

Martin case a chance at reflection

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The Trayvon Martin case has been a tragedy, and no matter how you look at it, the lives of many people have been affected. For them, there will be no return to normalcy. But despite the misfortune of what has happened, something positive can grow from this case. Discussion will continue for a long time, and something everyone should acknowledge is that race is still a major issue in this country, and that everyone has biases that they need to be frank about.

This is not to say that America is a bad place to be for a person of color. It's quite the opposite. There's no other country in the world where someone born in Vietnam can work together with someone from Ethiopia, France, or Belize to build something. The United States has politicians, professionals, and stars whose roots stretch across the globe.

But this doesn't mean that we live in a post-racial America. The effects of racism can still be seen everywhere and in every community, whether it's by teenagers being detained and lined up against a wall, community members being beaten, or education resources being shifted.

The effects of racism on the Asian and Pacific Americans are plain and can be seen day-to-day in the missed promotions, the white washing to APA stories, and the existence of the bamboo ceiling. And while these things might not be as extreme as internment camps or being barred from immigrating one's family to the United States, they are still very real.

The next time you find yourself making an assumption about someone, such as whether or not they'd be a good leader, a good student, or a hard worker, examine why and how you're making that judgment. Is it based on fact and first-hand experience? Or is it a generalization?

The next chance you get to collaborate across racial lines, take it. The more chances communities of color take to build bridges between them, the more thoughtful understanding they can foster. And with more thoughtful understanding, we can avoid any more tragedies.