HARVARD-RADCLIFFE CLASS OF 1966

Dear Classmates, January 2026

Yea! End of January. All I have to do is get through the short month of February and then I get to get out of here (MA) for a few days in Arizona. We've got snow up to here, and the temp is alll of 1 degree.

Let's see what interesting events you've posted this month!

Donna Gibson Stone & Randy Lindel:

Our **60 th Class Reunion** will take place on campus Wednesday, Jue 3 through Friday, June 5. An opening reception will be Wednesday, classmate presentations and discussion, our Memorial Service and a clambake will be on Thursday and a class session, Alumni Parade and Alumni Day meeting will be on Friday. Detailed schedules and registration forms will be sent out in February. Information about programming, hotels, etc. will be regularly updated at our reunion web page: **https://alumni.harvard.edu/reunions/class-programming/60th-reunion** Please note the paragraphs below requesting classmate participation in our reunion programs.

Ann Peck & Sandy Ungar:

The 60th Reunion Committee has again asked the two of us to plan the programs for the windows available to the class in the June schedule.

Brief 10-minute talks by classmates were very popular at the 50th and 55th, so we thought we would try them again. We'd like to invite you to volunteer to speak at reunion about your recent experiences: a hobby, a revelation, a new skill, a reflection on aging, something important to you that you'd like to share (and can limit strictly to ten minutes). We can't guarantee a place on the roster. We hope to have so many entries that we'll be put in the difficult position of having to choose again on the basis of varied content. And we tentatively expect to have room for only five. **Please send a description of your ten-minute talko annpeck@comcast.net and sju5@georgetown.edu.** We'll let you know well before the reunion. All the ten-minute talks will be given in person—so please, only volunteer if you plan to attend!

Also, we anticipate having **two 75-minute panels** -- one on **diversity in all its forms** and the recent widespread rejection of DEI initiatives in education, business, and other domains; and the other featuring **personal perspectives on aging.** If you would like to volunteer to be a panelist for one of these discussions, please let us know asap. We'll probably have space for four or five participants on each and want to assure a variety of perspectives (so please let us know yours).

Robert Leavitt:

The second edition of the ***Peskotomuhkati-Wolastoqey Dictionary*** (Passamaquoddy-Maliseet) is now available from the University of Maine Press. This has been an ongoing project of mine, in collaboration with elders David Francis and Margaret Apt, and dozens of other speakers of the language, in Maine and New Brunswick, since the 1970s. We continue to update the dictionary on its website.

Meanwhile, I have been enjoying retirement, spending winters in Oaxaca, Mexico, and travelling occasionally with my daughters or grandsons—in Canada and Mexico, and most recently to Iceland and Europe. I've been learning to relax and enjoy a quiet life at home in New Brunswick on the Bay of Fundy. In Mexico, I've been keeping up with writing short pieces in English and

Spanish to reflect on encounters with the remarkable people I have met: Native colleagues, teachers and students, canoeing and cribbage partners, neighbors and far-flung family.

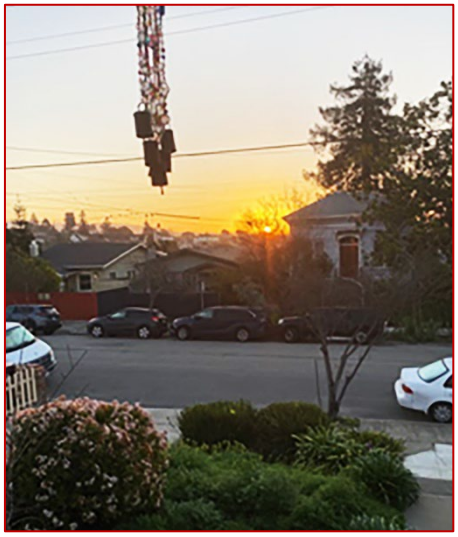
Tony Kahn:

I've been collecting some of the personal stories I've produced for NPR over the years on YouTube -- a way of spending five minutes apiece with a fellow human being — real voices, telling real stories, even as AI continues to blow holes in what we used to call "reality." I'd be delighted if any of my class members want to check them out and give them a listen. **Here's the link**: (Ed. note: with apologies to Tony, I couldn't make the link work, but if you open Youtube and in the search box type in: **A Walk in my Shoes, Tony Kahn** that will get you there.)

Virginia Morris:

Personally, the holiday was good, but as far the country is concerned, we've had enough of what is coming down from this administration- from 47 and his cronies: we can do better!!

Not only do we have a mid-term election coming up but methinks we need to encourage our Senators to file for a 25th amendment petition – and at the same time, for our Representatives in the House to file or a third impeachment proceedingfor 47 – whatever works!! We need, as "We the people", after 250 years of this country, to take it back – and to elect a government that treats its people fairly and decently!!! No excuse for what is happening, under I.C.E. employees, in Minneapolis- with two people 'observing I.C.E.'s activity' being shot and killed this month. Nor is there any need for what happened to the people of L.A. or Chicago last year. Meanwhile, the current president stopped the passage of a (nearly passed) bi-partasan immigration bill before the 2024 election because he told the Republicans in Congress that immigration was "his" issue and he wouldn't win the Presidency if that bill passed! (We need a just and fair immigration bill and we need it now!!!)



Let's apply the rule of law, i.e. "due process under the law- " laid out in the Constitution- in the 1st, 4th and 14th amendments to begin with! Come on you all, we may be 81 or so, and possibly cranky, but we need to turn this ship of state back around now for the survival of future generations. of human (and all other) beings. It took us 10 years of protesting to end the Vietnam war, from '65-'75, but we did it. I think we can turn this government around this coming year if we all pay attention- starting now. (Try watching the kids online who run "Indivisible"!!!)

New morning photo, yesterday:

John Diamonte:

We, Pryor and future nation—
"Whom you gonna believe,
Them, or your lyin' eyes?"—
Will win over lies' foundation.
Losers, cowards, fade who prop that piece of s**t.
All faiths' nonviolent work,
The unified of real King's 'beloved community,'
Will keep it: democracy. Our prize.

Bill Bussey:

Hi, belatedly, Tom. We include a two-sided sheet of photographs in traditional greeting cards.

In Memoriam:

Barbara Livermore has provided an obituary for **Isaiah Jackson:**

https://symphony.org/obituary-isaiah-allen-jackson-iii-former-music-director-at-dayton-philharmonic-with-an-international-career-80/

'65	Lawrence Robertson	10/24/25	Washington, DC
'65	Mark Hallett	11/02/25	Rockville, MD
'65	Mary Deutsch Edsall	09/28/25	Washington, DC

Don't forget about the reunion; stay warm,

Tom Black
co-class secretary

J. Chester Johnson:

For Racial Healing: #9 'American White Women at Crossroads'

Unless otherwise noted, when I refer to "racism", "white racism", "white racist", and similar terms without elaboration, I intend for white women to be included within the particular concept. However, there is evidence, relying on the preceding #8 installment of this "For Racial Healing" series, that white men have a greater bias against Blacks than white women, who are not subject to the same evolutionary stresses that have, according to the University of Michigan study, existed for white men.

At the same time, white women would have felt considerable pressures to be subservient to the protectors (in-group males). We certainly know history demonstrates that white women have felt for generations and centuries the dominance (and presumed, for most of that time, male superiority) of white men in marriage and various areas of endeavor, such as politics, religion, business, education, arts, etc., even though we've witnessed a legitimate correction to this strict dominance in recent years with white women having made measurable inroads into the white man's reign.

I have had discussions with women on this subject, and the strongest argument for white women's actions in support – even in limited ways – of certain civil rights initiatives, when white men, as a group, opposed with considerable vigor those very same initiatives in places, during the early stages of the modern civil rights movement of the 1950s, like Montgomery, Alabama and Little Rock, Arkansas, consists of the theory that white women could empathize directly with an oppressed segment of the population, such as Blacks, since white women had endured, for many centuries, much gender oppression from white males.

Now back to that discussion on racial healing in a church on the upper eastside of Manhattan, an occasion which only women attended, except for one other white man and me. The women conducted themselves in a way suggesting that the absence of men for a racial healing session had been a normal occurrence. And why shouldn't it be normal? In 2020, one of my nonfiction books was published that dealt with a race- related event, and over two years, I gave more than 80 presentations on that book to organizations across the country (mainly via internet). For much of that time, I spoke principally to audiences of women – Black and white. Not all the time, but for much of the time.

Moreover, any follow-up to one of my lectures at a later date was usually initiated by a woman, not a man. There were white women who wished to re-establish relations with Black, childhood friends, for those relations had been severed by institutional forces through a school's social milieu or racial policies or by familial forces through parents, grandparents, etc. Then, there were other women who wished to talk further about what could be done to reduce the impacts of filiopietism; these were the most emotionally and intensely draining as numerous white women routinely admitted their personal complicity in familial racism against Blacks. Worship of the past and ancestors had embedded itself in many of these women who would then adhere to the practices that made filiopietism, from their viewpoint, mostly impossible to break, as they articulated the pressures they felt over the years that had developed from family practice.

But now, they wondered how they could have allowed themselves to be manipulated that long ago so thoroughly and often, even over great, physical distances, and they routinely then asked the valid question: what could they do to unwind the power and effects of filiopietism? I had no comfortable answer for those women in those circumstances. Could they change their behavior codified so long ago? How many individual friendships and family relationships would have to be broken? And yet, those women were the persons to understand the power of authentic passion and the solution of one-to-one allyships that were available if they leaped to grasp it. Looking back over time, I have no idea how many took the leap.

Of course, there has been more than enough Black racial prejudice among white women to give attention to the various forms through which this bias toward Blacks has been sufficiently demonstrated. Much material and commentary show that white women share in white racism. What I'm also saying, though, is that a white women's version of bias has, in many cases, shown itself to be different and less severe, intense, and certainly less brutal than white men's applications.

When we look back to the beginning of the modern civil rights movement in the 1950s with its mission being Black liberation and equality, the first three crucial events to come to mind that served as catalysts for stimulating civil rights actions, starting the middle of the 1950s, are Emmett Till's mutilation and murder, which happened in August, 1955, followed four months later by the Montgomery, Alabama bus boycott that ended after a year, to be succeeded in nine months thereafter by the first phase of the Little Rock Central High School desegregation crises.

The role that Carolyn Bryant performed in the mutilation and murder of Emmett Till, together with her representations in the subsequent, local trial, suggests a culpability and participation that depart dramatically from more positive contributions by white women in Montgomery and Little Rock, which we will cover shortly. Carolyn Bryant's place in the Emmett Till narrative has been confusing and complicated from start to finish. Toward the end of her own life, she apparently voiced misgivings about her own recall of true events surrounding the particulars, without witnesses, of the Emmett Till-Carolyn Bryant conversation and encounter in the grocery store that preceded and incentivized Till's mutilation and murder. Indeed, Carolyn Bryant confessed a number of years ago to the historian, Timothy Tyson, that an important piece of the Till story had been untrue about which she had lied for generations and decades. If that part of her earlier story were untrue, what other portions can we believe to be true, at least as told by Carolyn Bryant about what really happened between Emmett Till and her?

Nonetheless, the Carolyn Bryant problem does not alter that which we have discovered about certain white women's attitudes and efforts in both Montgomery, Alabama and Little Rock, Arkansas during the crucial 1950s. The genuine, public roles of various white women are made quite clear in both the Montgomery and Little Rock instances.

For example, we do know, according to Taylor Branch's Pulitzer Prize winning book, **Parting The Waters**, that at the start of the Montgomery bus boycott,

*"Of the few people who bothered to write the **Advertiser** (prominent Montgomery, Alabama newspaper) at first, most were white women who saw it as a justifiable demand for simple, decent treatment."*

The boycott, which started on December 5, 1955, ended slightly more than a year later on December 20, 1956. Since the local business and governmental community, controlled by white men, refused to relent to initial, but less expansive demands by the Black population as those requests grew and developed over the period of the boycott, Montgomery white men tended to become more entrenched with more aggression being pursued against Blacks, especially against several of the boycott leaders, including Martin Luther King, Jr. While the actions in the context of the boycott by a number of white women in Montgomery, Alabama during the mid-1950s clearly were not equivalent to "going to the barricades", they were, at the same time, not reflective of the much less sympathetic and harsher reactions to the bus boycott then being expressed by large numbers of white men in Montgomery, up and down the social and economic spectrum.

Notwithstanding the combative acts by white men, the bus boycott in Montgomery continued uninterrupted month after month. At one point, Mayor W. A. Gayle voiced his frustration at the lack of Black capitulation, lashing out at white women in town, saying publicly that if the white women in Montgomery would cease picking up Black women in the morning at predetermined locations and returning them back home in the afternoon, the bus boycott could then be broken. At the time, there were also reports of white women in cars picking up Black women as they walked to or from work and driving them to their destinations. Even though these were modest steps by a number of white women in Montgomery, lending support to Black efforts, they were certainly a far cry from the aggression and violence being perpetrated by many white men in the city against Blacks at that time.

Although their deeds came late during the two-year crisis period, white women were even more engaged in Little Rock for helping to resolve politically and institutionally the issues associated with the integration of Central High School that led to a major federal-state confrontation.

Through a series of legal decisions in the federal court system, including numerous applications and judicial clarifications, Little Rock, Arkansas was chosen – rather, more specifically – Little Rock Central High School was chosen to be compelled to integrate in accordance with a gradual integration plan, drawn up by the local Superintendent of Schools, a white man. Little Rock Central seemed like a logical choice for the initial, major, urban school in the South to be integrated in accordance with the *Brown* decision. After all, in the midst of the trauma and violence that accompanied the Montgomery bus boycott, the City of Little Rock had integrated

its bus system in April, 1956 without much difficulty. King referenced on occasion this Little Rock experience during the Montgomery maelstrom.

In the fall of 1958, less than two weeks before the election that led to closure of high schools in Little Rock, a white women's organization with the name, the Women's Emergency Committee ("WEC"), was formed to solicit support for open schools. Consisting of the wives of many of the white male business leaders of Little Rock, WEC members had access to influential, local levers of power that few organizations could match. It has also been suggested that members of WEC may have even withheld sex to persuade their husbands to see WEC's point of view.

Their efforts fell short in the election that closed the high schools, but WEC's strength and tactics improved over the following months, so that when segregationists' members of the school board voted not to employ teachers or administrators whom these board members believed supported integration, WEC, together with a number of local businessmen, established STOP (Stop This Outrageous Purge) and worked to recall the three segregationist board members. With WEC's considerable assistance, STOP won the recall election with the addition of three moderate members, breaking control of the Little Rock School Board by the staunch, segregationist Governor. The Little Rock public high schools were then reopened in August, 1959, but not at the level of integration that Black leadership in the city had wanted. Moreover, one would have wished for WEC to be an integrated women's group, but alas, it wasn't, so we must temper our optimism about the basic, non-racist tendencies of these white women.

This installment has shown that there can be a difference between white women and white men in attitude and intensity toward Black liberation and racial healing. It is clear that there have been instances where white women have assisted Black initiatives to achieve Black goals. That particular role by a meaningful portion of white women was illustrated in both the Montgomery bus boycott and the Little Rock Central High School crisis. This is not to say that white women can't be serious racists. I've witnessed the reality of women racists, including those within my own family. However, there is reason to think many white women are inclined to acknowledge and deal with racism, both generally and personally, including a willingness to work with anti-racism programs and goals that lead to adjusted, racial behavior.

As we consider steps regarding the proposed protocol for racial healing, it is important to keep in mind distinctions affecting white prejudice between white women and white men. My comments underscore the point that the prejudice of white men will need to be addressed in a somewhat different, more concentrated manner that would include acknowledgment of white men's distinguishable prejudice towardBlacks.

American white women have not been in positions, generally speaking, as opposed to white men, even to apply a more fulsome and longer-term empathetic response to Black-white racial healing. While the times are changing, there has not been enough breadth to open wider the avenues for much more visible encouragement from American white women, who have therefore been at crossroads with their prospects for a more generous intent toward Blacks. Even though racism against Blacks certainly exists among American white women, we do not know what the results could possibly be for Black-white racial healing if the crossroads were somehow transformed into a clearer and cleaner path.

Next Time: "Those We Abuse, We Loathe."