Is Inequality Making Us Sick?
The House that Racism Built

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A Global Phenomenon

In race-conscious societies, such as,

- Australia
- Brazil
- New Zealand
- South Africa
- the U.K.
- United States,

non-dominant racial groups have worse health than the dominant racial group.
Life Expectancy, Indigenous Men

Maori, Aboriginal, First Nation, Am Indian & Alaskan Native; Bramley et al. 2004
Life Expectancy Lags, 1950-2010

Source: NCHS, Health United States, 2013
Making Sense of Racial Inequities
The House that Racism Built

Racism
• Ideology of inferiority
• Institutional
• Cultural

Social Forces
• Political
• Legal
• Economic
• Religious
• Cultural
• Historical Events
Racism Defined

• Racism: an organized system, premised on the categorization and ranking of social groups into races and devalues, disempowers and differentially allocates desirable societal opportunities and resources to racial groups regarded as inferior

• The development of racism is typically undergirded by an ideology of inferiority in which some population groups are regarded as being inferior to others.

• This leads to the development of negative attitudes and beliefs toward racial out-groups (prejudice and stereotypes), and differential treatment of these groups by individuals and social institutions (discrimination)

Bonilla-Silva, 1996; Williams 2004
Individual vs Institutional Racism
Individual Bias: Waiting at Crosswalks

- 3 Black and 3 White males, in Portland, OR
- Males in their 20s, wearing identical clothing
- Male indicates intention to cross
Drivers Less Likely to Yield for Blacks

Average Number of Cars that Passed Without Stopping

- **Black pedestrians**: 2.02*
- **White pedestrians**: 0.98

Tara Goddard, et al., Psychology Faculty Publications, Portland State University, 2014

(*) *p* ≤ .05
Blacks Wait Longer to Cross the Street

Second elapsed until driver yield

Black pedestrians: 9.79*  
White pedestrians: 7.4

Tara Goddard, et al., Psychology Faculty Publications, Portland State University, 2014
(*: p ≤ .05)
### Institutional Discrimination: Waiting to Vote

**Average number of minutes, 2012 Presidential Election**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Average Waiting Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African Americans</td>
<td>23 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latinos</td>
<td>19 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian Americans</td>
<td>15 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Americans</td>
<td>13 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whites</td>
<td>12 min</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Cooperative Congressional Election Study, 2012*
Institutional Processes

- Length of time waiting to vote linked to the residence of the voter and the policies and procedures (budgeting and space constraints and local administrative procedures) linked to place:
- How many voters being served by a polling site?
- How many precincts in a given area?
- Staffing of a precinct affects how long it takes to vote
The House that Racism Built

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Segregation
Place Matters

Residential Segregation is a striking legacy of racism

- As is the forced removal and relocation of indigenous peoples
- The institutionalized isolation and marginalization of racial populations has adversely affected life chances in multiple ways
Racial Segregation Is ... 

1. "basic" to understanding racial inequality in America (Myrdal 1944).

2. Key to understanding racial inequality (Kenneth Clark, 1965).

3. The "linchpin" of U.S. race relations and the source of the large and growing racial inequality in SES (Kerner Commission, 1968).

4. "one of the most successful political ideologies" of the last century and "the dominant system of racial regulation and control" in the U.S (John Cell, 1982).

5. "the key structural factor for the perpetuation of Black poverty in the U.S." and the "missing link" in efforts to understand urban poverty (Massey and Denton, 1993).
How Segregation Can Affect Health

1. Segregation determines SES by affecting quality of education and employment opportunities.

2. Segregation can create pathogenic neighborhood and housing conditions.

3. Conditions linked to segregation can constrain the practice of health behaviors and encourage unhealthy ones.

4. Segregation can adversely affect access to medical care and to high-quality care.

Williams & Collins, Pub Health Reports, 2001
Where you Live Matters

It Matters A LOT for your Health
Racial Differences in Residential Environment

In the 171 largest cities in the U.S., there is not even one city where whites live in equal conditions to those of blacks.

“The worst urban context in which whites reside is considerably better than the average context of black communities.”

Sampson & Wilson 1995
Segregation Contributes to Large Racial/Ethnic Differences in SES
Residential Segregation and SES

A study of the effects of segregation on young African American adults found that the elimination of segregation would erase black-white differences in:

- Earnings
- High School Graduation Rate
- Unemployment

And reduce racial differences in single motherhood by two-thirds

Cutler, Glaeser & Vigdor, 1997
Median Household Income and Race, 2013

Racial Differences in Income are Substantial:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Income Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>1 dollar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>1.15 dollar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>70 cents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AI/AN</td>
<td>62 cents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>59 cents</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

U.S. Census Bureau (DeNavas – Walt and Proctor 2014)
Median Wealth and Race, 2011

For every dollar of wealth that Whites have, Asians have 81 cents, Blacks have only 6 cents, and Latinos have only 7 cents.

U.S. Census Bureau, 2014
Large Racial/Ethnic Differences in SES that are consequential for life are not acts of God.

They are not random events – they reflect the successful implementation of social policies, many of which are rooted in racism.
Socioeconomic Status (SES) is a central determinant of the distribution of valuable resources in society.
SAT = Scholastic Aptitude Test
OR
Student Affluence Test?
Relative Risks of All-Cause Mortality by Household Income Level: U.S. Panel Study of Income Dynamics

P. McDonough, Duncan, Williams, & House, AJPH, 1997
Added Burden of Race
Life Expectancy at Age 25 Based on Level of Education

- White
- Black

Overall 5-year gap vs. College graduate 5.3-year gap

Murphy, NVSS 2000; Braveman et al. AJPH; 2010, NLMS 1988-1998
Blacks with a college degree have a lower life expectancy than Whites with only a high school degree.

Murphy, NVSS 2000; Braveman et al. AJPH; 2010, NLMS 1988-1998
Why Does Race Still Matter?

Could racism be a critical missing piece of the puzzle to understand the patterning of racial disparities in health?
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Individual Discrimination

Segregation

A

B
The Pervasiveness of Discrimination

 Discrimination

- Getting a job
- Receiving a promotion
- Hailing a taxi
- Obtaining bank loans
- Buying a home
- Renting an apartment
- Getting insurance
- Suspended from preschool
- Purchasing a car
- Haileding a taxi
- Pulled over by police
- Cost of bail
- Arrested for drug–related crimes
- Quality of medical care
Experiences of discrimination are a source of Toxic Stress
Every Day Discrimination

In your day-to-day life how often do these happen to you?

- You are treated with less courtesy than other people.
- You are treated with less respect than other people.
- You receive poorer service than other people at restaurants or stores.
- People act as if they think you are not smart.
- People act as if they are afraid of you.
- People act as if they think you are dishonest.
- People act as if they’re better than you are.
- You are called names or insulted.
- You are threatened or harassed.

What do you think was the main reason for these experiences?
Discrimination & Health: Tene Lewis

- Everyday Discrimination: positively associated with:
  - coronary artery calcification (Lewis et al., Psy Med, 2006)
  - C-reactive protein (Lewis et al., Brain Beh Immunity, 2010)
  - lower birth weight (Earnshaw et al., Ann Beh Med, 2013)
  - cognitive impairment (Barnes et al., 2012)
  - poor sleep [object. & subject.] (Lewis et al, Hlth Psy, 2012)
  - visceral fat (Lewis et al., Am J Epidemiology, 2011)
Discrimination and Allostatic Load

- 331 Blacks (20 year olds), 9 rural counties in Georgia
- Discrimination assessed at age 16, 17, and 18
- Allostatic load assessed at age 20; overnight cortisol, epinephrine, norepinephrine, SBP, DBP, CRP, BMI
- 79% of sample had low and increasing levels of discrimination; 22% had stably high levels
- Stably high levels of discrimination as a teen linked to higher allostatic load at age 20
- Association increased when adjusted for CES-D, life stress, socioeconomic risk and unhealthy behavior.

Gene Brody et al., 2014., Child Development
Discrimination in the larger environment
Arab American Birth Outcomes

• Non race-related stressors can be racialized in ways that can generate racial/ethnic discrimination
• September 11 terrorist attacks an example
• Well-documented increase in discrimination and harassment of Arab Americans after 9/11/2001
• Arab American women in California had an increased risk of low birthweight and preterm birth in the 6 months after Sept. 11 compared to pre-Sept. 11
• Other women in California had no change in birth outcome risk, pre-and post-September 11

Lauderdale, 2006
The Trump Effect

- Survey of 2,000 K-12 teachers (not a probability sample)
- Since the 2016 presidential campaign began:
  - 67% of teachers report that students (esp., immigrants, children of immigrants and Muslims) express concerns or fears about what might happen to their family after the election
  - 50%+ report increase in uncivil political discourse
  - More than a third seen increase in anti-Muslim or anti-immigrant sentiment
  - 50%+ say students “emboldened” to use slurs and in name-calling, and say bigoted and hostile things about minorities, immigrants, and Muslims

“My students are terrified of Donald Trump; they think that if he is elected, all black people will get sent back to Africa”

--Middle School Teacher with a large population of African American Muslims
Students in Tears

My students are “crying in the classroom and having meltdowns at home”

-- Elementary school teacher, Virginia

Worried About the Wall

“Is the wall here yet?”

The question that a Latino child in kindergarten asks his teacher every day.

(He was told by classmates that he will be deported and trapped behind a wall)

-- Kindergarten teacher, Tennessee

Costello, The Trump Effect, Southern Poverty Law Center, 2016
Concerned About Safety

“My black students are “concerned for their safety because of what they see on TV at Trump rallies”

-- K-3 Teacher, Oregon
I have “Latino students who carry their birth certificates and social security cards to school because they are afraid they will be deported”

-- High School Teacher, North Carolina
America’s Children Today

• In 2016 almost 1 in 3 U.S. students are children of immigrants
• They are scared, stressed and need support and assurance from teachers
• Muslim children are harassed and worried
• Some native born black children whose ancestors have been in the U.S. for centuries are scared about being sent back to Africa
• Many young students have nightmares about a return to slavery, being rounded up and put in camps

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- Segregation
  - Stereotypes
  - Implicit and explicit bias
  - Stigma

- Individual Discrimination
Percent of Whites* Viewing Group as Violence Prone, 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Percent Support</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blacks</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whites</td>
<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hispanics</td>
<td>43</td>
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<tr>
<td>American Indians</td>
<td>29</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asians</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>PI/NH</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arab Americans</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* who work or volunteer with Children

Priest et al., in prep.; National Voices Project
Where do Negative Racial Stereotypes come from?
Racial Stereotypes in Our Culture

• BEAGLE Project

• 10 million words

• Sample of books, newspapers, magazine articles, etc. that average college-level student would read in lifetime

• Allows us to assess how often Americans have seen or heard words paired together over their lifetime
## Stereotypes in Our Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Trait</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Trait</th>
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<td>BLACK</td>
<td>poor</td>
<td>.64</td>
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<td>wealthy</td>
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<tr>
<td>BLACK</td>
<td>religious</td>
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<td>WHITE</td>
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<tr>
<td>BLACK</td>
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<td>successful</td>
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<td>BLACK</td>
<td>dangerous</td>
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<td>WHITE</td>
<td>educated</td>
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<tr>
<td>FEMALE</td>
<td>distant</td>
<td>.37</td>
<td>MALE</td>
<td>dominant</td>
<td>.46</td>
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<tr>
<td>FEMALE</td>
<td>warm</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>MALE</td>
<td>leader</td>
<td>.31</td>
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<tr>
<td>FEMALE</td>
<td>gentle</td>
<td>.34</td>
<td>MALE</td>
<td>logical</td>
<td>.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEMALE</td>
<td>passive</td>
<td>.34</td>
<td>MALE</td>
<td>strong</td>
<td>.31</td>
</tr>
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*Verhaeghen et al. British J Psychology, 2011*
### Stereotypes in Our Culture

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<tr>
<th>BLACK</th>
<th>Trait</th>
<th>Correlation</th>
<th>WHITE</th>
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<th>Correlation</th>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>educated</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>charming</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td></td>
<td>ethical</td>
<td>.28</td>
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<tr>
<td>merry</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td></td>
<td>greedy</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td></td>
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<td>ignorant</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td></td>
<td>sheltered</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>musical</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td></td>
<td>selfish</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>

Verhaeghen et al. British J Psychology, 2011
Negative stereotypes about race remain deeply embedded in our culture

Negative Stereotypes Trigger Racial Discrimination
Racial Bias in Medical Care
Ethnicity and Pain Medicine

Percent of Patients with broken bone receiving no analgesia

Hispanics: 55%
NH Whites: 26%

Todd et al., JAMA, 1993
Disparities in the Clinical Encounter: The Core Paradox

How could well-meaning and highly educated health professionals, working in their usual circumstances with diverse populations of patients, create a pattern of care that appears to be discriminatory?
Unconscious Discrimination

- When one holds a negative stereotype about a group and meets someone who fits the stereotype s/he will discriminate against that individual.

- Stereotype-linked bias is an
  - Automatic process
  - Unconscious process

- It occurs even among persons who are not prejudiced.
Preschool Suspensions

- Disproportionate rates of early childhood expulsions for boys, Blacks, and particularly Black boys

- Compared to White preschoolers, Blacks are 3.6 times as likely to receive one or more suspensions

- Black children make up 19% of preschoolers, but are 47% of preschoolers suspended one or more times

- Boys are three times as likely as girls to be suspended one or more times.

Gillam et al., Research Study Brief, Yale Child Study Center, 2016
Bias in Preschool?

- At a conference, 135 pre-K teachers watch 12 short videos and asked to detect challenging behavior in classroom “Sometimes this involves seeing behavior before it becomes problematic...Some clips may or may not contain challenging behavior”
- 4 children in each video
Bias in Pre-School!

- Participants to identify the child who would require the most attention
- Eye-tracking data identifies how much time spent gazing at each child
- Teachers focus more on black children
- Teachers spent more time gazing at black boys than any other children
- Pattern true for Black and White teachers
- When asked which children required most attention, 42% indicated the black boy (68% more than expected by chance alone)
Faster than the Twinkling of an Eye!

- Studies find that most Americans have rapid and unconscious emotional and neural reactions to blacks
- A millisecond is 1/1000 of a second
- 100 milliseconds - how quickly an individual's race is noticed and whether or not that person is trustworthy
- 300 - 400 milliseconds: time for human eye to blink
- 800 milliseconds: human resting heart cycle time

Fiske et al, Du Bois Review, 2009
Reducing Racial Bias Among Health Care Providers: Lessons from Social-Cognitive Psychology

Diana Burgess, PhD\textsuperscript{1,2}, Michelle van Ryn, PhD, MPH\textsuperscript{1,3}, John Dovidio, PhD\textsuperscript{4}, and Somnath Saha, MD, MPH\textsuperscript{5}
The Devine Solution

- Non-black adults can be motivated to increase their awareness of bias against blacks, their concerns about the effects of bias and to implement strategies which were effective in producing substantial reductions in bias that remained evident three months later.

- Implicit biases viewed as deeply engrained habits that can be replaced by learning new prejudice-reducing strategies including stereotype replacement, counter-stereotype imaging, individuation, perspective taking and increasing opportunities for interracial contact.

Internalized Racism:

Acceptance of society’s negative characterization can adversely affect health
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Individual Discrimination

Segregation
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Income
Education
Employment
Under-employment
Wealth
Health
Incarceration
Stress

Individual and Collective Resources, Social Resources
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Income Education Employment Under-employment Wealth Health Incarceration Stress

Stereotypes Implicit and Explicit Bias Stigma

Individual and Collective Resources, Social Resources

Resources, Social Resources

A B C D E F G H
Undoing Racism

Dismantling Institutional Racism
Racism as a System: Implications

- Disparities in one societal domain are not independent of those in other domains.
- Racism is a set of dynamically related components of subsystems.
- There is reciprocal causality of disparities across domains.
- Disparities in one domain are a product of causal processes across multiple subsystems.
- “It is impossible” to come up with remedies for disparities if we fail to acknowledge and address the interdependence across domains.

Reskin, Ann Review of Sociology, 2012
Racism as a System

Arrows reflect emergence of racism and the effects of subsystems (white arrows)

Racism

Labor Market & Income

Education

School Segregation

Residential Segregation

Housing Market

Credit Markets

Health Care Sys

Criminal Justice System

Adapted from Reskin, Ann Rev Sociology, 2012
Options for Reducing Racial Inequalities

1. An exogenous force that acts on every subsystem: authoritative entity with mandate to act

2. Act on leverage points
   -- Residential segregation is one

3. Removing institutions from the discrimination system
   -- Success of the Army

4. Increasing accountability, reducing discretion

Effective solutions to reducing racism must be comprehensive

Reskin, Ann Review of Sociology, 2012
Improving America’s Health
Start Early
Carolina Abecedarian Project (ABC)

• 1972-77, economically disadvantaged children, birth to age 5, randomized to early childhood program

• Program offered a safe and nurturing environment, good nutrition and pediatric care

• At age 21, fewer symptoms of depression, lower marijuana use, more active lifestyle, & educational & vocational assetts benefits

• In mid-30’s, lower levels of multiple risk factors for CVD and metabolic disease. Effects stronger for males

Campbell et al. AJPH, 2008; Campbell et al., Science, 2014
Carolina Abecedarian Project (ABC)

- Example: systolic BP 143 mm Hg in male controls vs. 126 mm Hg in the treatment group.
- One in 4 males in control group met criteria for metabolic syndrome compared to none in the treatment group.
- Lower BMI at zero to 5 yrs equals a lower BMI in their 30s.

Campbell et al. AJPH, 2008; Campbell et al, Science, 2014
Improving America’s Health
Comprehensive Approaches
Purpose Built Communities: Comprehensive

- Based on efforts in Atlanta’s East Lake district
- Purpose Built Communities uses integrative strategies including cradle-to-college educational opportunities, mixed-income housing, early child development programs, employment support and recreational opportunities
- Community engagement and philanthropy
- **Key**: addressing all of the challenges faced by disadvantaged communities simultaneously
- Purpose Built Communities in Atlanta, New Orleans, Indianapolis, Charlotte, among others
Improving America’s Health

Addressing Economic Well-being
Economic Policy is Health Policy

In the last 60 years, black-white differences in health have narrowed and widened with black-white differences in income.
Mortality Changes, Men, 1968 to 1978
Ages 35 to 74

Cooper et al. (1981b)
Mortality Changes, Women, 1968 to 1978
Ages 35 to 74

Cooper et al. (1981b)
Median Family Income of Blacks per $1 of Whites

U.S. Life Expectancy at Birth, 1984-1992

Year


75.3 75.3 75.4 75.6 75.6 75.9 76.1 76.3 76.5

69.5 69.3 69.1 69.1 68.9 68.8 69.1 69.3 69.6

White Black

NCHS, 1995
Improving America’s Health

Undoing Racism

It is not enough just to open the gates of opportunity. Everyone, irrespective of social group and background, must have the ability to walk through those gates.
Case of Medicine in the U.S.

How well did Affirmative Action work for women and minorities?
Minority Graduation Trends in US Medical Schools, 1950-2010

AAMC: Diversity in Medical Education: Facts & Figures 2012
The Differing Diversity Success and Outcomes for Women Versus Minorities Highlights the Critical Need of Making Investments to Ensure that all Are Enabled to Take Advantage of New Opportunities
Progress (or lack thereof) in Medicine

• In 2014, there were 27 fewer African American males in the first year of Medical School than there had been 36 years earlier, in 1978

• In the mid-1960s, 2.9% of all practicing physicians in the US were black, and in 2012, 3.8% of all practicing physicians were black (5.2% were Hispanic)

AAMC, Altering the Course, 2015; Deville et al. JAMA Internal Med, 2015
“There is nothing so unfair as the equal treatment of unequal people.”

- Thomas Jefferson
Conclusions

• Racism, in its multiple forms, is alive and well today

• Its most powerful effects are through policies and procedures that are embedded in social institutions

• We need to acknowledge and understand the current manifestations of racism

• We need re-doubled efforts to mitigate its pathogenic effects

• We need to create the political will and support to dismantle societal structures that support racism, ethno-centrism, anti-immigrant sentiments and incivility
"True compassion is more than flinging a coin to a beggar; it understands that an edifice which produces beggars needs restructuring."

- - Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
A Call to Action

“Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope, and those ripples build a current which can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.”

- Robert F. Kennedy