

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Different Rules... Based On Skin Color

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How many times as a minorities do we have to turn on our televisions, tablets, phones, or computers, and be confronted with the [cold hard truth that our lives in this world are inferior to others](#)? We are allowed to occupy the same physical structures of others, but we are not afforded all of the same RIGHTS and PRIVILEGES granted to other races in that same physical structure in our society.

As a mentor of young black men, I try to instill in them what was instilled in me; there are different rules in our society for someone who happens to be male and black. As a result of these different rules, we are confronted with different daily challenges that are not innate to any other race. We are stigmatized based on the clothes we wear, the way we converse, the types of entertainment we enjoy, and the style of our hair. But fear not, all

of these things with the "proper grooming" and "educational enlightenment" can be camouflaged into the box in which we are told we need to exist in to be successful and safe. All except that one thing that none of us can escape: our skin color. Just ask Harvard Professor Dr. Henry Louis Gates. Fortunately for his situation, it only ended up with him being arrested erroneously, and not in his murder.

Because of this negative stigma constructed over time, we are constantly left in a position to have to prove ourselves worthy of rights and privileges that are inherently afforded to the majority upon birth, regardless of socioeconomic status. There are a myriad of reasons for this; nonetheless for us to be successful and to survive we must exist in this box. When will we ever reach a point in our society, where the inhumane treatment of a segment in that society by a societal structure put in place to protect members of said society be met with the same outrage that followed after Michael Vick's ill treatment of dogs?

We live in a society where animals are as protected, and in some cases more protected than black men. When will enough become enough?

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