 'halfie' occurred at orientation, the question posed by one of the upperclassman guides. "I guess so," I responded, probably quietly, the shy not-yet-sophomore that I was. I initially assumed that this would be an isolated incident, but, unfortunately, my first semester here was spent answering countless variations of the ever-important question: "which racial box do I shove you in?" Regardless of the fact that for people like me there is rarely ever a box, at IMSA there is, and it is named 'halfie'. I can only assume that this word is an IMSA creation, as I've never heard it spoken by anyone outside of the bubble. IMSA seems to be a school particularly obsessed with race, and perhaps this is no surprise given that we also possess a significantly different racial makeup than the average Illinois public school. According to the statistics listed on the IMSA website, "Of the 51% males and 49% females; 45% are Asian, 38% Caucasian, 8.8% Latino, 7.7% African-American, 0.3% American Indian or Alaska Native and 0.2% Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander." The statistics raise more questions than they answer since they lack a multiracial category and add up to 100%. For those like me, who checked more than one box under race, what are we counted as? More dated statistics (from the 2010-2011 school year) estimate the percentage of mixed race individuals at IMSA to be around 2.5%, consistent with the state of Illinois' mixed race population of 2.3%, according to the 2010 Census.

Arriving here as a sophomore, I noticed immediately the tendency to group and describe oneself and others by race. Terms such as “The Fob Mob” and “Brown Town” surfaced to describe the respectively predominately East and South Asian groups. Friend groups seemed to form around which race you were, or occasionally, which race you wished you were. The socializing occurred under the leering eyes of the borderline hebephilic male upperclassmen, lusting after the innocence of the sophomore girls, particularly the Asian ones. At IMSA, I felt more conscious of my race than I ever had before—where did I fit in, if my identity was not so clear-cut? I started identifying myself as a ‘halfie’ to others, even though the word left a sour taste on my tongue. Two years later, after making friends of racial, ethnic, religious, geographic, and ideological diversity, I finally pinned down the reason behind my discomfort with the word ‘halfie’. While in a typical majority-white locale, Asians are often seen as exotic, the abundance of Asian students here at IMSA results in a sort of normalization of the culture. The result is the need (why is there a need?) to exoticify another identity, and those of mixed ethnicity are a prime target. An alternative explanation is the assumption that as someone whose ethnicity is diluted with white blood, my connection to my culture is automatically inferior to that of someone with full Korean background. ‘Halfie’ implies that I am split, composed of fractions, when truly I am a whole person, but with multiple backgrounds: ‘doubleie’ might be more accurate. I began correcting people when they called me a ‘halfie’, and it’s been a while since I heard that word.

My experience with the diversity at IMSA has been overwhelmingly positive—I’ve performed in Korean Traditional Dance as a part of IMSA’s Lunar New Year performance, I’m the President of Spectrum, IMSA’s Gay-Straight Alliance, and I am a member of BELLAs, Beautiful Empowered Ladies Leading All. Despite some minor hiccoughs, here at IMSA I have been able to embrace all aspects of my identity, and I am a better person because of it.

Taken by Deborah Park



Lauren Burke

My name is Lauren Burke, and I'm excited to be a writer for the Minority Report and having a platform to write these issues at IMSA! For a brief background, my hometown is Darien and I live in 1502B. On campus, I'm president of Spectrum, IMSA's Gay-Straight Alliance, and I'm also involved with Swim Team and BELLAs. I'm primarily interested in issues pertaining to women and the LGBTQ/Asian communities. I'm looking forward to having a platform to write about these issues at IMSA.

Singing for Equality



(<http://latino.foxnews.com/latino/news/2013/06/14/san-antonio-spurs-bring-back-11-year-old-boy-at-nba-finals-to-sing-national/>)

“ This kid is Mexican why is he singing the national anthem. #yournotamerican #gohome” (<http://www.latinorebels.com/2013/06/12/twitter-goes-ballistic-about-mexican-american-boy-singing-national-anthem-at-nba-finals/>)

The horrendous grammar is obviously not the only thing wrong with this tweet and tweets just like this were common amongst social media sites on a summer night this past June. These racist comments were in reaction to 11-year-old Sebastien De La Cruz’s performance of the National Anthem at the NBA semifinals. Sebastien was introduced as “el Charro de Horo” * and a San Antonio native before his performance. He appeared on thousands of television screens, wearing a traditional Mexican outfit, and winning the crowd over with his impressive voice.

Despite the young boy’s incredible talent and charm, people all over the United States were offended that an “illegal immigrant” was singing “their” national anthem. Perhaps their ignorance had inhibited them from hearing that Sebastien was born in the US, thus making him a US citizen. What they also didn’t know was that Sebastien’s father served in the Navy for several years. This Mexican American family could be considered more “American” than most of the people attacking them. The assumption that people who look like or are of Hispanic decent are an illegal immigrants is

*A “charro” is a man who wears the traditional mariachi outfit. “de horo” means “of gold”

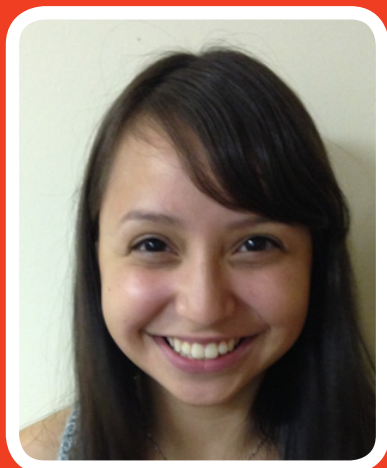
something that is far too common in the US and even here at IMSA. The number of times Hispanic students at IMSA are asked if they have a green card is unbelievable.

The controversy that followed after the boy's performance was covered in the news, online articles, and more social media sites and my family discussed the implications of this unfortunate event. My mother and brother agreed that although the comments were uncalled for, they believed that the boy should have not sung the national anthem in his Mexican attire. My father and I personally thought that what he wore should not have been a problem. My brother and mother argued that what he wore represents the Mexican culture, and it clashed with the "American" song. I completely disagree with this justification. America is a 'melting pot', meaning that the country is made up of a variety of different cultures. There should not be a problem if a person decides to represent their specific culture when singing the "Star Spangled Banner." After all, that is what America stands for, isn't it? Not only that, but Sebastien is a performer, and the mariachi outfit is a part of his artistic appearance. He made it to the finals of America's Got Talent with his mariachi style singing, and it is what he is known for. There should be no reason he should have to change that, if it does not directly affect the the core ideals of American culture.

At the end of the day, the young boy handled the offensive tweets in a mature and responsible manner. At an interview the mariachi singer states, "I knew that one day when I sing, people were going to judge me, and that's why, over the time that I have grown, you don't really care about what people say about you. It's about what you think about yourself." (<http://nbclatino.com/2013/06/13/little-mariachi-singer-sebastien-de-la-cruz-responds-to-twitter-bullies/>)

Sabastien didn't lose. The commotion that was created only made him become more popular. He was invited to game 4 of the NBA finals, and President Obama even tweeted to show his support for this boy. I can only imagine how mad the tweeters were when they realized that they only helped Sebastien's career instead of tearing him down. Sebastien's experiences only highlighted the ignorance still present in our culture. However, we now know the change that still needs to be made and will be made.

Taken by Deborah Park



Yvette Ramirez

My name is Yvette Ramirez and I'm a senior living in 03B. Aside from Minority Report, I am also the President of Alma Latina, a coordinator of LS2S, an ethics facilitator and a member of KI and BELLAs. When I'm not working, I like to play volleyball and hang out with my friends. I love meeting new people and making others laugh, so don't be afraid to talk to me!

We All Eventually Forget Where We Come From

I can see the golden yellow crown
Upon a woman whose skin shines black.
An eloquent white silk gown
That drapes down
From her shoulders to her back
Straight to the ground.

I can see the elegant black kimono
Graceful, on a man of striking yellow.
Vibrant red and intricate gold
Patterns flow,
On the seams, so finely sewn.

I can see the uniquely bronzed necklace
Resting over the daring red warrior's chest.
With a godly green headdress
Made of feathers, sitting pleasantly on the prince.

I can see no fabricated world.
Only rulers of dynasties, kingdoms, and empires
From countless colors.
We have been here once before
But some history gets lost in the time warp.

We robbed ourselves of precious gifts
By forgetting about our heritage.
If only we knew about that risk,
We would know how important color really is.
But I refuse to find contentment
When we are still incompetent.

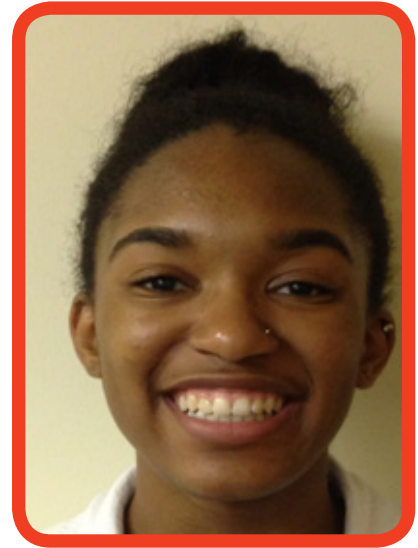
For God's creation is not simply black and white.
Our world should not be blinded by shades,
If we can perceive the light.
A complex spectrum of colors that glow so bright
In the day, and fade with night.

Even the ambiguities of human nature pursues this
beauty
A rainbow found in every personality.
From the impulsive reds
Unique yellows
And tranquil blues
Which blend to produce a variety of hues.

Color dominates,
Yet we abuse its value
We take advantage of our perception
And use it to criticize fellow "hue-"
Men and women with the potential to change this
world;
But we don't see their good
We see their color.

What once gave us strength became our kryptonite
Because we are bound, shackled to "stereotypes":

Black "thugs" going to college,
Brown "terrorists" fighting the American war,
"Illegal" reds paying their taxes,
Yellow "nerds" becoming musicians,
"Selfish" whites sharing their money.
The day that we realize the true power of our colors,
Will be the day that I am content.



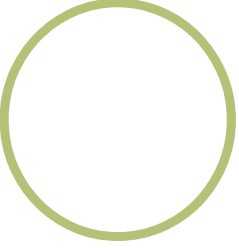
Taken by Deborah Park

Kayla Ingram

I am an African American female who landed on this Earth on February 17 of 1996. I began my life in the city of Chicago. A survivor at the Illinois Math and Science Academy, my active involvement in the community has kept me going. As a PROMISE Cooperative Learning Facilitator, I keep a radiant smile on my face. I enjoy learning about other cultures and hope to teach others more about myself as a board member of the Peer Multicultural Educators.

My favorite quote is "In helping others you are helping yourself" and my favorite poem is "Invictus" by William Ernest Henley.

Russia's Anti-Gay Law: What it Says and What it Means

 On November 7th, you may have noticed that Illinois passed marriage equality legislation. This is a big step for not only Illinois but for the United States as a whole, with Illinois being the 15th state to legalize marriage equality. Hawaii has recently followed suit, becoming the 16th. Even though this is great news for members of the LGBTQA community and its allies, the struggle to become recognized in society as equals to other heterosexual, cis-gendered individuals is still present. In many countries, gay marriage is not only illegal, but the motivation for deadly hate crimes.

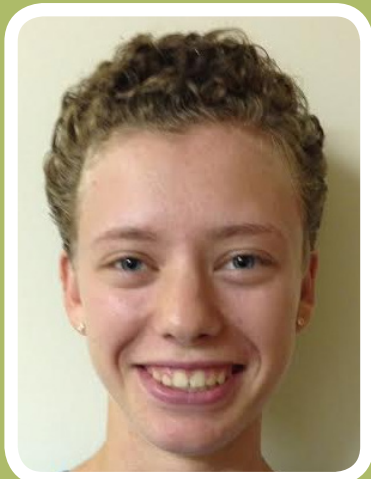
Russia is one of the many countries where homosexuality is still seen as a sin and where anti-gay sentiments are on the rise. On June 30th of this year, Russia's president, Vladimir Putin, signed into law a bill (Article 6.21) which addresses the propaganda of non-traditional sexual relations. To paraphrase, this law says that the spreading of gay propaganda by any individual or organization which aims to form non-traditional sexual attitudes in minors, promote the interest or appeal these sexual relations, or mislead minors to believe that non-traditional sexual relations are socially equivalent to heterosexual relations will be punished with a fine. These fines vary, with individuals facing fines of 4,000-5,000 rubles (\$120-\$150 equivalently) to 50,000-100,000 rubles when internet and other mass media delivered this information.

One might ask, "So what? It's just a fine." The problem is that, even though Putin denies it, this law discriminates against the LGBTQA community and places them in a significantly lower social class than heterosexual individuals. This law has also led to an increase in anti-gay violence and harassment by organized groups such as "Occupy Gerontophilia" and "Occupy Paedophilia" Also, this law and its consequences affect individuals in the LGBTQA outside of Russia as well. There has been debating on whether or not to boycott the 2016 Olympic Games which will be held in Sochi, Russia. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) has already

investigated and stated that Russia, with this law in effect, does not violate the Olympic anti-discrimination principles. This is because the Russian authorities have spoken with Jean-Claude Kelly, the chairman of the IOC, and told him that homosexuals as well as heterosexuals will be held accountable for spreading gay propaganda, so no discrimination will take place. However, the big issue is not over who will be punished for spreading this propaganda, but why the LGBTQA community is not represented nor respected.

This is not the first time that the rights of LGBTQA members residing in Russia have been trampled on. On July 3, 2013, another law was signed which banned homosexuals from adopting Russian children. Homosexuality has been seen in a negative light for many years around the world but especially in Russia. These sentiments have risen as gay people are continually blamed for hindering Russia's already low birth rates, thus hurting the country. Blaming a group of people for a country's problems has happened before. Actually, it should sound quite familiar. The same principle was used by Adolf Hitler when he accused the Jews for causing Germany's failure in WWI and for the disastrous depression afterwards. By looking at history and Russia's past with the LGBTQA community, one can predict that this will not be the end of the struggle for equality. However, our generation must be aware of these events and protect the rights of our fellow people around the world. The solutions to such social injustices may not always be clear-cut or in black and white, but we must take action to halt the discrimination of any group of people.

Taken by Deborah Park



Addison Schwaller

Hi! My name is Addison Schwaller and I am a senior currently residing in 03C. I am excited to get to know all of the sophomores (or as many as I possibly can). I am a BELLA and a Writing Center tutor and I am also involved in Spectrum. I am interested in biology and medicine and I am very excited to be a part of Minority Report.

An Explosive Win for Nina



<http://www.firstpost.com/photos/photos-indian-origin-nina-davuluri-crowned-miss-america-2014-1111483.html>first

Before starting this piece, I'd like to set forth this disclaimer. The purpose of this article is not to attack any contestants, to force you to change your view on any of the pageant outcomes, or to demean in any way the twitter users whose comments were shown in this article. Rather, the sole purpose is to examine the reactions and responses caused by an event and what it shows about how people view the ambiguous idea of an “American Culture”.

When Nina Davuluri, whose family hails from the Vijayawada, India, won the title of Miss New York, she was given an opportunity to move on to the Miss America finalist round (http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2013-09-16/us-canada-news/42113379_1_miss-america-miss-new-york-moghalrajapuram). After competing in the various rounds in the competition, including a dance where she performed a Bollywood classical fusion piece, she became the first woman of Indian descent to win the title of Miss America.

But wait, this is when things got interesting. Twitter began to explode with posts that went along the lines of “I swear I’m not racist, but this is America.” and “Miss America is a terrorist. Whatever. It’s Fine” (<http://www.syracuse.com/news/index>).

ssf/2013/09/nina_davuluri_miss_america_indian_racist_backlash.html). These posts were hateful and ignorant but ultimately brought an interesting point to my attention. If so many people felt that Davuluri did not embody the image of America, what characteristics do?

Many people were frustrated when Miss Kansas contestant, Theresa Vail, did not advance to the final rounds. There was a widely circulated four paneled poster with pictures of this contestant in each with the caption “Loves her country, loves hunting, loves tattoos, real Miss America” (<http://www.orlandosentinel.com/features/blogs/gone-viral/os-miss-america-racism-20130916,0,4789897.post>). From this, we could assume that what embodies being “American” are having these very MACHO hobbies.

However, there is one serious problem with the criticism the winner of the pageant received. The America that we know today is not identified by one culture. Rather, it’s a melting pot of the vibrant dance, food, beliefs and passions from all of those who are part of this nation. This is what makes America so magnificently unique. Davuluri brought her cultural identity into the show through her performance of a Bollywood-classical fusion dance as well as her performance dance. While this performance was thoroughly Indian she is an American, born and raised in this country in states such as New York, Michigan and Oklahoma (http://www.syracuse.com/news/index.ssf/2013/09/fayettevilles_nina_davuluri_is_named_miss_america.html). The aspects that she brought to the pageant, such as her endorsement of STEM education and the answers that she provided to the various interview questions were also a part of her and these played into her victory (<http://abcnews.go.com/blogs/lifestyle/2013/09/nina-davuluri-first-indian-american-crowned-miss-america/>).

To tie this back to together, people will always have the freedom to question the decisions made by the judges in this pageant. The real issue, though, is how these displays of insensitivity and misconceptions demonstrate people’s lack of understanding of what this country really is. So, I leave you with one question. How does your culture and your actions define what being “American” is?

Taken by Deborah Park



Sharon Johnson

In my junior year, I will be a representative of the SCIA, a member of NHS, a writing center tutor, an IMSA Christians bible study leader and a member of the girls basketball team. In my own time, I research in medical work of field doctors, as well as cook and volunteer. I am always open and available to those who need advice, conversation, or anything of the sort.



1930s

Rule number seven of the Miss America rule book required contestants to be "of good health and of the white race"

1984

Vanessa Williams became the first African-American Miss America



2000

The first Asian Miss America, Angela Baraquio

Pictures taken from

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/09/16/nina-davuluri-miss-america-religion_n_3934428.html

<http://www.aogundade.com/vanessa-williams-the-first-black-miss-america-1984.html>

<http://www.hawaiireporter.com/husband-and-wife-songwriting-duo-tini-angela-baraquio-grey-release-new-acoustic-pop-lp/123>

For Our Education

Being Black and from the South Side of Chicago means a lot. For me, having that profile is associated with a lot of responsibility; a responsibility too great to fit into this article. However, a significant part of this responsibility is for education. This includes the responsibility of fighting not only for our own education, but especially that of our youth's.

It's disappointing to see a map like Figure 1 – one showing the segregation that my ancestors strove to abolish. This data has been taken from the United States' 2010 Census. The South and West sides are primarily Black and Hispanic, while the North side is primarily White.

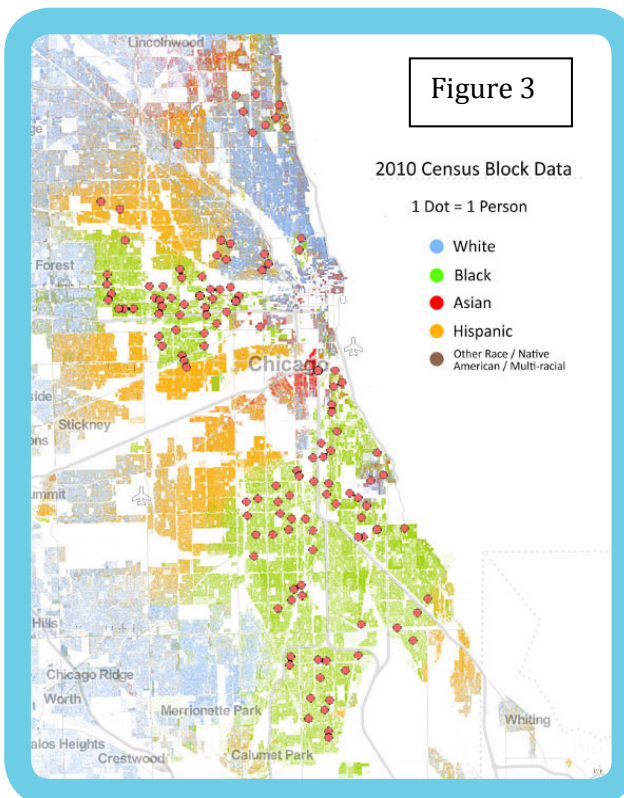
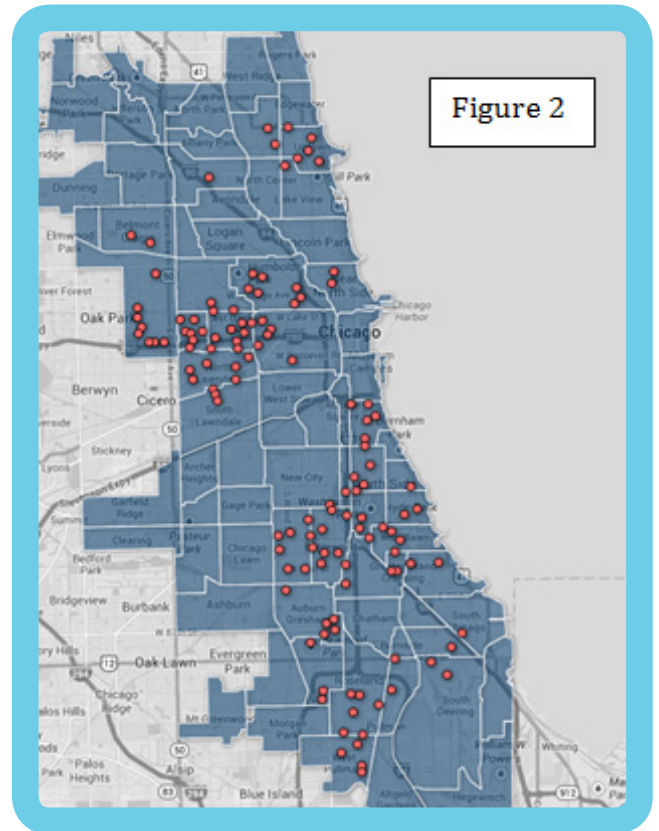
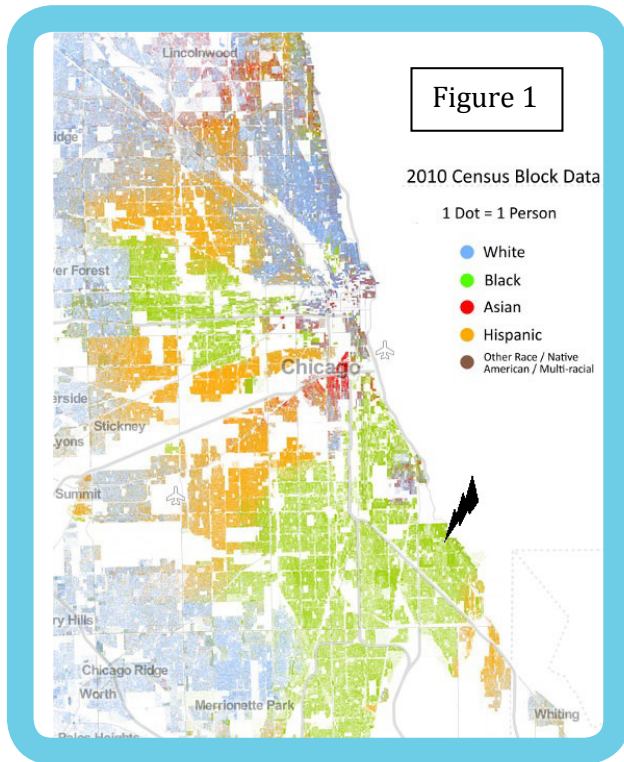
The black spark on the South Side is where I'm from. This area is known as the South Shore neighborhood. With a zoom in, it can be seen that it's denser, as there are a lot of apartments in the area. When I was younger, I didn't really think much of the segregation – It was just a part of my life. There was such an absence of diversity that my younger sister, who was at the time in Second Grade, thought Chicago (32.9% African-American) was mostly black people! It sounds preposterous, but it's not unreasonable for her to think so, since that's mostly what she saw. Our parks, grocery stores, and schools were filled with mostly, if not all, black people.

Figure 2 shows a map of all schools affected by Chicago Public Schools' (CPS) recent school closings, where each red dot represents one school. This includes schools that:

- were deemed under-utilized or under-resourced
- were in need of intervention due to low performance, or the above conditions
- had to take in more students, due to nearby schools closing

Figure 3 shows those same dots, but placed on the map detailing ethnicities. It can be seen that the vast majority of these schools are in our Black neighborhoods.

What this means is that many Black children are short-changed with the worst educational resources, rather than what students need to succeed. It means that they are using text-books are several years old and aren't improving their performance.



This means that their classrooms are in poorer conditions, and are not inspiring learning environments. Unfortunately, for those whose schools were closed, they have lost a home for their education, and are forced to travel elsewhere to build this educational foundation.

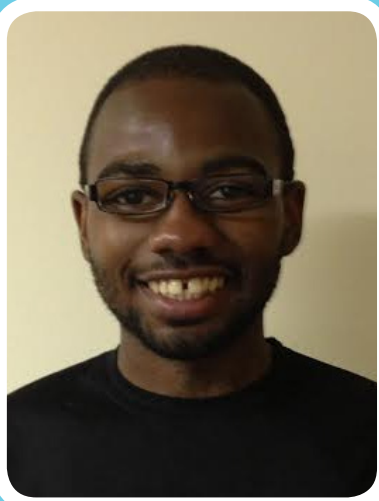
I discuss my personal experiences so that these figures may be seen from my perspective. School closings happening exclusively in Black neighborhoods are extremely relevant to me. I consider myself very lucky to have attended a level 1 school, Robert A. Black Magnet School, from Kindergarten through 8th grade (in CPS's level of the highest performing schools). The especially interesting thing is that it was only by chance that I was able to attend this school, for their admissions procedure is based on a lottery system. This means that I, among other students, was randomly selected for admission.

If my name hadn't been randomly selected as a candidate for admission, I could have been any one of the thousands of other children left to attend their neighborhood schools. My neighborhood school happens to be Dumas Elementary School, one of the schools scheduled for closure in Figure 2.

Thus, it is my greatest privilege to attend the Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy. Being here is something children from my old school used to see as unrealistic. I remember being laughed at because I dreamed of being here. I have opportunities at my fingertips. I get to use some of the greatest learning tools that exist, and I have a support system - with people around me just as passionate about learning as I am.

With great privilege comes great responsibility. This is a responsibility that I share with all Blacks, especially those in an educated position. Once again, it's the responsibility for our education. This is why IMSA's Providing Opportunities for

Taken by Deborah Park



Al-Jahil Gault

My name is Al-Jahil Gault and I am a senior living in 1501 C wing. I decided to become a writer in the Minority Report because I like to promote mutual understanding between different groups of people. This year, I'm working with a couple of programs, but I'm primarily involved on the Providing Opportunities for Mathematics and Science Enrichment (PROMISE) Executive Board. I've also been on the Cross-country team for 3 years.

Mathematics and Science Enrichment (PROMISE) programs exist – to serve the underrepresented and economically disadvantaged population. It's the responsibility of showing our black brothers and sisters that we can be great, despite obstacles we face. It's a responsibility for each other.

Citations:

http://graphics.chicagotribune.com/school_utilization/

<http://demographics.coopercenter.org/DotMap/index.html>

<http://www.wbez.org/news/chicago-proposes-closing-53-elementary-schools-firing-staff-another-6-106202>

<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/17/1714000.html>

Check out these past issues of Minority Report

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<https://www.imsa.edu/sites/default/files/upload/Minority%20Report%20Issue%201.pdf>

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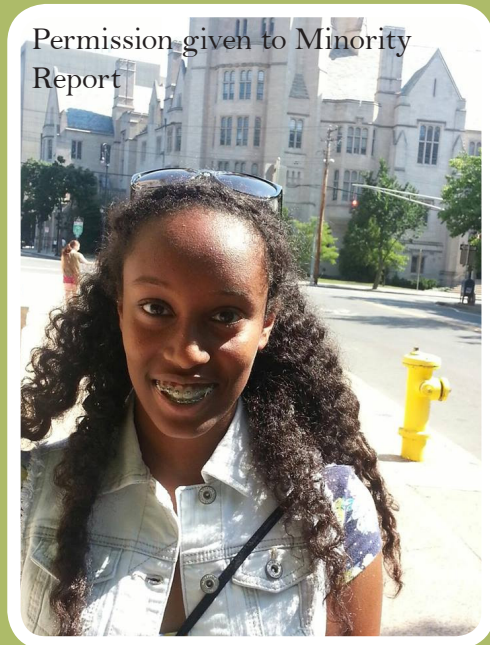
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Meet the

Editors



Selam Zenebe-Gete

Deborah Park

My name is Selam Zenebe-Gete and I am a senior living in 1502 B. As a co-editor of Minority Report, I am passionate about bringing awareness to different cultural, racial, and religious groups. In addition, I am the co-president of National Honor Society, co-captain of the dance team, a peer tutor, and Aurora Leadership Institute Mentor. I love volunteering and have worked at hospitals and summer camps during the summer.

Hello! My name is Deborah Park and I am excited to be the co-editor of Minority Report! I will work relentlessly this year to make an amazing publication that will spread cultural awareness of minorities in the IMSA community and the world as a whole! If you will like to contribute your experiences or just want to talk, feel free to email me at dpark2@imsa.edu and or stop by my room (03B down quad)!