



## VIDEOS THAT SPARK CONVERSATION

*Let's talk about Gender, Race, and Identity*

## VIDEO TRANSCRIPTS

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# THE GENDERBREAD PERSON

KATIE Couric & SAM Killermann

National Geographic

January 2017

Link to YouTube page: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=89Az3m-qJeU&t=3s>

## TRANSCRIPT:

KATIE COURIC: Let's unpack this whole gender conversation. You use a device, or a character, called the Genderbread Man.

SAM KILERMAN: Person.

KATIE: Oh, sorry. Oh. Sorry, sorry. The Genderbread Person.

SAM: [laughing] It's okay.

I find it really helpful to think about gender in a few different distinct categories — gender identity, how you define your gender and how you see yourself; gender expression, the different ways that we present or perform gender through our actions, our dress, and our demeanor; and biological sex or anatomical sex, the physical characteristics that make up our body that in many people's minds equal gender, but don't.

KATIE: So, gender expression is the way you present yourself to the world. So you could be talking about the way you dress,

SAM: Yeah.

KATIE: --the way you comb your hair or,

SAM: Or don't.

KATIE: --or use product.

SAM: Yeah.

KATIE: So everything as it relates to the outside world, right?

SAM: Yeah. Yeah, I mean that's a perfect way of thinking about it. So, even just — okay, so this is funny. [gestures to his crossed legs]. The way that I'm sitting right now is a very feminine expression of sitting, because how we sit is gendered, right?

KATIE: Meanwhile, I'm kind of man-spreading.

SAM: [laughing] Yeah, you're man-spreading! You're not even giving me enough room to properly man-spread over here. This is the man cross, the masculine way of crossing a leg. This is just uncomfortable for me. It feels like so much.

KATIE: It feels good to me.

SAM: Yeah?

KATIE: Yeah, it's like yoga. Okay, now let's do the girl.

SAM: Okay.

KATIE: So, gender is different than sexual orientation--

SAM: Yeah.

KATIE: But a lot of people get them confused.

SAM: Yeah. Gender is who you go to bed as. Sexual orientation is who you go to bed *with*.

KATIE: Got it.

SAM: So if you haven't heard that one, that one's important.

KATIE: So let's talk about penises and vaginas, shall we?

SAM: [laughing] Yeah, we might as well.

KATIE: [laughing] Let's just go right there--

SAM: If you haven't already talked about penises and vaginas, we need to talk about penises and vaginas because that's what everybody always thinks. Immediately, as soon as you say gender, anybody who's walking by right now who's hearing us say the word "gender," the first thing that's popping to their mind is external genitalia. They're thinking about penises and vaginas.

KATIE: So, for the purpose of our discussion, the bottom line is your external genitalia does not dictate your gender.

SAM: Yeah.

KATIE (voiceover): Wait a second. Can you rewind that?

[clip rewinds]

KATIE: The bottom line is your external genitalia does not dictate your gender.

SAM: Yeah I mean that, that — I couldn't have said it better.

[Music] [Music]

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# SHARING YOUR PRONOUNS

LGBT Equity Center

University of Maryland, College Park

August 2017

Link to YouTube page: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fb\\_We13\\_QTA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fb_We13_QTA)

## TRANSCRIPT:

AKEEM: Hey, here's an article about people sharing their names and also their... pronouns?  
What's up with that?

YASMIN: Well, a lot of my friends have started sharing their pronouns, and actually I have too.

AKEEM: Oh... but I don't get it. What's the point?

YASMIN: Look, you can't always assume a person's gender or pronouns from that person's name or appearance. Those assumptions aren't always right. You know that, don't you?

AKEEM: I guess... so, you mean, like, transgender people?

YASMIN: Well, yeah, sometimes I guess. You can't tell who's transgender and who isn't based on appearances and well, sometimes women with short hair and — a whole lot of other people have assumptions made about them.

AKEEM: I get that.

YASMIN: And, some of my friends are neither men nor women — they're nonbinary. And some simply go by pronouns you couldn't guess.

AKEEM: Sure, but for most people I can guess, and I'll guess it right.

YASMIN: Listen, that sends the wrong message that you have to look a certain way to go by certain pronouns.

AKEEM: Oh, so people share their pronouns because you can't always tell by their appearance?

YASMIN: Yeah! And sharing invites other people to share so you don't have to just guess.

AKEEM: Ohhh. Okay, that makes sense.

[switch to Sika and Nico talking]

SIKA: My name is Sika and my pronouns are she, her, and hers.

NIC: And I'm Nic and I go by they and them pronouns.

SIKA: Sharing pronouns is a lot like sharing your name. We expect that people won't guess at our names and make up names for us that we don't want.

NIC: In English, pronouns are sometimes used in place of a person's name.

SIKA: Many people go by she/her/hers or by he/him/his. However, others go by they/them/theirs or some other set of pronouns. For instance, Nic goes by they/them. — “*They* are a colleague of mine.” “I work in the office next to *them*.”

NIC: Asking me my pronouns is not the same as asking my gender. Pronouns are publicly used to refer to me even if the details of my identity are private.

SIKA: A great way to avoid assumptions is to share your own pronouns and then invite others to do so as well. But remember, not everyone will feel comfortable sharing their pronouns.

Or, what they share today in this space might, not be the pronouns they'll go by in other spaces or in the future.

[switch back to Akeem and Yasmin talking]

AKEEM: So, how do you do it?

YASMIN: Do what? Share your pronouns?

AKEEM: Yeah.

YASMIN: Well, I would say, "My name is Yasmin and I go by she/her pronouns."

AKEEM: Okay. And I could say, "My name is Akeem and I go by he/him pronouns."

YASMIN: Exactly!

AKEEM: Ohhh — that wasn't so hard.

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# THE MYTH OF RACE: DEBUNKED IN 3 MINUTES

Jenée Desmond Harris

Vox

January 2018

Link to original video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VnfKgffCZ7U>

## TRANSCRIPT:

You may think you know exactly what race you are, but how would you prove it if someone disagreed with you? The fact is, even though race drives a lot of social and political outcomes, race isn't real.

One of the first people to attempt to categorize humans according to race was a German scientist around 1776. He came up with 5 different groups according to physical appearance and geographic origin of their ancestors. Americans of European descent eagerly bought into this type of thinking around the same time. Some historians have said the idea that there were different races helped them resolve the contradiction between a natural right to freedom and the fact of slavery. If whites were their own distinct category, then they could feel a lot better about denying freedom to people who they labeled black and decided were fundamentally different.

But as political priorities change, definitions of race in America adjust right along with them. For example, if you were of Mexican birth or ancestry in the United States in 1929, you were considered white. Then, the 1930 census changed that to "non-white" to limit immigration. Later, when the U.S. needed to increase its labor force during World War II, these people were switched back to white. And what it took to be "black" once varied so wildly throughout the country — from one quarter, to one sixteenth, to the infamous "One drop" of African ancestry — that people could actually change races just by crossing state lines. Then, suddenly in 2000, the government decided that Americans could be more than one race and added a multi-racial category to the census.

This has left many Americans scratching their heads when it comes to selecting who they are. As many as 6.2% of census respondents selected "Some other race" in a 2010 survey. The idea that someone might look one way and identify another way, or that they might be really hard to place in a racial category, is not new. This is why there was a public debate about whether MSNBC's Karen Finney could say she was black. Or, how we can't even agree on the racial label assigned to the President of the United States.

Of course, many people feel their racial identity is very clear and very permanent, but the fact that some people have changed theirs and that no one can really argue with them, shows how shaky the very idea of race is. This is all because there isn't a race chromosome in our DNA that people can point to. It simply doesn't exist. When the medical community links race to health outcomes, it's really just using race as a substitute for other factors, such as where your ancestors came from or the experiences of people who may have been put in the same racial group as you.

Dorothy Roberts explains that Sickle-Cell Anemia is a prime example of this. The disease is linked to areas with higher rates of Malaria, which includes some parts of Europe and Asia in addition to Africa. It's not actually about race at all. This of course does not mean that the concept of race isn't hugely important in our lives. The racial categories to which we're assigned can determine real life experiences, they can drive political outcomes, and they can even make the difference between life and death. But understanding that racial categories are made up can give us an important perspective on where racism came from in the first place.

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# WHAT IS INTERSECTIONALITY?

Kimberlé Crenshaw

Interview for the

National Association of Independent Schools

2018

Link to original video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ViDtnfQ9FHc>

## TRANSCRIPT:

Intersectionality is just a metaphor for understanding the ways that multiple forms of inequality or disadvantage sometimes compound themselves, and they create obstacles that often are not understood within conventional ways of thinking about anti-racism or feminism or whatever social justice advocacy structures we have.

Intersectionality isn't so much a grand theory, it's a prism for understanding certain kinds of problems. African-American girls are six times more likely to be suspended than white girls. That's probably a race and a gender problem. It's not just a race problem and it's not just a gender problem. So I encourage people to think about how the convergence of race stereotypes or gender stereotypes might actually play out in the classroom — between teachers and students, between students and other students, between students and administrators — and commit themselves to understanding that as a way of intervening and providing equal educational opportunity for all students regardless of their identities.

Identity isn't simply a self-contained unit. It is a relationship between people and history, people in communities, people in institutions. So schools do a good job when they understand that and when they commit themselves to curricular development; to opportunities in the school for all students to understand the histories that have brought us to this particular moment. You can't change outcomes without understanding how they've come about. So, independent schools can take the lead on that — to be responsive to their student populations and to the communities out of which the students come.

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# HOW I LEARNED TO STOP WORRYING AND LOVE DISCUSSING RACE (EXCERPT)

Jay Smooth

Hampshire College TedX

October 2011

Link to original video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MbdxeFcQtaU&t=462s>

**TRANSCRIPT** (start at 7:21 and view to the end):

There are many things in our day-to-day lives that lead us towards developing little pockets of prejudice; that lead us towards acting unkind to others without having any intent to do so. These are things we'll just naturally develop in our day-to-day lives. The problem with that all-or-nothing binary, is it causes us to look at racism and prejudice as if they are akin to having tonsils. You either have tonsils or you don't. And if you've had your prejudice removed, you never need to consider — If someone says, "I think you may have a little unconscious prejudice," you say, "No, my prejudice was removed in 2005. I went to see that movie Crash, it's all good." — But that's not how these things work. When you go through your day-to-day lives there are all of these mass media and social stimuli, as well as processes that we all have inside our brains that we're not aware of that cause us to build up little pockets of prejudice every day, just like plaque develops on our teeth. So we need to move away from the tonsils paradigm of race discourse towards the dental hygiene paradigm of race discourse. That's if I could offer one piece of advice.

And in general, I think we need to move away from the premise that being a good person is a fixed, immutable characteristic and shift towards seeing being good as a practice, and it is a practice that we carry out by engaging with our imperfections. We need to shift towards thinking of being a good person the same way we think of being a clean person. Being a clean person is something that you maintain and work on every day. We don't assume that I'm a clean person therefore I don't need to brush my teeth. When someone suggests to us that we've got something stuck in our teeth, we don't say, "Wait, what do you mean? I have something stuck in my teeth? I'm a clean person!"

So, I know that this is no small task, but if we can shift a little bit closer towards viewing those race conversations the same way we view a conversation about something stuck in our teeth, it'll go a long way towards making our conversations a bit smoother and allow us to work together on bigger issues around race; because there are a lot of — beyond the persistent, conversational awkwardness of race — there are persistent, systemic, and institutional issues around race that are not caused by conversation and they can't be entirely solved by conversation. You can't talk them away. But, we need people to work together and coordinate and communicate to find strategies to work on those systemic issues; because despite all of the barriers that we have broken, all of the apparent markers of progress, there are still so many disparities. If you look at unemployment rates, infant mortality rates, incarceration rates, median household income, there are so many disparities on the various sides of the color lines in this

country that it is worthwhile for us to iron out these conversational issues; if for nothing else, so that we can get a little bit closer to working together on those big issues.

So I hope that we can, if I could have one wish, it would be that we would reconsider how we conceptualize being a good person and keep in mind that we are not good despite our imperfections; it is the connection we maintain with our imperfections that allows us to be good. Our connection with our personal and common imperfections, being mindful of those personal and common imperfections, is what allows us to be good to each other and be good to ourselves. [applause]

So, I know that this is no easy task, and race may be the most difficult sphere in which to apply this concept, but I think it's where we could also reap the most rewards. So I hope that bit by bit, if we consider that and are mindful of it, we can shift away from taking it as an indictment of our goodness and move towards taking it as a gesture of respect and an act of kindness when someone tells us that we've got something racist stuck in our teeth.

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