

Everyone's a little bit racist, Part 2

The Bethlehem Gadfly George Floyd killing June 22, 2020

 *Latest in a series of posts responding to the George Floyd killing* 

Alison Steele is a Liberty High School alum who traveled the world looking for adventure and purpose before finding it in Pittsburgh. She has made it her mission to help others make more informed decisions around how they interact with people and the planet.

from Steele's Everyone's a Little Bit Racist, Part 2

If we're talking about racism as a set of learned biases that fly just under the radar, then yes, I am, and everyone I know is. So my question is: what can I do about it?

Alison Steele

I recognize that I live a privileged life. I am white, was raised in a middle class family, and had my college costs covered. I could go on, but suffice it to say that there are numerous factors I recognize (and probably many more that I don't) that have given me an advantage in modern American society. That being said, I was also raised with the understanding that it is my responsibility to use my position to lift up others who haven't had the same advantages.

I've been fortunate enough to build a career I love in the nonprofit world focusing on the concept of social equity, working to address the social determinants of health in both urban and rural settings. However, I still feel like I could be doing more to help others, particularly given more pressing current issues.

My last job focused on housing inequality in minority/low-income neighborhoods in Pittsburgh, and therefore put me in the position to listen and learn about issues that many black Pittsburghers face. However, I wouldn't say I've put in much time on my own to learn about issues of race throughout America's history.

I realize that I fall into the realm of the "white moderate" that Dr. King described in his letter from the Birmingham jail. While I certainly don't value order over justice, I do recognize that I share some responsibility

for my silent complicity. I want to bring an end to that silence – my own and maybe others’ if I can. However, I realize the inherent problem in getting privileged people to discuss their privilege (and yes, I’m going to generalize here): we (or at least I) feel some level of guilt and shame over that position of power. It takes a lot of courage to talk about personal shame, and unfortunately, that reluctance to talk perpetuates the problem. I hope to begin down that path with what you’re about to read about personal exploration of my biases.

[please continue reading on [Everyone’s a Little Bit Racist, Part 2](#)]

*At the end of **Part 1** of her series, Steele provided an interesting bibliography of books on the history of racism in America. Here at the end of Part 2, Steele provides an extensive linked list of organizations working on the race issue. Great resources.*