

Sharing what I know about trauma

The Bethlehem Gadfly Jacob Blake August 31, 2020

 Latest in a series of posts responding to the Jacob Blake shooting 

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Gadfly:

I've been pondering much of the discussion that's been flying around centering on Black Lives Matter and calls for changes in policing/addressing police brutality. I admit to jumping to the conclusion that people should "Just know" and frustrated at "How could they not know???" So I'm sharing what I know, hoping that when we know better we will all do better.

Yes, Black Lives Matter, and I completely understand "Back the Blue." I'm not anti-police, and I have never personally had a negative interaction with any Bethlehem police officer. But I know this: police officers can go home, take off their uniform and resume their life. Black and brown folks can not remove their skin.

Let me tell you about a good friend of mine.

She is white, her husband is black. From the outside looking in, they are living the American Dream, and they did it "the right way." They put each other through school. They are both hard-working, law-abiding college-educated professionals. They go to church, volunteer in their community, donate copiously. They waited to plan their baby until they felt they could afford to have a family.

When their child was born, after much agonizing and arguing, they came to the decision that they could not name their baby the name they had chosen because there is just too much evidence proving that schools and

employers look at resumes with “ethnic names” differently (see links below for context). They hoped that racism would be a thing of the past when their baby is grown, but they couldn’t count on it.

Sit with yourself a moment and imagine being robbed of the chance to name your own baby.

That feeling you just felt is trauma.

Michele

“Are Job Candidates Still Being Penalized For Having ‘Ghetto’ Names?”

“Harvard Study Says Minority Job Candidates Are ‘Whitening’ Their Resumes When Looking for Jobs”

“Study: anti-black hiring discrimination is as prevalent today as it was in 1989”

“The Causes and Consequences of Distinctively Black Names”