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I hope your summer is going smoothly.

In our **Self-Development** column, I will comment on the value of being generally educated. Check it out.

The **Elephant in the Room** column tackles a current and controversial issue of racism. See if you can grasp my subtle distinction between being "anti-racist" and "*an* anti-racist".

The **From Ara's Journal** column contains a brief note about seeing around corners. I call it being *prescient*.

The **The World of Words** column comes through yet again with another gem of a word, courtesy of our fabulous English language.



OK, let's get started.

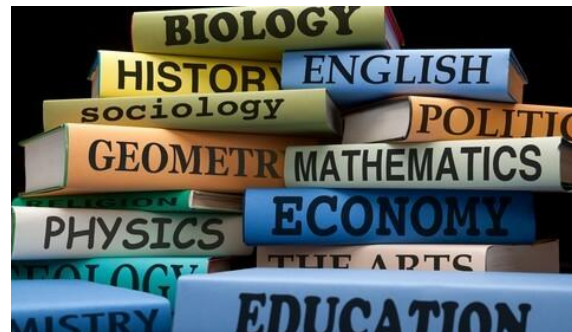
Ara Norwood

Self-Development

On Being Generally Educated

A lot of my friends and colleagues, as it happens, (RB, RD, JG, JL, LM, DP, JS, to name a few without actually naming them) have earned PhD degrees. They are very bright in a very narrow sliver of some discipline. (Truth be told, some of them are very bright in other areas far removed from their studies in graduate school. And plenty of my friends who do not sport a PhD are also quite bright – JM comes to mind). When a person earns a

PhD they know more about a discrete topic than pretty much anyone on the planet,



including their own teachers. That level of specialization is enormously impressive. And yet it is also quite limiting. It's a huge world out there, with many areas of learning awaiting us. Hence, the value in general education.

When I first became acquainted with the notion of general education, it was in the context of college studies that are required of all students. These studies were the standard disciplines that every university student was required to complete prior to graduating, regardless of their college major. They included basic courses in English, Math, History, and Science. Like many students who lacked maturity and perspective, I resented being forced to complete them, as many of the fields of study did not interest me at that time.

As I have matured over time, I have come to realize how fascinating it is to learn something new in fields such as the history of America's founding, or neuroscience and what it tells us about the human brain, or the poetry of William Butler Yeats, or the use of spherical trigonometry to predict an eclipse. Learning never ends and it would take several lifetimes to even begin to understand all that is possible to know in all of the various academic disciplines that are before us.

It's humbling. The vastness of possible knowledge(s) out there tells us that very few of us know very much about anything.

Still, it's exciting in that discoveries of new understanding await us every day.

My advice: read regularly, and read widely. Gain new understandings frequently and apply them. Try to discern how truths within all disciplines point towards how the world works. Do this, and you will be both generally educated and useful to society.

The Elephant in the Room

I Am Anti-Racist; But I Am Not "An" Anti-Racist

Here are my views on racism in a nutshell: racism is at once evil and moronic.

Let's start with the evil side of the equation. Racism usually means that a person of one race views a person of a different race as inferior and as worthy of contempt. Sometimes this contempt limits itself to a silent viewpoint and nothing more. At times this contempt manifests itself in verbally disparaging the person who is despised. At its worst, this contempt leads the racist to physically harming them. Institutional slavery is the apex of this vile world-view, the notion that a person's race rendered them worthy of subjugation and being stripped of their very freedoms. It is noteworthy that slavery has been an ignominious feature of almost all societies on this planet over the course of its history.

As to the moronic aspects of racism, the thought that the color of one's skin renders a person undesirable or worthy of contempt is so demented it is hardly possible to conceive of a more stupid paradigm. There are people who are worthy of contempt in all races, just as there are people who are worthy of adulation in all races. Skin color tells us nothing – absolutely nothing – about the worth or value of a human being. Skin color says nothing of that person's decency or indecency, about their intelligence or lack thereof, about their morality or their depravity, about their spirituality or their secular nature. Thus, to assess a white person or a black person (to use only two examples) as decent or indecent based



on their skin color makes about as much sense as judging the quality and comfort of a car based on the color of the exterior paint. In short, to judge human beings by the color of their skin is to use the most irrelevant criteria in such judgments, an act of sheer idiocy.

Thus, I am opposed to racism just as I am opposed to people shoplifting. I am not a racist myself, just as I am not a shoplifter. It would never occur to me to judge human beings by the color of their skin, just as the thought of stealing from a retail store would never enter my head. As a non-racist white man, I have no qualms about judging a person a first-rate jerk regardless of that person's skin color. But in making such judgments, I do so without regard to the color of their skin, only with regard to their actions, behaviors, and character. I am, in fact, so opposed to racism, that if I found a white bully (male or female) attacking or harassing or belittling a black person (male or female) based on that black person's skin color, I would immediately come to the aid of the black person and initiate a strong confrontation of the white person, even if it escalated to the point of physical violence. I would do the exact same thing if the racist was black and the victim was white. It makes no difference to me what the skin color is of the racist who is harming others; I would act because I am opposed to racism. I am anti-racist.

However, I am not an anti-racist. Once you put the article "an" in front of "anti-racist" you make "anti-racist" the defining characteristic of that person. You make an activist of that person. And you are apt to find that person is on a slippery slope that tends to slide into the realm of racism itself – that person is in danger of becoming the very thing he or she claims to detest. Many people today who have jumped on the band-wagon of being "an" anti-racist as their primary self-identification have become so obsessed with the notion of racism, real or imagined, that they find themselves on a witch-hunt, chasing down imaginary villains, attributing to others a phantom guilt that is hoped for but not deserved. Being "an" anti-racist has become a fashionable trend, a mark of self-congratulatory virtue-signaling, comprising membership in a fraternal order of righteous rectitude seeking the adulation of others: "Look how noble I am! I am an anti-racist, and if you don't join my club to hunt down and persecute other racists, that must mean you are one of them!"

The suspicions entertained by today's activist anti-racists often causes them to see racism where none exists. Con men like Ibram X. Kendi (whose real name is Ibram Henry Rogers but he hated that name because it didn't sound "black" enough) manipulate the minds and hearts of legions to get on his particular bandwagon to join a search-and-destroy mission. Radicals like Patrisse Cullors, co-founder of Black Lives Matter, who claims to be both Marxist and Queer (and who likely used BLM donations for personal use when she purchased four homes recently, including a \$1.4 million home in Malibu, an exclusive beach community in the Los Angeles area) routinely promulgate the lie that America is systemically racist. A systemically racist country would not have elected, and then reelected, a black president in 2008 and 2012.

My being anti-racist means I am not a racist, even though Kendi and Cullors and other race hustlers like them insist, without evidence, that my being white makes me racist by definition. (Do you see how the game is played?) My being anti-racist means I will confront actual racism if and when I come across it. Kendi and Cullors, who both would self-identify as "an" anti-racist, see racism where none exists. What choice do they have? If all they are is an anti-racist, they need something to do. They need purpose and meaning in their lives, and they can only get it if there is racism everywhere.

But there isn't racism everywhere. That is why so many people have to make up phony instances of racism, as Jussie Smollett did, with his fake claims of racist barbarity, which he himself made up out of thin air; or Tawana Brawley, who was found naked and covered in feces, and who falsely accused six white men of raping her (she had not been raped and she had covered herself in feces); or Crystal Mangum, a black student at North Carolina Central University, who falsely accused three white members of the Duke University lacrosse team of rape, a rape that never happened; or Amari Allen, a black

middle school student in Virginia who claimed that 3 white male classmates pinned her down on the playground and cut off her dreadlocks, when in fact, she cut off her own dreadlocks and made up the whole thing; or Sherita Dixon-Cole, a black human resources professional who was pulled over by a Texas state trooper for DUI and who claimed that officer sexually assaulted her, which was a complete fabrication on her part, and I could add many more episodes of false reports claiming racism where none existed. This all points to one unassailable fact: people make up false racism reports only when there is very little racism taking place.

Because I have disdain for racism, I will continue to confront racism whenever I encounter it. But I am not "an" anti-racist, a crusading activist hoping to find racism where none exists.

* * * * *

And that, my friends, is the latest elephant in the room.

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Your résumé is your marketing brochure, and you do not get a second chance to make a first impression. Make an investment in yourself!

* * * * *

"I purchased Norwood's résumé guide last month and it's amazing! He goes through the processes step-by-step and you end up with not only a résumé that will get you that interview, but the skills necessary to be confident so you succeed in your interviews resulting in you receiving job offers (yes, offers)." -- D Smith, Santa Clarita, California

"I could not have gotten my first job without your expertise. Thank you so much! I learned that I had to reword and improve my résumé in order to be taken seriously in the



workforce. I had been given tips from my professors in Health Science and other professionals but your advice was just what I needed. It took weeks of frustration waiting for interview calls when I happened to stumble across your website and discovered that I needed help. Your publication enlightened me with your knowledge on the wording and format needed to attract an employer. Furthermore, your booklet helped me recognize certain skills and work experience that I would have never considered important until you got me thinking about it. Thanks for a great product!" -- R. Espana, Valencia, California

From Ara's Journal

On Being Prescient

*"I don't know how World War III will be fought.
But I do know how World War IV will be fought:
with sticks and stones."*

-- Albert Einstein,
after the atom bomb was dropped on Hiroshima.



Prescience is anticipatory; it is seeing 4 moves ahead. To be prescient is to see around corners. It involves being prognostic. It imagines what is likely to occur in the future as events unfold.

While we are often wrong in our imaginings as to what will happen next, careful study of history to detect the likely trends that have occurred in the past can often be a reliable guide as to what will eventuate.

Being prescient is thoughtful, not reactive.

Being prescient is valuable. While it is memory that reflects on the past, it is imagination that assesses the future.

And when we are accurate, more or less, about what will happen in the future, we can plan accordingly, and capitalize on opportunities as well as prepare defenses against the invariable problems that will surely manifest themselves.

The World of Words

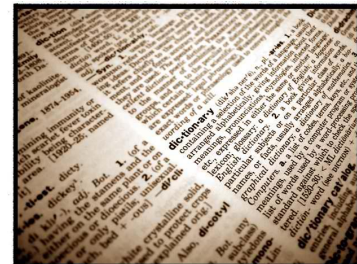
Opulent

Building Your Power of Expression

Opulent, adj.

Pronunciation: əˈpyələnt

Meaning: When something is opulent, it is lavish, rich, elegant, or luxurious. The notion of opulence points to the concept of wealth.



Usage:

- *When I saw her home in Palos Verdes Estates, I realized that this home was quite opulent in its appointments.*
 - *This is an opulent family, with money going back for several generations.*
 - *If you don't mind, I prefer the opulent comfort of a limousine.*
-

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