

The universal fate of species

By Jeff Davidson

Community-wide throughout Chatham County, it is within our capability to embrace diversity, even overcoming anthropological impediments to do so.

I was watching television in a Washington DC hotel room the night before I was to give a speech. There was a feature on about a local animal shelter and the various preferences among potential dog adopters. It turns out that light-colored and multi-colored dogs are popular, but the darker the dog, the longer it stays in the shelter. When it comes to pets, black dogs are least popular and have the hardest time attracting an owner.

All of the sociological and human behavior books, journals, and articles I'd ever read leapt forward in my memory. If the animal shelter feature showed that black is least desirable among people selecting the color of their pet, what are the ramifications for a dark skinned person in this world? Are they born to a life of inherent bias, even when people are trying their best to be unprejudiced?

Is it human nature to be attracted to light and be repelled by dark? Light, white, and fair-skin are traditionally equated with sunshine, goodness, and safety. Black, dark, or deep brown are associated with the



unknown, the unseen, risk, or danger. This is a primarily subconscious pairing which has persisted in the human psyche for thousands of years. In one of his more memorable, humorous observations, comedian Chris Rock quips,

"There's not one white guy here who would trade places with me — and I'm RICH!!"

If it truly is human nature to be attracted to light and to avoid dark, will decades more of benevolent attempts at social engineering change us? Have we not already made dramatic strides in overcoming 15,000 to 25,000 year-old predispositions?

Astronomically, chemically, and biologically, diversity is the fate of species everywhere, not simply on earth. If and when life is discovered on distant planets, the variation in human appearance will more than

likely be mirrored by wide variation in whatever species populate those celestial bodies.

It is our task and ongoing challenge to rise above physiological differences and even the resulting psycho-physiological variations in human behavior, outlook, and disposition.

Individually and collectively, we have the ability.

Jeff Davidson is "The Work-Life Balance Expert" offering keynote speeches to corporate and association audiences. He wrote "Breathing Space," the "60 Second Innovator," and the "Joy of Simple Living." Visit www.Work-LifeBalance.net for more information.



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