



HOLDING GROUND

A 2ND STORY STUDY GUIDE
INSPIRED BY ORIGINAL STORIES FROM
MCKENZIE CHINN & AMINA NORMAN-HAWKINS



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HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Welcome to our study guide.

We are a collective of story-makers and story-lovers committed to building a more empathetic world by sharing one great story at a time. We are twenty years old, and we believe in the unique power of sharing one's personal story.

This guide takes a closer look at two stories. Amina Norman-Hawkins *Return To Marquette Park* is a story of finding oneself in dangerous territory, during a moment of history that feels anachronistic.

In McKenzie Chinn's *Micro/Macro*, she experiences aggression and oppression on scales both large and small while attending school at DePaul University.

We have crafted this guide to serve you and your classroom. Within its pages are activities, separate interviews with Amina and McKenzie, and historical information that will add context to these stories. On our website you can find additional resources and related learning standards.

To use this guide in any capacity, please start by listening to both stories, available on the 2nd Story website at 2ndStory.com/intheclassroom.

CONTENT WARNING: We advise listening to both stories first before playing them for your classroom. Both stories share detailed descriptions of racially charged events, and *Return To Marquette Park* uses strong language.

Thank you for bringing us into your classroom.

The 2nd Story Collective



START TALKING.

2nd Story uses first-person, true stories as an entry-point for conversation. After listening to McKenzie Chinn's *Micro/Macro* and Amina Norman-Hawkins' *Return to Marquette Park*, you can use the following questions to begin a rich conversation with your students.

GROUP AGREEMENTS

When sharing personal narratives, stories, and sensitive information, we begin by establishing the following agreements with participants. Before beginning your discussion, we recommend going over the following group agreements with your students. When finished, ask them, "Do you agree?" and then have them collectively and vocally respond with "I agree."

- 1.) What is learned here leaves here. What is said here stays here.
- 2.) Take care of yourself.
- 3.) Practice equity by sharing the floor.
- 4.) Stay curious.

*This exercise can also be done (either for the first time or again) when you have your students share their stories.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- 1.) Do these stories feel familiar or unfamiliar to you? Why?
- 2.) Micro-aggressions plant the seeds for macro-aggressions. In these two stories, which actions plant the seeds for other actions? How does this resonate with your own lived experience?
- 3.) In both of these stories, Amina and McKenzie "cross invisible boundaries." What are the factors, perceptions, and social constructs that create "invisible boundaries?" What kind of real and perceived boundaries exist in Chicago?
- 4.) What are the different levels of danger in these stories? Explore personal, interpersonal, societal, cultural, and historical.
- 5.) How does identity affect the experience of danger in these stories?
- 6.) Mark Twain has been quoted, "History doesn't repeat itself but it often rhymes." What parallels do you draw between these two stories, or current and past events?

FINDING MEANING **A CONVERSATION WITH FILMMAKER & HIP-HOP PRACTITIONER AMINA NORMAN-HAWKINS**

BY MAX SPITZ, 2ND STORY COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR

Amina Norman-Hawkins is now an internationally recognized voice of grassroots hip-hop activism. She is a writer, performing artist, filmmaker, and hip-hop practitioner who has spent the past 20 years involved in the preservation of Chicago's hip-hop culture and community. Amina is co-founder of the Chicago Hip-Hop Initiative, a hip-hop community empowerment collaborative, and the Chicago Hip-Hop Heritage Month, an officially recognized annual observance (since 2003) that celebrates Chicago's local hip-hop arts and community throughout the entire month of July.



I like to start these interviews by getting to know you a little more. What's your story?

My mother is from Chicago and my father is from Nigeria. They met in Chicago in the 1960s. When I was 7, my father relocated back to Nigeria and our family moved with him. This was my

first "visit" to Nigeria. I went through elementary and secondary school in Nigeria and graduated high school in 1986 at age 16. I come back to the United States and I met a kid in my poetry class who asked if I rap. And I have no idea what that really is so I said, "Yeah," and I became an MC in 1987/88. I became a part of the local poetry scene, and thus the local hip-hop scene, and that translated into actually being able to throw events and reach people and engage others. I started at Columbia some years ago, teaching Hip-Hop History and Black Music History courses. In 2003, I co-drafted a resolution to recognize July as Chicago Hip-Hop month and city council approved it; so we celebrate Chicago Hip-Hop Month every July.

Is Hip-hop your main outlet?

Hip-hop has become my main language almost by default.

What role does story play in your life?

Storytelling is a part of the fabric of my people and what we do. Everything is storytelling. We have oral traditions, and everything is passed down through storytelling. I think it's second nature for me to have found hip hop that allows me to find stories.

You lived in Nigeria for such foundational years. How did that compare to your time in Chicago?

I grew up in Nigeria where education was paramount. You went to school to become an engineer or doctor or lawyer or accountant, and I wanted to be an artist.

When I was very young my mother joined the Nation of Islam so not only did we live in Chicago but we were pro-Black Power. But then we moved to Nigeria so there was no need to BE pro-Black Power. When I came back

in 1986, I had a sense that I could do anything I set my mind to. I think growing up in Nigeria toughened me, made me feel empowered me to do things that might have been ridiculous to other people.

How soon after returning from Nigeria did you join the hip hop group?

I started college that Fall, and that same year I got involved with hip hop, with some of the guys who asked me to join their rap group.

Why did you want to tell this story?

I didn't realize it was a story until a friend told me it was. It was just something that happened to me. Just stepping back in time, you don't feel that old until you start thinking about it. To have gone from being chased by Klansman to being in a place with all these diverse people made me feel like so much time had passed. Who knew it would be relevant again? I told the story in the 1990s. I tell my students this story and they're shocked. They know Marquette Park, but they pass it not knowing what happened there even though it happened not that long ago.

Seeing blatant prejudice come back into the light has been a wake-up call for many.

We never really dealt with it. We just found a way not to pay attention to it. Marquette Park got integrated. And the people who were in the park that day still live somewhere. And unless those people have changed, it's still there. We are at a crossroad where we must deal with it.

So much of American history feels so recent.

As a black woman, we're often looking at issues of black and brown people as descendants of slavery. I can't just forget what my ancestors went through. That they were tossed off ships when they were too sick to make it across the water. That they were sold. I am still here because someone survived enough for me to be here. But my white counterparts have ancestors whose history is now on their shoulders, too. Everyone needs to recognize that we all have things we have to look at, the work has to be done.

We see how the work changes over time. What does "the work" look like right now?

There's so much work. The work that is on the tips of my fingers is hip-hop related work and how hip-hop is healing. Even in reconciling your ancestors history, it's about healing. I get it, I understand it, and I want to learn how to move on with that pain.

What was the aftermath of this KKK riot for you?

It made me feel like I got to witness a moment in history that I would otherwise not have gotten to witness. I don't know anyone else my age who's been chased by the Klan in full robes. It's an experience I didn't ask for but I own it now. That moment in Marquette Park taught me that my little five-person rap group was there by no accident.

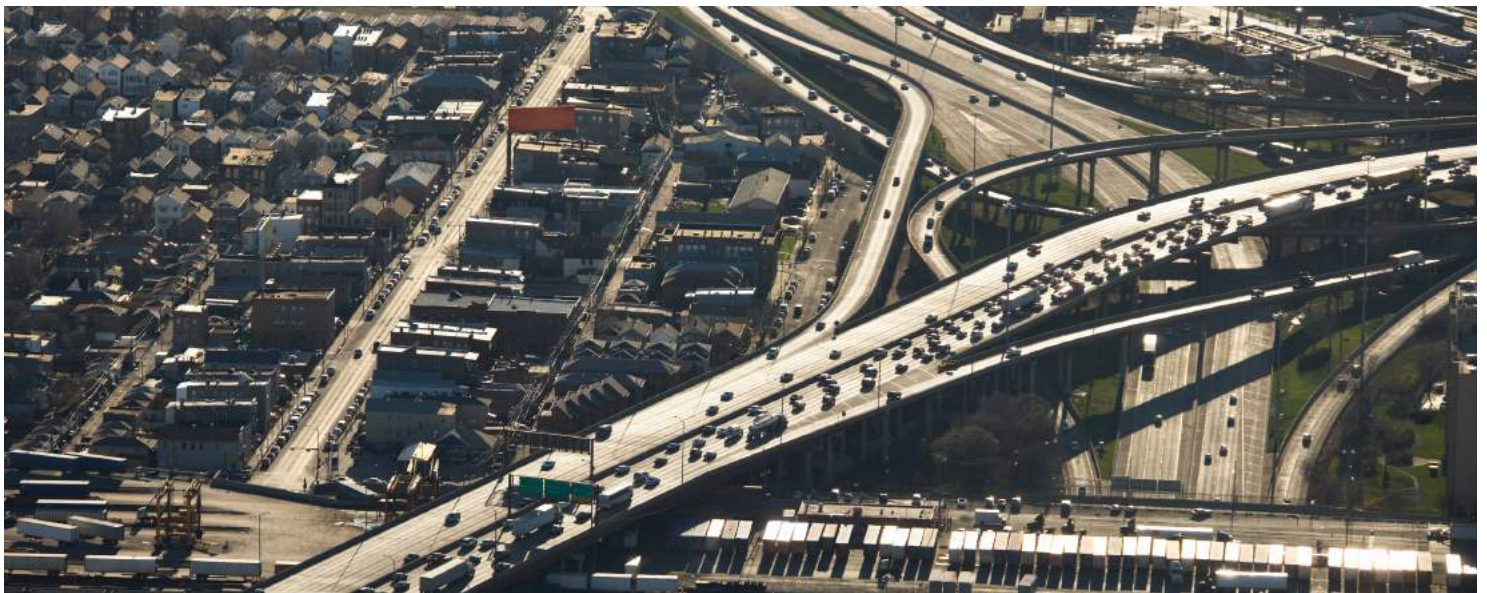
Once you're out, you can look back. You can ask "What did that mean?"

You have to ask that question. Otherwise, it's just like the cliché of "history is doomed to repeat itself."

If you can accept that you have certain prejudices or ignorances, then it's easy to learn. It's one thing to reach people who are willing to learn, but how do we reach people who don't want to or don't think they need to?

Once you learn the truth and come into the light, then you have a responsibility to reach back to those people who are ignorant - who you were in the dark with.

A TALE OF TWO CITIES



"ONE OF THE INSIDIOUS TRAITS OF SEGREGATION IS HOW EASY IT MAKES IT FOR THE HAVES TO IGNORE THE PLIGHT OF THE HAVE-NOTS. FOR MOST WHITES, CONCENTRATED POVERTY AND ITS MANY ILLS ARE AN ABSTRACTION—SOMETHING THEY READ ABOUT BUT RARELY SEE, SINCE IT EXISTS IN PARTS OF TOWN THEY DON'T LIVE IN OR WORK IN OR VISIT. ON THE NORTH LAKEFRONT, WHERE THE NEIGHBORHOODS ARE MORE DIVERSE THAN MOST IN CHICAGO, RESIDENTS MAY ALSO BE FOOLED INTO THINKING IT'S THE NORM THROUGHOUT THE CITY."

**- STEVE BOGIRA,
CHICAGO READER: 'SEPARATE, UNEQUAL, AND IGNORED'**

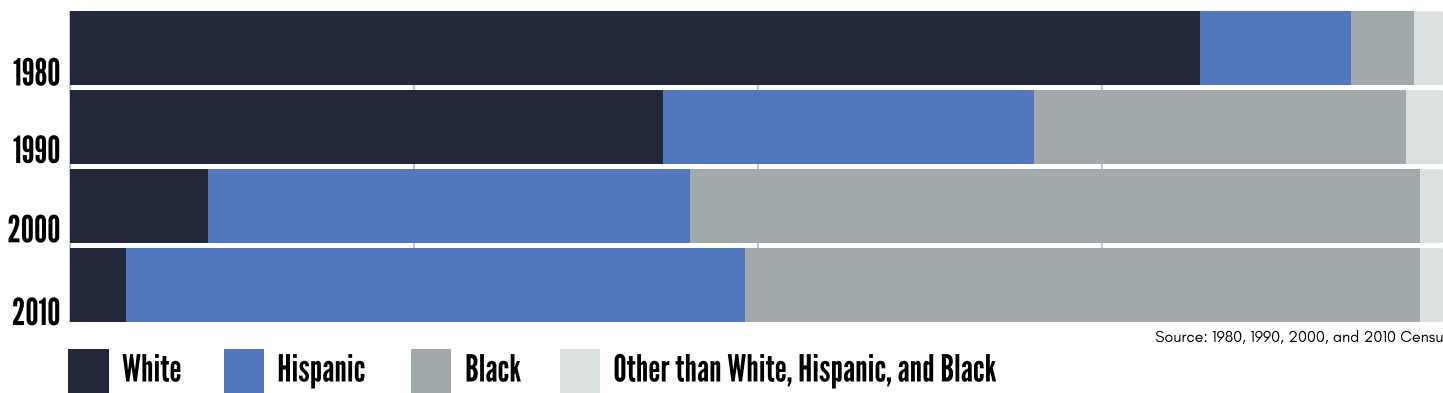
IN CONTRAST:

	Chicago Lawn*	Lincoln Park
Median Income	\$33,616	\$95,416
Vacant Housing	16%	9%
Unemployment	21.9%	3.5%
Less than a HS Degree	29.6%	2.6%

Source: CMAP 2016 American Community Survey
*Chicago Lawn is commonly referred to Marquette Parks

Chicago is the United States' third largest city, with over 2.7 million people living across its 77 community areas. However, for many residents, Chicago is seen as two cities segregated by race and economic status. In these two stories, how do the tellers' experiences differ based on the neighborhood?

A CLOSER LOOK AT MARQUETTE PARK



If you walk through the Marquette Park (located in or commonly referred to as Chicago Lawn) neighborhood on Chicago's southwest side, you would find yourself in a neighborhood populated almost entirely by Black and Hispanic residents. This has been true of Marquette Park for nearly twenty years. Marquette Park became a centerpiece of the Civil Rights movement, a location representative of the resistance non-White communities faced when attempting to integrate.

THE 1960s

In 1966, and as part of the Chicago Freedom Movement, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and his wife, Coretta Scott, moved into the nearby neighborhood of North Lawndale. King moved to North Lawndale, one of Chicago's most divested and predominantly Black neighborhoods, with the intention of exposing the racist tactics used by landlords and property owners to segregate the city. In less than twenty years, Lawndale had gone from majority White to majority Black. Many surrounding neighborhoods, however, had benefited from the **White Flight** out of Lawndale and similar, poorer, areas.

Dr. King, along with the Chicago Freedom Movement, marched through Marquette Park twice. Both times groups of white supremacists, the second time numbering in the thousands, violently retaliated against the Civil Rights activists. They brandished Confederate flags and swastikas. They threw bricks, rocks, bottles, etc., one of which hit Dr. King in the head. Dr. King was quoted afterwards saying, **"I have never seen — even in Mississippi and Alabama — mobs as hostile and as hate-filled as I've seen here in Chicago."**

WHITE FLIGHT (noun)

the phenomenon of white people moving out of urban areas, particularly those with significant populations of color, and into suburban areas.

THE 1970s

As protesters continued to rally against Civil Rights, Marquette Park became home to white supremacist groups. The National Socialist Party of America (NSPA) based itself out of Marquette Park and led anti-integration rallies in surrounding neighborhoods. Throughout the late 1970s, the NSPA clashed with counter-protesters, including the Jewish Defense League. However, the NSPA also pursued Civil Rights protests, and where they instigated violent counter-protests, often with few repercussions from law enforcement. On several occasions, law enforcement blocked groups of Black protesters from entering Marquette Park, claiming the neighborhood was too unsafe. This was not entirely untrue, as large groups of white residents, whether official members/supporters of the NSPA or not, would attack and abuse Black Civil Rights protesters.

THE 1980s

Over the course of the 80s, Marquette Park's demographics began to diversify, albeit slowly and with strong resistance from its White residents. By 1986, the Klu Klux Klan itself had begun rallying in Marquette Park as well. Black groups such as Crusaders for Justice and International Committee Against Racism (INCAR) organized counter-protests, but White residents turned out in strong support for the KKK. In one particular incident in 1986, 400 White residents of Marquette Park turned out to support about forty official KKK members on their rally. These residents hurled stones and bottles at the INCAR members, who had begun to flee on the direction of local police. By the end of that summer, a small group of civil rights activists held a gathering in Marquette Park, which required approximately 700 police officers to maintain peace and keep the activists safe.

A final, mass protest occurred in 1988 with about 500 white supremacists rallying in Marquette Park. While police kept them separated from counter protesters, the white residents in the area joined the supremacists in chanting "White power," and other similar epithets. A rally in honor of Dr. King was scheduled for later that same day, and the White supremacists focused their hatred on those celebrating Dr. King's memory. Fortunately, no violence occurred that day.

SETTING AS A CHARACTER

In both of these stories, the setting is incredibly important to the story. In fact, the setting has such a strong influence on the story that you might say that the "setting is a character." This means that the setting is more than just a backdrop in front of which the action happens. Instead, the setting itself is a catalyst for the action of the story and for the emotional state of the characters.

“PLACE CONNECTS CHARACTERS TO A COLLECTIVE AND PERSONAL PAST, AND SO PLACE IS THE EMOTIONAL CENTER OF STORY. AND BY PLACE, I DON’T SIMPLY MEAN LOCATION. A LOCATION IS A DOT ON THE MAP, A SET OF COORDINATES. PLACE IS LOCATION WITH NARRATIVE, WITH MEMORY AND IMAGINATION, WITH HISTORY. WE TRANSFORM A LOCATION INTO A PLACE BY TELLING ITS STORIES.”

- JOHN DUFRESNE, *THE LIE THAT TELLS A TRUTH*

ACTIVITY #1: IMAGINING A SETTING'S PAST

Ultimately, the setting is not a character—characters have personalities, which means they are persons. It is people that infuse meaning into a setting. So what people have influenced your setting's past?

Choose a setting, and imagine the people that have infused meaning into it. Maybe it's a setting you're familiar with, like a place in your neighborhood, or a place you've visited. Maybe it's a place that has an important history. Or maybe it's a fictional place that you're imagining. Think about the following:

- What is the "lifespan" of your main setting?
- What has it "seen"? You can think about this from many different levels: global, international, national, state, city, community, neighborhood, home.
- What was it like 5 years ago? 50? 500?
- What meaning might this have for the story that you're telling?
- In Amina's story: what does it mean to tell a story set in Marquette Park, given the history of that setting? How does this come alive in Amina's story?

ACTIVITY #2: DETAILS AND EMOTIONS

A setting becomes a living thing (it has personality) in a story through the combination of setting details and the emotions attached to those details. Another way to say this is that setting comes alive partly in its details and partly in the way that the story's characters experience it.

- What are some of the details in McKenzie's story about which she shares her emotional response?
- How do those details build a richer story?
- Are there any responses to those details (objects, locations, etc) that change over the course of the story?
- Why does her response to those details change?
- How do these details speak to the overall story that McKenzie is sharing?

UNVEILING PRIVILEGE A CONVERSATION WITH POET, ACTOR, & EDUCATOR MCKENZIE CHINN

BY MAX SPITZ, 2ND STORY COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR

McKenzie Chinn's work has appeared in *PANK*, *Crab Fat Magazine*, *The Fem*, *Juked*, *Sundog Lit*, and others. Her work has been nominated for a Pushcart Prize, Best New Poets, and Best of the Net. She is part of Growing Concerns Poetry Collective, with hip-hop artist Mykele Deville and musician Jeff Austin. The collective released its inaugural album, *WE HERE: Thank you for Noticing*, in 2017, and published its first book of poems *Five Fifths* through Candor Arts in 2018. She is the writer, producer, and lead actor of the feature film *Olympia*.



So, tell me a little about yourself. Where are you from? Have you always been an artist?

I grew up just outside Washington, D.C. in Maryland. I've been a storyteller for as long as I can remember. As a child instead of playing outside I would write stories and journals. In high school I became really drawn to theater, and I received a full ride to study acting in Baltimore for undergrad. I was eventually accepted to

DePaul University to get my MFA in Acting. After graduating I stayed in Chicago because it's such a vibrant town for artists.

I am also from Maryland! Where did you grow up?

I grew up in Prince George's County. We were 15 minutes out of the city and I went an hour north for school. Even though Baltimore and DC are so close, they're very different places. Washington feels very white-collar professional. Baltimore, however, feels very blue collar, very working class in a way that I was drawn to while living there.

How was it going from living right on the outskirts of a wealthy white collar city to studying right outside Baltimore as a more blue collar town?

It was so different; it took me a long time to understand it. College can be its own world in a lot of ways. I didn't have a lot of exposure to the culture of Baltimore until I finished school and lived in Baltimore for a few years.

Can you talk to me about your Chicago experience? What neighborhoods did you live in?

I've moved around a lot. I started living in Roger's Park which was wonderful. It's one of the most integrated neighborhoods on the north side. I've also lived in Lincoln Square, Andersonville, Ukrainian Village, Pilsen, and now Hyde Park. Chicago is defined by its incredibly unique neighborhoods. As a non-native Chicagoan, I've been able to witness the culture and inner working of these places. It's been lovely to carry that with me.

In Macro/Micro you touch on micro-aggressions, which unfortunately happen all of the time. How do you navigate which ones to highlight?

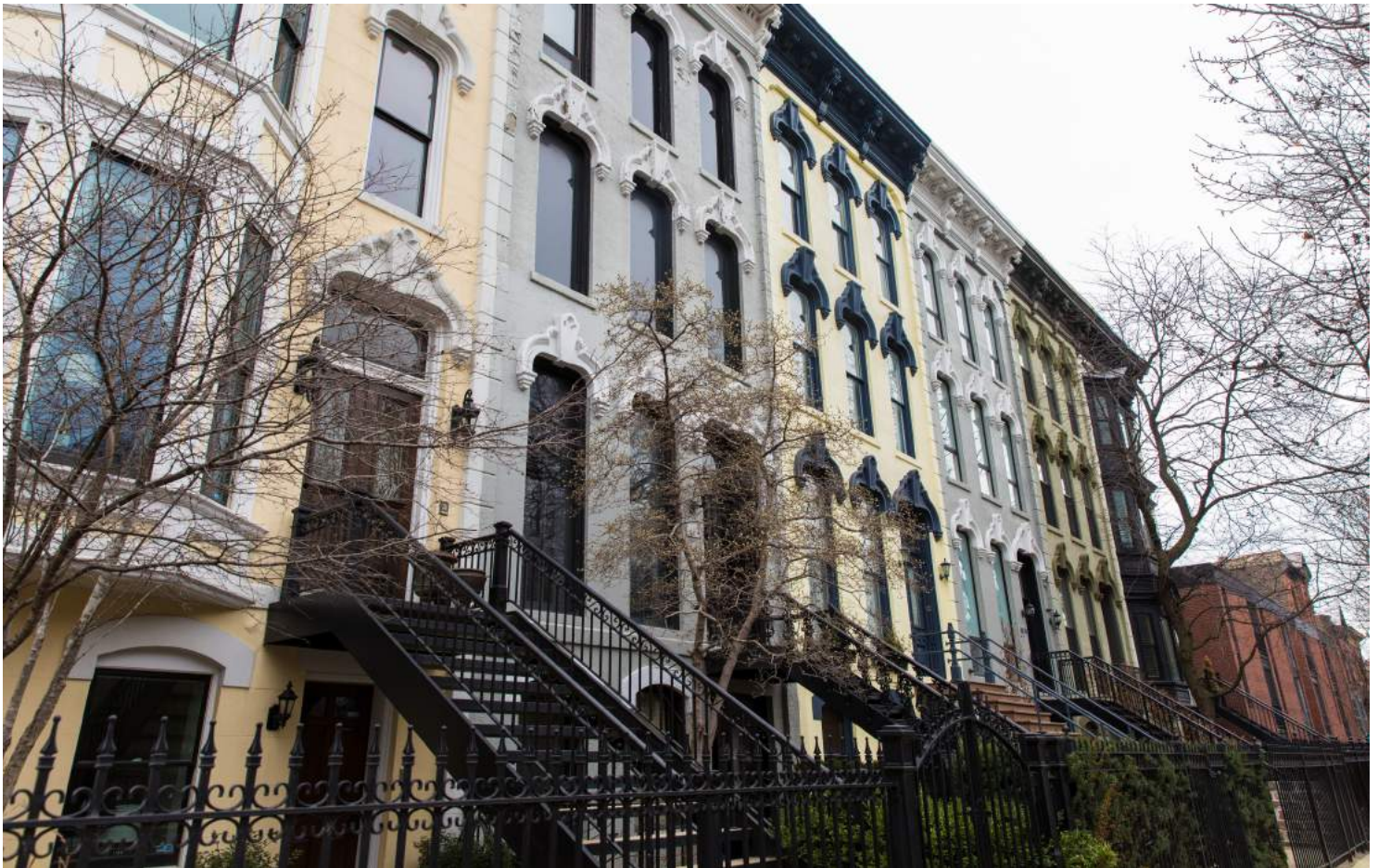
The experiences I chose to highlight are the ones that happen all the time. They are consistent experiences not just in my life but, I think, in the lives of any black person who lives in an urban area. I had an experience where I was telling a story with 2nd Story where I was about to go to the stage to perform. I was the last story of the night and was heading to the stage and a guy at a table stopped me and asked me to bring them their check. One of the things about micro-aggressions is you're constantly asking yourself "Am I being too sensitive?" "Am I making an issue where there is none?" But I've also been in places like Home Depot and Whole Foods where people ask me to help them find items.

That disconnect is so frustrating. I've been to Home Depot hundreds of times, but no customer has ever approached me with a question. And I look like I know what I'm doing at Home Depot! Have you ever called someone out on a micro-aggression and their response is "Oh...You're right."

No. Not once, never. There was an incident at a Whole Foods that comes to mind. Everyone who worked there was wearing a black apron that said "Whole Foods." I was wearing no such apron, but I had two separate people ask me for help. The second person, I don't think I was rude, but I responded saying, "Why do you think I work here?" I wanted to know if they could articulate why. Is there something I'm missing about how I present, or are they willing to admit that they thought I worked there because most people who do work there are black? But she just got tongue tied and said, "You look like you know what you're doing..." So I just walked away.

I want to explore the other half of your story, the macro-aggressions you experience from a specific aggressor. Was that situation ever resolved?

I didn't encounter him anymore after the last incident in the story. He had been harassing other students on campus and, collectively, we had had enough. We complained enough that if any further complaint was made than he would be arrested; we all felt our physical safety was being threatened. Luckily for us nothing happened after that, but I don't think he ever had to face any consequences for his behavior.



Lincoln Park, Chicago, IL

"THERE IS VERY LITTLE THAT CAN HAPPEN IN THIS COUNTRY ANYMORE, RACIALLY, THAT COULD SHOCK ME."

There is a moment in the story where your boyfriend at the time, who is white, has an immediate “call to action” response. Is there a safe way we, white people, can intervene so we don’t make you or any other POC feel more uncomfortable?

On a personal level, I, of course appreciated him having that response since we were in a relationship. There is very little that can happen in this country anymore, racially, that could shock me. As a black person in America, I spend a lot more time thinking about implications of race on the world, my community, and me personally than most white people. Another important thing is he had more privilege than me in that moment as a white person. It’s kind of white people’s jobs to use their privilege to protect people who don’t have that privilege. As an able-bodied person I should use my voice to advocate for disabled people. As a cisgender person, I should use my voice to advocate for trans and non-binary people. Therefore white, male people should use their privilege to advocate for those who don’t have those privileges.

I appreciate that final anecdote because it represents a simple example of the harmless benefits of privilege.

The fact is: privilege exists. We all have different types and amounts of privilege, but until we have true equity in this country people with privilege need to harness and leverage it to help folks without it.

One last question. If you were to rewrite this story today, do you think it would be the same?

It’s perhaps even more apparent now than it was when the events happened or when I wrote the story. There’s a documented rise in hate crimes since Donald Trump took office. I think about the new nature of micro-aggressions and how in 2018 we couldn’t go a day without a white person calling the cops on a black person. There are certain behaviors I don’t understand, but storytelling is a great way to begin to understand the things that elude our imagination.

PUT THE PEN TO PAPER

At 2nd Story we believe that sharing first-person, true stories has the power to change hearts and minds, and we want to know what stories are living inside of you.

We invite you to share your story. Below are several writing prompts that you can use to share a story from your own life that parallels the themes and ideas in these two real-life stories. Select a prompt and begin writing on the next page!

SHARE A TIME WHEN YOU:

- WERE SHOCKED BY SOMEONE'S BEHAVIOR**
- FOUND YOURSELF IN UNFAMILIAR TERRITORY**
- STOOD UP FOR YOURSELF OR OTHERS**
- LEARNED SOMETHING ABOUT**
- VISITED A PLACE FROM YOUR CHILDHOOD**
- FELT EMPOWERED**
- WORRIED ABOUT YOUR SAFETY**

I WANT TO SCREAM. WHY DOESN'T SHE UNDERSTAND MY URGENCY? WHY ISN'T SHE WORKING FASTER TO STOP HIM? DOES SHE NOT UNDERSTAND THAT BECAUSE OF HIM, EVEN WHEN HE'S NOT THERE, I WORRY THAT HE'S THERE, AND I WORRY ABOUT WHAT HE MIGHT BE PLANNING TO DO NEXT? DOES SHE NOT UNDERSTAND THAT I WORRY ALL THE TIME NOW? THAT IT IS NOW NORMAL FOR ME TO WORRY ABOUT THE SAFETY OF MY BODY AND MY FRIEND'S BODIES IN THIS PLACE?

MCKENZIE CHINN



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