



Street graffiti, George Town, Malaysia (2014)

LANGUAGE & RACISM 2

Greg and José continue their three-part conversation. The first part is at this URL: <https://bit.ly/2Tr53NG>

the final part is at: <https://bit.ly/2C0t44a>

Greg O’Keefe: It’s important but **I mean** personally, like I’ve always been- I mean just because like there are- there are certain words about black people we would never say. (You can’t) And it’s funny because we we were always programmed not to say that when we were kids and I- I had black friends growing up and it was just a word we never said and they called each other that but we couldn’t say it. And it was just kind of...

José Cruz: Now that- that’s something I also don’t like. (Well) The fact that they call each other that. You guys shouldn’t be calling each other that. That’s...

Greg: Well you know there’s, but there’s- There’s a whole other way- You know I had- One of my friends in- when I was in college, he came from a very educated family. He was black and his father was um a doctor (Mm hmm) and his mother was also like working in the court system. She wasn’t a lawyer. (Mm hmm) But anyways, so the the point was with him, he’s very intelligent. (Yeah) One time I asked him, why can’t white people say um, (That word) that word? And he said, well it’s because they see it as that your ancestors enslaved their ancestors. And I say, but my my grandfather came over in nineteen- 1903.

José: Look at me, I’m from the Philippines (Well in uh) and I can’t say that word.

Greg: Well but you’ve never had it said to you. I’ve actually had it said to me before in Boston where someone said you know, you’re white and your grandparents or your granddaddy.

José: Oh you mean some black guy said that to you.

Greg: Yeah yeah yeah. (OK OK) So the the thing is you know, uh the area I grew up in, they just see white. But I- My family- None of my family even existed in America until the late 1800s (Exactly exactly) So it’s kind of like, people associate with a group and I think what happens is, is the group is, is sometimes, multi- And I hate to say this, and I don’t mean to- I hope it doesn’t offend anybody- with um, in some ways...

José: We we aim to offend here on GOLDFish ha ha.

Greg: Well, It’s- I think it’s- What happens is is people get more associated with a group. And it’s more of the the weaker crowd that gets either involved with the group itself and the people who are controlling that crowd, they know that those people are weak and they’re listening and they’re looking for information about that group only. And rarely are they thinking about what they can do as an individual. And I think individualism is really an important uh part of what we should

all think about. And while we are being an individual, about how we can help other people. And this is something that I think we should all think about. (Mm hmm) And uh just jumping on someone because they've made some sort of you know slur or whatever- if it's done unintentionally- You can tell when it's been done intentionally.

José: Oh yeah it's pretty easy to tell when someone's being...

Greg: So if someone does it unintentionally. I mean, If you're an educated man or an educated woman you see that as an error. And then it's your job as an educated man or a woman to correct that error in a polite and **unoffensive** way. You know there's a- there's an old saying, uh uh you know, I don't know how it goes actually ha ha.

José: Ha ha. Thanks for bringing it up.

Greg: Hold on hold on. Well well there is a saying. I forget- I don't **want to**, I don't want to mess it

up, because it's a nice little saying. It's very quick.

José: It's an um, it's an English saying?

Greg: Well it's actually- I think it's from Chinese, I think (OK) Mm I think they- "A bad man is a good man's job."

José: Bad manners is a good man's (A bad man) Is a good man's job. Oh I get it right away. The- You've paraphrased it uh if nothing else, quite well.

Greg: So yeah uh, but I think that's true. And I think a lot of people unfortunately, in the way it's turning out in the states now, is there's too much righteousness, I think. People are (Mm hmm) looking for the chance to be in the right and not really looking for the chance to be peaceful with that person they're dealing with.

Word count	Time	Words/Min.
762	3:06	245.80

Pointers:

José and Greg are speaking very very quickly

Note how Greg tends to speak with many broken sentences. This is not a rare speaking style.

I mean: I mean is now a common discourse marker, similar in function to saying "well" as the beginning a phrase (0:00)

unoffensive: Greg should have said, "**IN**offensive" (2:19)

want to: pronounced, "**WANNA**" (2:32)

Discussion:

Do you find it difficult to talk about racism?

Have you ever witnessed any kind of racism?

Why is racism such a difficult problem?

YOUTUBE: "TRAINING DAY/DENZEL WASHINGTON - "MY NIGGA"
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jbeT35wtEG0>

VOA ARTICLE: "STUDENTS EXAMINE RACISM AFTER WATCHING DOCUMENTARY"
<https://learningenglish.voanews.com/a/3598788.html>

IMAGE COURTESY MIKE GIFFORD
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/43661283@N00/15694921634/>

