

There's no "right" way to talk about race.

But we must talk about it, indeed.

# Jack Kornfield, “The Rabbi’s Story”



# The New York Times Magazine

August 16, 2019

*In August of 1619, a ship appeared on this horizon, near Point Comfort, a coastal port in the British colony of Virginia. It carried more than 20 enslaved Africans, who were sold to the colonists. America was not yet America, but this was the moment it began. No aspect of the country that would be formed here has been untouched by the 250 years of slavery that followed. On the 400th anniversary of this fateful moment, it is finally time to tell our story truthfully.*

## **Micro-aggression:**

**The often unintended or unpremeditated expression of enduring or persistent (racial) prejudice and privilege, usually below or outside the realm of formal legal redress, since it has no institutional process of repair. This (neoliberal) process results in the recipient of microaggression feeling exhaustion, depression and shimmering, but difficult to articulate, rage.**

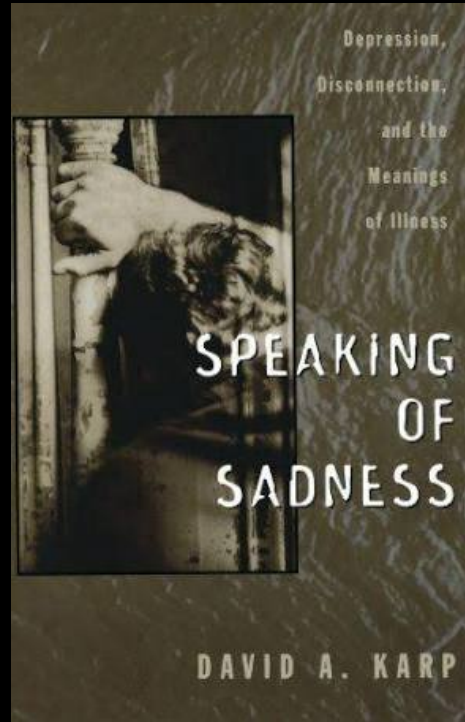
**(my own definition!)**

**The burden of hyper-visibility**

**To always be “seen” as a problem**

**The burden of “civility” as defined by dominant power, even while granting their own freedom from respectfulness.**

The problem of depression memoirs: unlike goal-oriented (obsessive-compulsive) narratives, depression seems to “lack” a language.



Aesthetic strategies

Post war split in Jazz

between “Swing” Big Band & “Be-bop” small band

**Melody in F**

Anna Babitskaya  
OP. 104

Moderato

**SALT PEANUTS**

Music by  
JOHN "DIZZY" GILLESPIE and KENNY CLARKE

Moderately fast

Not melodic, but chord progression (playing down the chord)  
Too fast to dance to (it doesn't swing)  
Denial of mass-market pleasure/commercialized culture of white  
fantasy of "jungle rhythms)



## Dizzy Gillespie, "Salt Peanuts" (1945)



## 3 Generations

“ear” musicians – weakly literate, non-reproducible (Scott Joplin)

“eye” musicians – can read musical score

“compositional” musicians – analytical of musical structure

**Bop are generation from middle class, musically trained**

**So possible ascent to middle class**

**Yet “unoriginal” –**

**Bop uses Broadway musical tunes and popular music.**

**WHY?**



Black workers for white audiences



Jackie Robison breaks segregation in 1947, but most remain in so-called "Negro Leagues"

# Bop's cultural politics:

Deconstruct the form of white mainstream, commercial music

To critique not merely the privilege of unexamined whiteness, but the pleasure gained from this unexamined privilege  
(NO DANCING!)

What Sara Ahmed calls Killjoy Cultural Politics



Charlie Parker, “Relaxin’ at Camarillo” (1947)

to “relax” your hair – to “get straight”



**When equality is measured in terms of access to repressive institutions that remain unchanged or even become strengthened by the admission of those who were previously barred... we need to insist on different criteria for democracy: substantive as well as formal rights, the right to be free of violence, the right to employment, housing, healthcare, and quality education. In brief, socialist rather than capitalist conceptions of democracy.**

**Angela Davis, in an interview entitled “Abolition Democracy”**