

Your Name

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Common Ground Synthesis Essay

Racial profiling has become a prevalent social issue making things worse for the people of color and Muslims, in particular. There are several incidents reported where Latinos, Blacks, Muslims, and Asians are constantly facing racial profiling because of their ethnicity. Although, the institutions involved in normalizing racial profiling against certain groups mostly include police departments. Police in the name of security and betterment of the citizens stop and humiliate the targeted groups which is not just unethical but also against humanitarian laws. Racial profiling is becoming more and more evident even in the progressive and developed countries as people from underdeveloped countries or struggling economies come to work in metropolitan countries but instead are compelled to face humiliation and discrimination.

There are many incidents where blacks report that they have been stopped by the police officers and other security agencies which makes them feel humiliated and disrespected in front of the other ethnic groups (Laymon). This is also the reason that now common people have also started internalizing the stigma that perhaps blacks are criminals and savages or have the tendency to harm people. Although, blacks are the peace-loving ethnic group and therefore want to be treated in a very dignified manner as other ethnic groups get treated with respect. Every human irrespective of his or her ethnicity or color, religious affiliation has self-respect and integrity which should be respected in every domain until and unless the person is complying with the laws of the state. Blacks complain that they

do not feel comfortable while walking in white neighborhood because the cruel gazes of whites convey the message of feeling insecure or threatened by the presence of blacks. This is quite unfair with blacks because they are being treated that way because of something they do not have control over. This racial profiling could be considered as the reason that blacks become rebellious and therefore retaliate against the unfair and brutal acts of the police. Recently, a strong wave of black rights movement swayed almost entire United States due to the brutal killing of George Floyd. The video circulated over the internet is a proof that how police officers treat blacks even though they are not proven guilty of any involvement in serious crime. As mentioned in the article “ average, blacks were stopped and searched as much as six times more often than whites”. This is the reality of today’s society where whites are considered as the most privileged ethnic group of the world and their crimes are mostly pushed under the mat while labeling other ethnic groups as terrorists, uncultured, and uncivilized.

After the horrible incident of 9/11 Muslims have been targeted for racial profiling and labeled as terrorists due to the involvement of so-called some Muslims. However, it is not fair to label entire community as terrorist just because of the involvement of few in terrible incident. Since 9/11, individuals who identify as Middle Eastern or Muslims have been subjected to racial profiling and arbitrary detention at airports. Muslim women have been instructed to remove their hijabs prior to flying, and Muslim families are frequently detained, interrogated, and examined, creating worry and embarrassment. The FBI reports that anti-Muslim hate crimes have increased fivefold since 2001. (about 100-150 each year. Frequently, Sikhs are confused with Muslims and therefore fell victim to racial profiling. Throughout the country, numerous mosques, existing and planned, have been vandalized and demolished. Certain government officials have denied zoning permits for mosques and Islamic centers based on religious intolerance, treating these facilities differently than other

places of worship, and have proposed completely unnecessary restrictions on Islamic Shariah law in order to incite fear and animosity toward Muslims. Muslims in America are wrongfully attacked for exercising their fundamental constitutional right to religious liberty, ranging from religiously motivated discrimination and attacks on existing and new Islamic facilities to misguided congressional hearings . According to Pilar and DiLascio in article “Racial Profiling: Overview”

“Muslims and South Asians in North America and Europe complained that they were unfairly stopped and searched and were targeted for questioning at airports by security agencies. (Muslims are not of any single ethnic or racial group but do tend to wear specific attire for religious reasons, making them a visible minority.)”.

In order to prevent terrorism, Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump has recommended expanding Muslim profiling. In addition to surveillance and possible mosque closures, Trump pressed for community involvement in identifying suspects and a ban on Muslim visitors to the US. When questioned whether strengthening New York City's stop-and-frisk strategy will disproportionately target black and Latino young men, Trump said that it would. Trump's comments and actions have reignited discussion about how the country's law enforcement should safeguard individuals' rights (Bump). The proponents of racial profiling are concerned with the security of the other people which is justified and acceptable to some extent. Since unprecedented events and happenings have negative impact on many of the things considering international and national matters. National security is one of the most sensitive matter which must be tackled with great care because it can directly impact the integrity of the country. Therefore, keeping check and balance and running people through security checks is acceptable.

However, the entire discussion of racial profiling and proponents of racial profiling could be proven fruitful if the security concerns would be addressed without promoting racial segregation or stigmatizing ethnic groups other than whites. As long as, there are certain set standards which can help citizens of all ethnic groups to keep their integrity intact, security checks would not make them feel humiliated any longer. Therefore it is important to formulate a legal framework for police department where everything from respecting the rights of the citizens of all ethnic groups to the strict legal implications for involvement in serious crimes (also for citizens of all ethnic groups) must be mentioned. Also, there must be serious legal punishments for the police officers who try to violate the rules and use force and violence against innocent citizens. Equal treatment is the only solution for either eliminating or minimizing this prevalent social issue.

Racial profiling is becoming increasingly prevalent even in progressive and industrialized countries, as people from developing countries or struggling economies seek employment in urban areas but are forced to endure humiliation and discrimination. Numerous situations have occurred in which blacks describe being stopped by police officers and other security agencies, leaving them feeling humiliated and disrespected in the presence of other ethnic groups. This racial profiling may be a factor in blacks being rebellious and retaliating against the police's unjust and cruel deeds. Whites are regarded as the world's most privileged ethnic group, and their illegalities are frequently overlooked while other ethnic groups are labelled as terrorists, illiterate, and uncivilized. Moreover, following the atrocity of 9/11, Muslims have been singled out for racial profiling and stigmatised as terrorists as a result of the alleged involvement of "certain Muslims." However, it is unjust to designate an entire community as terrorists solely because a few individuals were involved in a horrific incident. However, the entire debate about racial profiling and its advocates may be successful if security problems were handled without encouraging racial segregation or

stigmatizing ethnic groups other than whites. As long as certain established criteria exist to assist citizens of all ethnic groups in maintaining their integrity, security checks will no longer cause them to feel humiliated.

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1301. F050

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Losing Wallet

It was a typical workday morning. I finished doing my morning routine as usual and got dressed for the day. I grabbed my button-up and jeans, laced up my boots, and made sure I held my I.D badge, my wallet in my backpack. My dad was already waiting outside for me in the company truck. I got in, and we headed off to work. Once I arrived to work, the first thing I did was to clock in before heading out to the field. My position was that of a tool room attendant. As an attendant, my responsibility was to open the tool room and supply tools to the workers and radios to the supervisors. I managed the tool inventory as to how many tools were issued in a day, how many were given back etc., and all maintained all the radios to ensure they were charged for the next day.

That one unfortunate day, after packing up and finishing inventory, I began to lock up the tool room for the day. As I was getting ready to close the tool room, I made sure to grab my things before heading out, but I noticed that my wallet was missing. A state of panic took over my body. I began frantically looking for my wallet and the first thing I did was double-check my backpack. I retraced what I did the whole shift and could not remember where I could have left it. I called my dad who also came and helped me look for it. I even reopened the tool room to make sure that I did not misplace it inside. Unfortunately, we had no luck, so we decided to head home. As we got into the truck, my dad suggested that I should cancel all my cards. We got home, had dinner, and I went to my room depressed. I was upset at myself for losing something important so carelessly and was annoyed at the fact that someone out

there now has access to all my information and my wallet. Morning time came, and I did my regular morning routine to get ready for the work. I grabbed my I.D, my backpack and headed outside towards the work truck. I again clocked in for work, opened the tool room, and continued with my daily routine of issuing tools and radios as always. Slowly throughout the day, I checked places I missed from the day prior, hoping to find my wallet. As my dad and I clocked out for the day and got in the truck, my dad told me he needed his knife to cut something. He told me to grab it from the truck's middle console. As soon as I reached for the knife, to my utter surprise I saw my wallet there, lying in plain sight.

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Shizuki Hara

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Course Title

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My Life

I am from a Japanese household, In a land that is too foreign and strange to my sense

I am Haru, Japanese for Spring, yet I am soon to approach the autumn of my life

Sprinkled onto the Pizza like a foreign topping,

I am that pineapple that some eagerly cherish where others willfully reject

I came from a land where both these items are a foreign feast.

I am from Harajuku, the land where colors blossom and tradition flourish

With the rest of my kind aimlessly wanders, running through the allies

And feasting on the familiar air.

I am from the same land where I was born and bred

Yet later transported in a polished box, seven seas across my homeland,

To a family that has now become my center of existence

I am from fluffy fur and a runny snot, a wiggling tail that moves a lot.

I am from the eyes that shine with million galaxies, with the desire to return home dimming down.

I am from the religion of love, boundless, limitless, and shapeless

My values are affection, adoration, and untamed compassion

I am from days endlessly basking in the grassy field, and snowy days and windy springs

I have spent countless hours chasing after that shiny ball

That always seemed to evade my presence. I am from the crowd circle

With many of my fellow companions speeding to chase our invisible target.

I am from the days spent by the fireplace, mesmerized by the evacuating flames.

I am the hazel eyes, brownish fur, and a trimmed tail

With a red tee hugging my torso with "Spidy" written on it

Playing with my teddy plushie and rounded football

Clamped in my sharp teeth, scared to lose them all.

I am from that faraway land where flower bloom

And pink rains, where the pine burns and the aroma blends

Where on a rainy day, a sea of umbrellas moves around

Calm and steady, as if a caterpillar slowly crawly and waiting

To be metamorphized into a blooming butterfly.

I am from my loving owner, whose embrace has always calmed my sense

Whose affectionate smell has always made me forget

All the pain, loneliness, and solitude which I felt

Upon leaving land with whom I closely connect

I am from Shizuki Hara, a loving lady with an adorable smile

Whose cheers I will always miss upon me cuddling to her embrace.

Like all of us, I am from these leaving moment and shiny eyes

Dripping the liquid of my departure and sadness, sad to leave

Those adorable smiles, those shiny stars, those blossoming petals

Whom I will always miss and maybe wait, waiting to witness those eternal memories

That I will forever keep locked in my eyes.

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Self-Reflection on Writing the Fiction Essay

Growing up and maturing into an adult is a significant character development in one's life. The connection I received from both short stories that show character development are familial bond of sisterhood, struggling through life, learning to work hard, take on new challenges exploring and going through hardships and responsibilities. A short story entitled "Saving Sourdi", by May-lee Chai is dynamic and gripping piece of fiction, which is told from the perspective of Sourdi's sister, Nea. They are daughters to a single mom who juggles to work two jobs, paying the bills and caring for her two girls. In the story, the reader finds Nea and Sourdi to be always dreaming about living in "the real America". The girls had moved from place to place all their lives in hopes to find a place where they could live comfortably and be a family: "When we moved to South Dakota, I thought we'd find the real America, the one where we were supposed to be, not the hot sweaty" (Chai 121). The point connects with Sourdi's transformation into an adult faster than her younger sister can grasp.

The first true test of sisterhood was demonstrated at the beginning of the story where the bond between Nea and Sourdi was unbreakable, something they believed would never change. While the girls were working at their family restaurant one night, there was an incident. Few male customers got drunk and became belligerent. The situation escalated to the point where one man grabbed Sourdi tightly and would not let go. The girls were terrified. Their mom was not there, and the girls were clueless on how to properly handle the situation.

Nea reacted based on her first instinct. She grabbed a knife and stabbed the man in the arm: “I was trying to protect you” Nea exclaims (Chai 123). This shows just how far Nea was willing to go and protect her sister showing the bond and some responsibility she puts on herself to protect her sister.

Another point that I found relatable was the bond between the girls where they were close with each other while growing up. They would tell each other everything and created an inseparable bond: “I’d climb into Sourdi’s bed, claiming that I couldn’t sleep, curling into a ball beside my older sister” (Chai, 123). They spent several nights whispering to each other, showing that bond and being as close as the typical sisters would be telling each other secrets, expressing their emotions about kids at school, or even how their day went. They loved spending time together and being around one another.

Sourdi's character started to change as she grew, a change that also became noticeable to her sister Nea. Nea began to notice a change in Sourdi as she began to grow older and mature into a teenager. She started dating and grew feelings for a boy named Duke. He was first introduced to Nea while he was working at the family’s restaurant. Nea was even a witness to Sourdi’s first kiss with Duke. Sourdi was not embarrassed to have her younger sister around when she was spending time with her boyfriend. Most older sisters would never want to have their younger sister around especially when they’re on a date which again demonstrates how close the girls were and how they were open to share their experiences with one another.

Things suddenly took a turn for the worst when Sourdi got married to an evil man. He started abusing her sister. Nea had her suspicions from the start, but her assumptions grew into the truth. Nea began to realize that things were serious between Sourdi and her husband. Nea barely spoke to her sister for months which was the longest they had gone without

speaking to each other. Nea grew angry when she realized her sister's husband started to answer her phone for her. This totally threw her off. She was suspicious before, but this only fueled her fire even more: "The next morning, Sunday, I called first thing, but then he picked up, my sister's husband" (Chai 128). Considering that Sourdi was not able to answer her phone, immediately triggered Nea to know something was not right.

After arriving at Sourdi's home, Nea and Duke were shocked by what they saw. Sourdi had a bruise on her face and the remains of a black eye. Nea was in utter shock when she arrived: "I couldn't believe how dense my sister had become. We used to be able to communicate without words" (Chai 132). Sourdi has grown and transformed into an adult right before Nea's eyes. It appears Nea was not ready for her sister to grow up and essentially leave her behind. She most likely believed that she would continue to be close with her sister forever. Realistically this is not always true. The girl's mother mentioned to Nea that Sourdi is an adult, and she is not coming back to live with them: "She's a married woman. She has her own family now" (Chai 129).

According to the article by Julie Beck, there are several different ways to determine when an individual becomes an adult. One of the most common responses to this question is when someone has children. In the article, Beck mentions "The Big Three Criteria". The three traits that an adult should possess are taking responsibility for self, making decisions on their own, and finally being financially independent: "It's not that you can't be an adult unless you have kids. But for people who do, it often seems to be that flip-the-switch moment" (Beck). This can be related to Sourdi's situation. She was young when she got married and began to start her own family. In her families' eyes, she was considered an adult. They believed that once she got married and started a family of her own, she was now an adult.

Furthermore, the bond between two sisters is always believed to be unbreakable. No matter what sisters go through, they can always return to each other and know they are there for life. Unfortunately, this was not true in this short story. The girls were inseparable at the beginning of the story, then at the end of the story they were barely speaking and ended it on rough terms. Sourdi changed her whole perspective on her family at the end of the story. She had always been so close with her sister Nea, and they told each other everything. This story demonstrates how one person can easily affect another and their relationships. Also, how important it is to love and care for our loved ones while we have them.

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Creative Story

The room was covered in the deafening silence as the loud raindrops were desperately tapping on the window pane, struggling to break the voiceless vacuum; while two figures sat in front of each other; one with empty eyes and mind and the other filled with empathy and determination.

“Good to see you again Asma. Can you tell me how you feel today?”, the lady clad in white overalls took the first step to break the ice in the room.

Feeling? The word sounded alien to Asma who just sat there with an unfocused gaze; eyes desperate to find an anchor of interest. No matter how hard she thought, she was unable to remember the last time she felt something. It was as if she was trapped in a limbo where chaotic screams were buried, desperate to surface yet not even a single wave of emotion was there to disturb the sea of emptiness inside her.

“I don't remember”. It was a struggle, even to voice words now.

“Don't remember what?”, the lady questioned with furrowed brows as if she was unable to catch the context of her words.

“I don't remember how I feel doc. I don't even remember why I am here”, Asma replied with a confused voice as if she was trying to make sense of her surroundings.

“You know that you can always talk about anything with me. Right? I am here to help. Please let me help you”, the lady’s voice was sincere with a hint of desperation. It has been months with them sitting in front of each other, every other week, with silence being their constant companion.

Asma was not ready to talk, and the doctor was not willing to give. Both were stubborn in their own way.

“How can you help me doc, when even I am not sure of what’s wrong with me?” Asma gave her a skeptical gaze with a hint of annoyance in her voice.

“You’d be surprised how sometimes others are better at understanding the pains that we ourselves are unable to acknowledge”, the lady replied while giving Asma’s hand a gentle press, an assuring gesture to keep going.

Asma flinching and harshly rejecting her physical gesture was not what something she had expected. It was the very first time they ever had a physical interaction, and the doctor was to surprise to see the ragged breaths and hysteric eyes of the person, who always showed up with empty gaze.

“Asma, dear! Can you hear me. Focus on my voice. Calm down”, she tried to coax the hyperventilating woman in front of her, careful not to touch her. But Asma was no longer there with her in the room. The sea of thoughts was no longer calm. The emptiness that had enveloped her for months abandoned her without any warning and she was left with gasping for air, trying to get rid of the dirty touches and hushed whispers that was all over her suddenly.

Her mind took her back to the nightmare, she desperately wanted to forget. Loud horns, bustling cars, empty roads, black and yellow stripes, “it will be 150 Rs”... her ears were

ringing with untamed voices that she desperately wanted to tune out. Unfortunately, the remote control was no longer in her hands.

Was that her mistake? Dreaming? Thinking about her life? The nights can be cruel, and the vultures that lurk during that darkness can be vicious. Maybe that was why she failed to capture the dark gaze lurking for too long, in the rearview mirror. How did she not notice the rattling breaths as the car sped... not to her destination but towards her nightmare.

The skin is sensitive, they say but physical scars are easier to heal. What about the wounds left open and burning on one's sanity? How to cure something that cannot be seen and too intangible to touch. What's there to fight over when the battle was never fair to begin with? How to continue existing when breaths no longer carry any weight of life?

"..ma, Asma? Focus on my voice dear. Break out it. Look at me dear", the desperate voice of the psychologist invaded her nightmare as she slowly started breaking free from her trance.

"You are here. Breathe. Pay attention to my voice for the moment and nothing else. I know you can do this", the doctor demonstrated deep breathing to encourage her to follow her steps.

"There you go. Keep breathing", the lady encouraged Asma who was slowly coming back to her sense.

"Are you with me now?", the lady questioned Asma with concern visible in her voice.

"Y..yes. I am sorry for earlier", Asma replied with shaky breaths, her body softly trembling from the aftershocks of her sudden breakdown.

"It's okay if you do not want to talk about it for now. But know that unless you won't let go of the pain, you will stay trapped in it", the lady assured with a gentle smile.

“what’s the point of letting go, when there is nothing else left for me to seek?” Asma replied in a broken voice.

“As long as you are breathing, there is always a purpose in it. Meanings don’t present themselves willingly. You must actively seek your reason to live”, the lady continued, “If you think there is no reason for you to live in life, become someone’s reason to live. If you think you cannot pick yourself up, help someone else to stand. Brave are the hearts that help others, before they even help themselves.”

“How can be of any help to someone when I myself am broken beyond repair?” Asma questioned the doctor with confusion evident in her voice.

The doctor gave her a gentle smile and replied, “That is for you to figure out my dear. I am sure you are smart enough to figure that out yourself. I am hoping to see you soon, till than find a reason yourself to make your heartbeat again.”

And with that the doctor turned her chair around and went to stood by the window that was still withstanding the intruding efforts of the falling rain. She slightly opened the window pain as a gust of wind entered the room, creating goosebumps on Asma’s skin.

Was it too soon to give up or is there still a reason out there somewhere to continue? Guess it was for her to find out.