

 **LETTER TO THE EDITOR**  
**LEONARD PITTS JR.:**  
**A Genius Who**  
**Doesn't Understand**  
**White People!**



By Stephen L. Bakke  August 21, 2014

*Here's what provoked me:*

*Once more the brilliant Pulitzer Prize winning Leonard Pitts "got my goat" by slipping out of objective evaluation that I have been observing recently, into a bit of angry non-objective finger pointing about white American's ignoring and not caring about the plight of young African Americans. I assert that Pitts is ignoring an important fact that reinforces white American's reactions. Many whites wonder why they are accused of not putting enough value on the lives of black men, while hearing no outrage from black activists and leaders about the predominance of "black on black" killings. I suggest that there is only "selective screaming" by black leaders and unfortunately, white people may be following their example!*

*Here's my response:*

**Leonard Pitts Jr.: A Genius Who Doesn't Understand White People**

Re: "What the riots in Ferguson, MO, mean" – Leonard Pitts, August 20 – Here is the essence of his explanation:

- The riots ARE NOT about Michael Brown's death;
- they ARE about decades of brutality against African Americans;
- it's an outcry of rage – people screaming;
- yet, the riot can't be condoned, and is self-defeating;
- but, **"too few people outside of African America really notice, much less care."**

Pitts, a valuable member of the press, doesn't know people's hearts, nor does he understand white Americans. I agree that Black Americans are in the front lines of this debate, and that white Americans aren't there in any personal way; nor do whites understand the African American experience. On the other hand, Pitts doesn't know what it is to observe events from a WHITE perspective, which is certainly different. Consider:

- We are accused of not putting enough value on the lives of black men, while hearing no outrage from black activists about the predominance of "black on black" killings?
- Pitts asserts Ferguson represents "people screaming," and white people aren't noticing.

I suggest there is only "selective screaming" by black leaders! Unfortunately, white people may be following their example!