

Images of anti-racism (1)

The Bethlehem Gadfly George Floyd killing December 28, 2020

 *Latest in a series of posts in the wake of the George Floyd murder* 

*“I ask no favor for my sex. All I ask of our brethren is
that they take their feet off our necks.”*

Sarah Moore Grimke’ via Ruth Bader Ginsburg

It’s kind of a quiet, in-between week in the Gadfly business.

City work mainly buttoned up till we hit the new year.

Time for a little “intellectual” work.

As you might have noted, Gadfly has been taking advantage of the various webinars, conferences, programs, etc., on race offered locally (BAPL has done a great job!) in the wake of George Floyd’s murder.

Will be doing homework today for a discussion tomorrow.

Ah, the luxurious gift of time: a joy of retirement.

But Gadfly has recently fretted here that the way the world turns in our manic-paced culture we’re in danger of losing the national reckoning with race his murder precipitated.

But maybe not for another week anyway.

We are entering the flush of those television year-end reviews of the big stories of 2020, and, like you, Gadfly has noticed that Floyd is much back



in the news.

His murder still sharing top headline billing in a year overfilled with news.

The image of a knee [not the feet of Justice Ginsburg's remark!] on a neck coming center stage again.

I was thinking of that image recently while watching for a local program on race the 2013 Academy Award Best Picture “12 Years a Slave” about a free Black kidnapped into slavery who for twelve years unsuccessfully attempts to free himself — a film based on a true story.

It takes the agency of a white man (Samuel Bass) to free the wronged Black (Solomon Northrup).

Sometimes it is not possible for a Black to “rise” on his or her own, though not for the lack of trying. [Think systemic racism]

At considerable risk to himself — a white man living in the South defying the laws of the South — Bass contacts white people in the North who arrange to free Northrup.

Northrup is able to reconnect and reclaim his life, once more becoming a valuable contributor to his society.

But it takes the agency of a white man, a white man performing an anti-racist act, a white man who moves from a hands-off passive intellectual repulsion at slavery to an active physical repudiation of and personal rebellion against the racist system, the very world in which he exists.

Gadfly was very much moved by this image of an anti-racism act.

We can't have too many images of anti-racism, acts which are never easy.

to be continued . . .

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