



## Things Are Not Black and White

Matthew Peak  
Staff Writer

St. Andrews recently hosted an on-campus Club Fair designed to present to the college population the numerous clubs available for the Fall 2004 semester. As I strolled through the aisles and looked at what opportunities were presented, I noticed a club called the Black Student Union or BSU. I left feeling pretty disappointed that students needed their skin color to form a union.

The immediate question that needs to be asked is: what if there was established a White Student Union? The answer is pretty easy to guess. There would be protests, petitions, campaigns and the ending of academic careers. Voices would rise up and cry that America is a racist nation and that a White Student Union is a travesty of justice and an insult to all non-whites. I agree that having a White Student Union is a wrong way to have an identity, but so is the Black Student Union or a Hispanic Student Union or any "union" that has as its basic identity the color of skin. In our current level of education and understanding, most people would agree that the shade of melanin in the epidermis is too weak a standard by which to determine who a person is or is not. To look at a person and judge them unfit for what a society offers because their skin color does not match one's own is a very flawed idea that has plagued mankind since Noah stepped off the boat and thanked God that he was alive. In America, we have struggled long and hard just to say to one's neighbor that their skin color means nothing as we try to fulfill the golden rule: Love your neighbor as you yourself would want to be loved. But it seems that race keeps coming up time and time again. We talk of a day where people will be judged by the content of their character and not by the color of their skin and yet, the color of the skin still pervades our thinking. We have the National Association for the Advance of Colored People (NAACP), the Association for the Advancement of Mexican-Americans and the Arab-American Action Network. We have African-, Mexican-, Arab- and Asian-Amer-

icans. It would seem that the color of one's skin is very important. And it is especially important if you're Caucasian.

Why are we obsessed with being hyphenated Americans and having groups and unions where the determining factor for decision-making and membership seems to be race? Since we seem to swoon at the idea of a color-blind society, it would seem that we would jump at the chance to stop being half-Americans and just be united as Americans, regardless of our skin color. The reason behind this discrepancy can be found in the ideas of multiculturalism.

On the surface, multiculturalism seems like a fine idea with the honorable goal of ensuring that superficial differences among people do not lead to division and hatred. But it has become a rotted peach that poisons our children with ideas that will lead to the breakdown of America and the fall of what could be arguably the greatest nation on earth. In order to understand why multiculturalism is so bad for America, we need to look at two mitigating factors: race and culture and the link between them.

Since we know what race is, let's look at culture. What do we mean when say "culture?" People often travel to different parts of the country to experience different cultures, but what are they experiencing? Usually, it is very superficial things like food, art and music. In this sense, differences in cultures are good because tasting traditional Hispanic dishes or viewing Native American art or hearing Celtic songs can open our eyes and enrich our creativity as humans. I like Hispanic dishes and think Native American art is beautiful and find something touching about Celtic music. In such ways, I accept a multicultural idea. But there is something deeper at work.

When most people talk of "multicultural," they are not interested in the superficial things that can enrich our lives, but core worldviews. In the mind set of multiculturalists, in dealing with racism in America, particularly the variety in which whites disliked non-whites, the one way to equalize skin colors was to give each skin color a

## Until We Are One

Gilbert Abraham  
Staff Writer

There are 3 main reasons for the existence of minority groups:

To facilitate an institutional and social support group

To promote social/ethnic communication & progression

To give a name to the minority

The reason why there are institutional and social support groups is because people organize themselves inherently according to the similarities that they share with other people. Human beings are gregarious by nature and the need to associate and share knowledge for the group's progression is the premise behind learning institutions. Groups are formed to make a concentrated effort on uniting people that share a common interest to accomplish something.

The progression of social and ethnic communication is the foremost reason for the existence of the BSU. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. had a dream and in that dream he clearly outlined how he wished that his children would not be judged by anything but their character. That dream is one that I share along with many others. Dr. King and his daughter experienced this dream, if only for a short while. They experienced being judged solely upon their character, because from an early tender youth they did not understand, nor were they bias to, complexion because the desire to discriminate based upon complexion is something that is learned. Children mirror the dream that Dr. King spoke about. Children are born into

this world with naturally open minds as they have not yet been exposed, long enough, to the societal poison which teaches us to stereotype, and prejudice. If children were taught to ask constructive questions, as opposed to being taught to discriminate based on differences, the predicament of intolerance that has plagued human beings for all creation would, at least, be treated like an atrocious grisly disease as opposed to being spread.

Human beings have an intrinsic need to name and label everything! We must, we have to, and it is absolutely an obligation! And that's fine, but it is how we are taught to label that is the problem. Black, White, I have often argued are unjust labels used to associate a group of ethnicities. These types of labels are based solely upon their pigmentation, a label that is highly inadequate at capturing the essence of their ethnical heritage. At least, I would like to be called russet, auburn, mahogany, maybe even sexual chocolate, but not black. And for "white people," I say olive, porcelain, ivory, and for some, even salmon captures just the right hue. I think Asians and Hispanics have it best, they aren't called yellow very much, and at least there is an effort to associate Asians and Hispanics to their correct ethnical group.

The other day I was asked by my salmon "complexioned" friend, "What can I do to bridge the gap? What can I do to make a change?" While we were speaking about things pertaining to humanity he unintentionally brought up race over and over again which instigated me into remarking, RACE DOES NOT

EXIST! Someone show me how, biologically, I am different from The Honorable Ron Bayes or Dr. Deegan to the point that we are of a different species. I am not. A race is defined by its biological variation within a species and there is none among human beings, not to the extent that there would be specific races based on color.

My salmon friend and I, after long debate, concluded that in order to make a change in this monumental problem that we face, called discrimination and racial prejudice, we must, as cliché as it sounds, "be ourselves." We must recruit impressionable people and mold them into critical thinkers whom are indifferent to ethnical differences and whom celebrate education and intellectual conversation. We must start a social revolution and it is imperative that it starts here and now. SO, my salmon friends and my olive friends and my chocolate friends and my pearl friends and my porcelain friends and my auburn friends and my ebony and ivory and all my tan friends, we are waiting for all of you who want to join us.

**NO BLACK OR WHITE OR YELLOW PEOPLE ALLOWED!**

Getting back to the purpose of the BSU, it will need to exist until we no longer associate negative stereotypes with the black complexion. It will exist until black people are no longer judged by anything but their character. It will exist until the scolding imprint of oppression's shackles fade away and we are only reminded of those times in books and fables, not by belligerently ignorant people. For those who may be presently unaware, BSU,

*The opinions expressed in the Opinions-Editorials section of The Lance are solely those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of The Lance staff or St. Andrews Presbyterian College.*