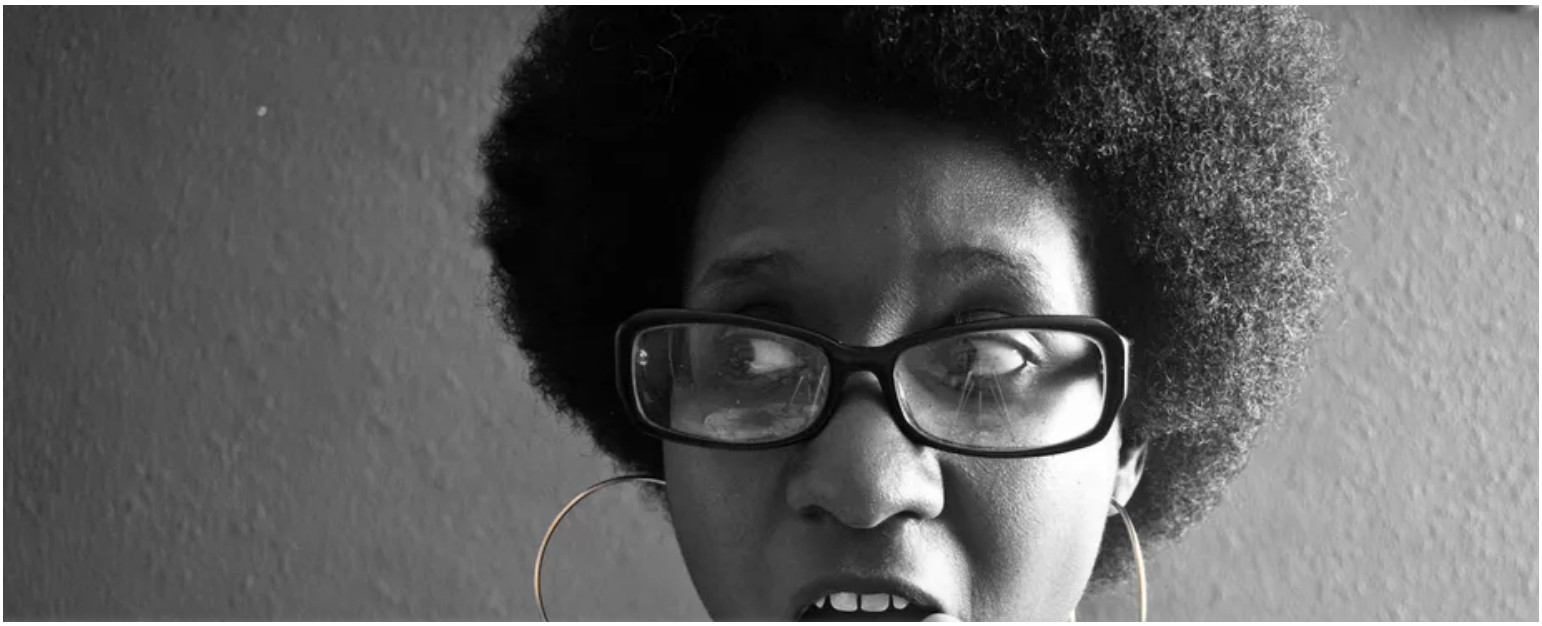




White Silence

March 22, 2012

by Mia McKenzie

I've noticed a trend. When I post to my Facebook page about gay cats, or my friend Sacha (a boy) try for the Denver Broncos cheerleaders, or bacon, my Facebook friends respond with comments and lik across the board. That is to say, the friends who respond are all across the board—black, brown, whi queer, straight, all genders. There is no specific category of friends that responds more or less than a other, when it comes to pretty much anything I post on Facebook.

Except, as it turns out, when I post anything about race.

When I post anything about race, there's a shift in who responds. Suddenly, my white friends are sile
Almost all of them. Every time.

And it's starting to piss me off.

Most of the stuff I post about race is in the form of articles about things going on in the country and
world, having to do with racism. Most recently, I've been posting links to news and articles about Tra
Martin (pictured above), the 17 year-old boy who was murdered last month in Florida while walking
with a bag of skittles. He was shot by a self-appointed neighborhood watch captain who thought he
"suspicious" and followed him, accosted him, and shot him in the chest. Anyone who knows about th
I would think, would be outraged. Scratch that. I know enough to know that there are many people v
would not be outraged, many, many people who would not and do not give a shit. But I am not Face
friends with those people. Or, at least, I didn't think I was.

I am careful about who I friend on Facebook. I keep my friends around 150 or so, because I don't thi
possible to really know more people than that, and I like my bubble, I like to be surrounded by peop
share most of my politics. I'm okay with that. I'm almost 36, and I have learned that I don't really nee
"appreciate everyone's point of view." I mean, you can have politics that are opposed to mine. Fine. B
you do, we are not going to be friends. I think that's reasonable. So, I think my Facebook friends pret
fall into the category of "people who share my politics," with very few exceptions. They are also peop
care about things, people who post about different causes. This includes the white folks on my frien
My white Facebook friends are mostly liberal democrat/independent types, queer or ally, feminist pe
who post about those things. And yet, whenever I post about race, they are silent.

Why?

They are people I like, so I want to give them the benefit of the doubt...

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