

*Racial Conflict in America: As told by Akron, Ohio Residents*  
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*I. INTRODUCTION*

Racial conflict has been an issue in the United States for centuries. The idea that one race or ethnicity is superior over others has existed for at least as long and in different forms. In American history, this superiority was embedded at one time in the laws<sup>1</sup>. Through protests, pressuring groups and individuals in power, laws and amendments were changed and created to be race-neutral, marking a step towards allowing opportunities for all, one principle our country, the United States of America, was founded on. Today our laws are race-neutral on paper but unfortunately, they are enforced or judged by individuals who may





towards blacks as opposed to direct expression of racial superiority or inferiority<sup>10</sup>, expressed explicitly in the law (Chiricos, et al., 2004).

Modern forms of racism, unlike lynching and Jim Crowe laws, are harder to specify

describes in one of his stories, it is a miracle that he can find the strength and forgiveness to





My initial thinking was these situations seem a little too surreal, at times I even felt like a couple of the stories were too unbelievable. After thinking about the data and stories more seriously, my thinking has changed to the extent that when you are around individuals who have never been racist or racially stereotyped; it is difficult to believe that it is happening in our own backyard. In my initial reaction to the story about Denise's brother being pulled over, I remember thinking, „WOW! I hear things like this happening on the radio, television or in music but to hear it personal account is surreal. The other traffic stop stories at first I did not think much of them but as I started analyzing them more I never thought stereotyping can really effect a person's life down to what they wear or drive.

#### Understanding Racial Conflict through the Stories and Articles

The stories helped me better understand and appreciate the importance of the scholarly data because when researching a topic or issue personally allows the researcher to see their own perspective and understand how and why scholars compose their perspective



