

The most oppressed group in America

You caught me. I was busy searching the Internet looking for somebody that would sell me a new identity. It seems that no company or organization is willing to go out on a limb and take my Whiteness in trade for any one of the myriad oppressed identity groups in America. I tried three places first: the NAACP, the Black Lives Matterites and even went to the Nation of Islam. None of them was willing to take my Caucasianousness in return for something as simple as an honorary Black identity. I even offered to pay for the privilege of *going Black*, but no go.

Failing that, it was off to the Hispanic and Latino identity groups. The Cubans in Florida didn't want me. Neither did the Puerto Ricans in New York, so I tried the Mexican-Americans in the great Southwest. Nope. I couldn't qualify. I even offered to Hispanicize my name and take a DNA test because I remember my grandmother once telling me that she actually met a migrant fruit-picker in the thirties and I thought that would be enough for me to get at least *temporary* membership in their oppressed community. "Sorry," they said. "We're full up at the moment. We have more than enough new members from all the undocumented refugees fleeing Central America and Mexico to our southern border. Maybe you should try the Asians. They seem to be having problems of late."

I took their advice and contacted some friends in the Bay area of San Francisco. I remembered that many Asian-Americans were being pursued and beaten up because of their success in integrating into American society. I called the local San Francisco office of Congresswoman and Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi for help. The phone rang at least a dozen times before a young female intern answered it. I explained my problem and told her that I wanted to give up my White privilege and exchange it for some minority oppression. This was met with a moment of silence on the other end of the phone. When she returned she said, "I'm sorry, what was your name again?" I said I was a fourth generation of Norwegian descent to which she replied, "Have you thought of contacting the DC headquarters of *Inuit Action*, the Greenland lobby that supports indigenous people we used to call Eskimos? That's probably the closest you can come to an oppressed group in Scandinavia."

I said that hadn't occurred to me because I wanted to hit up the top racial groups first. She then said, "Well we're up to our neck in applications for Asian status because the State of California is considering paying reparations to anyone who ever ate a plate of egg fu yung or has wielded a pair of chopsticks while humming a song from the Mikado." I thanked her and decided against calling the Inuits and instead migrated over to the gender crowd. Now THERE'S a place that's really got a handle on this oppression thing, I thought. That whole alphabet soup of homosexuals, transsexuals, non-binaries, Lesbians, bisexuals, cross-dressers and all the other alternative sexual partisans was really gaining traction. Okay, I thought, this might be a bit difficult because I've always considered myself to be an alpha-male (or at least a beta-male with alpha-male tendencies). How would I even sound credible over the phone? Without going into detail about the conversations I had with several people that represented these individual groups, I can only say that I failed, miserably. I just couldn't convince them of my sincerity. Maybe it was because of my answers to some of their questions they asked like, "Have you ever been friends with macho males or have you ever been a member of subversive organizations like the NRA?" (I answered 'yes' to both.)

It seemed that I was doomed, destined to walk the desolate wilderness of Whiteness with other old men that still fished, drank whiskey and watched the occasional football game. I reflected on the root cause of my problem. I didn't ask to be born White. It just happened. I certainly hadn't grown up with a huge guilt complex about America's slave past. I didn't kill Harvey Milk or try to deny James Meredith a place at the University of Mississippi nor did I support interning Japanese-Americans in work camps during World War II. Yet, I was being blamed for all this AND for bringing the first boatload of slaves over to colonial Virginia on the Dutch ship the 'White Lion' in 1619. This has to stop, I thought. Then it came to me. I am actually PART of the largest oppressed group of people in the U.S. -- White men of advancing age!

I immediately exhaled a huge sigh of relief. I had arrived even though I had never left. I would not have to prove anything to anybody. All I would have to do is show up and show myself. Society would do the rest, and if I still couldn't get the recognition I deserved I would simply band together with a bunch of other old White men and form a new group called, "Chalky Lives Matter" or something equally as memorable. We would march and do sit downs (marching can be exhausting at our age) at public spaces and demand to be heard. If we felt that we were being ignored we would imbibe copious amounts of lite beer and smoke cheap fat stogies and wave our Harvestore baseball caps in the air. Hell, we might even belch in unison to the tune of Yankee Doodle to get attention.

It is time the most oppressed and most blamed group in America took to the streets and to the airwaves to press its case. If we are going to be blamed for all of the country's ills and made scapegoats for centuries of unfair practices then we deserve some money for being both oppressor and oppressed! No other minority group can claim THAT dual title, and it should be followed up with a big fat check from the government as part of OUR reparations!

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