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Social Food Chain

Andre Furtado

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“Social Food Chain,” by Andre Furtado

My name is Andre Furtado, but I am known here, in prison, as number F84784. Ironically, for the CEOs of this prison system, numbers are also important, because that is the profit margin or their bottom line. Before I delve into deeper thoughts and concepts, I'd like to briefly share my background. I'm 34, from Santa Cruz, and of mixed race. My mother is Portuguese. My father is “Black.” I entered a world that is colored with injustice and racism! My mother's well-off, home-owning family literally threatened to cut her off if she went through with the pregnancy of a Black boy. Funny how they do not completely see me as part of their family, not just Black. Can you imagine a 6'4” 240 lbs man crying in prison? Well, as I write this, the realization of my creation has made me emotional.

I will say my mixed race essentially gives me a conflicted view on life and everything in it. Both the slave and the slave master run in my DNA. Am I to choose which defines me?

If you ever want to know the direction of America and what Americans are into, you look at what America is giving tax breaks/deductions for. Follow the money. A key issue in our social system is that the rich don't mind that many are poor and starving. The privileged racists at the top of the social hierarchy don't mind that many people are discriminated against. The lower class has been targeted to fill up the “for-profit” prison system. The statistics have shown that since the days of slavery, crimes committed by Blacks were punished, and punished harshly. While a specific “class” killed, raped, and whatever else they chose with immunity. What has changed? Rhetoric? Nice guys in nice suits literally doing what they please at our expense.

The problems that I see in society have solutions. But before stating those solutions, the problems must be defined. Recently, I experienced a travesty of a court proceeding by Santa Clara County. My rights were violated, as well as my due process and my right to a fair trial. I

was offered a 3-year plea deal. Because I believe in my innocence, I refused and I was sentenced to 104 years to life for pimping my girlfriend. This happened even though she came to my trial and said that “she lied” and the charges were false and should be dropped. She only said that stuff to incriminate me out of anger.

I’ve personally experienced social injustice in the very thing that is supposed to represent justice, our justice system. Am I the only one? Hardly. I am one of many who have faced such injustices. People of color, lower class and the underprivileged have essentially become “prey” to the predators. Our system has become a social food chain. However, we humans are one! One group, one class, and one race regardless of our color, our hair, or whichever body of water we’ve come across from. In time, we will learn.

There is a group of elites who “know” what the one thing that separates us is. A few of us are sent from God/Universe/Stars to teach and grow and direct us into a closer version of God called profits. The elite hide information, as they thirst for more information to further muddle and twist up that information. We know that people today are being divided by their class or income more than race. Racism will die hard because hate of it has entered people's DNA. To combat social injustice, we must connect. We must protect others. We must respect all! It starts with us! Because if we wait on them to change, we will continue to wait until the end of times.

As I sit in this cell, it’s a daily fight not to become institutionalized. A fight I will not lose, because once the prison system succeeds in institutionalizing one, you are a default, an invalid. I also find it difficult at times to fit into my surroundings as I rarely share interest or common thoughts with the populace. But we are by nature social creatures. As a plant needs water and sunlight, we need each other to bloom and flourish as the heavens intend.

However, social injustices don't end in prison. Some correctional officers are taught or find it in themselves to treat humans locked up in prison like slaves and second-rate humans. Correctional officers, like police officers, exert control and power – displaying the predator versus prey relationship further.

Undeniably, as humans our beliefs, concepts, and perceptions dictate the colors we use to see the world and the people in it. The youth are the determinant factor. So we must provide an openness, oneness, correctness. Better schools and youth programs are integral. I lived in Oakland when I was six years old. I'll never forget the 20-30 minutes I walked to school; I passed twenty liquor stores, which were nearly on every corner.

We cannot sabotage or sacrifice one group of people without eventually suffering and paying the price also. We must mimic a flower and grow together towards the heavens, and we must collectively open our minds, petal by beautiful petal.

Truly,

Andre

Genre

Social Justice Essay

Tags:

Elitism; Class and Racial consciousness; Mixed Race