

Topics for HTD Discussions

The solutions for “systemic racism” (Michael)

Read a very good article, [Neighborhoods and Violent Crime](#), which suggests several strategies for improving safety and neighborhood health. What follows from it is that the whole discourse of so-called "systemic racism" may be misguided. It's focused on our individual “implicit biases,” but what about “collective biases,” popular but misleading ideas not validated by the facts?

[What are the downsides/dangers of Identity politics?](#) (Michael)

I don't follow all these battles on Twitter and can't judge to what degree this article on Quora exaggerates the situation, but even if a half of it is true, it's still a reason to worry.

Another related article: [How a University of Iowa Reply-All Email Became Ground Zero for the Cancel Culture Wars](#).

This issue is also mentioned in this article: [Antisemitism and Anti-Zionism: Is America Following in Europe's Footsteps?](#)

How can we heal the divide around these divisive issues?

See No Stranger, Part 1: Loving Others (Dick)

This is the first three chapters of the book [See No Stranger](#) by [Valarie Kaur](#), which is the basis for her revolutionary love project to heal the divide. These three chapters describe the internal actions (wonder), interpersonal actions (grieve), and social actions (fight) appropriate for loving others. She illustrates each with moving personal stories.

See No Stranger, Part 2: Loving Opponents (Dick)

This is the second three chapters of the book [See No Stranger](#) by [Valarie Kaur](#). These three chapters describe the internal actions (rage), interpersonal actions (listen), and social actions (reimagine) appropriate for loving opponents. She illustrates each with moving personal stories.

See No Stranger, Part 3: Loving Ourselves (Dick)

This is the final three chapters of the book [See No Stranger](#) by [Valarie Kaur](#). These three chapters describe the internal actions (breathe), interpersonal actions (push), and social actions (transition) appropriate for loving ourselves. She illustrates each with moving personal stories.

[Canceling cancel culture with compassion](#) (Michael)

Cancel culture generally refers to celebrities, but what about the people in our inner circle we are cancelling due to ideological differences? What if instead of removing people from our lives, we extended compassion to them? In this moving talk, Betty Hart shares a poignant story of her father and the unlikely friendship of Ruth Bader Ginsberg and Antonin Scalia. Betty advocates for curiosity, diversity, empathy, and valuing the whole of a person rather than individual aspects.

Betty is a theatre artist whose mission is to help create space for necessary conversations.

[Why we don't need to meet in the middle](#) (Michael)

What we need is a revolution.

what I found in [writing a new book about Americans who are spanning gaps between people of difference](#) is that these bridge builders are pursuing their own unique form of revolution. Their revolution is predicated on forming relationships between people who aren't like each other under the premise that we won't overcome our deepest divides until we can see the world through each other's eyes.

Nathan Bomey is a reporter for USA TODAY and the author of a new book, "[Bridge Builders: Bringing People Together in a Polarized Age](#)," published by Polity

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How America Fractured Into Four Parts (Dick)

This is the title of an [interesting article](#) by George Packer in *The Atlantic*, and appears to be a shorter version of his new book *Last Best Hope: America in Crisis and Renewal*.

Packer describes four "tribes" in America that need to be reconciled:

- Free America (the libertarian Red America)
- Smart America (the coastal elite Blue America)
- Real America (Trump's Red America)
- Just America (BIPOC post-liberal Blue America)

Packer says:

All four of the narratives I've described emerged from America's failure to sustain and enlarge the middle-class democracy of the postwar years. They all respond to real problems. Each offers a value that the others need and lacks ones that the others have. Free America celebrates the energy of the unencumbered individual. Smart America respects intelligence and welcomes change. Real America commits itself to a place and has a sense of limits. Just America demands a confrontation with what the others want to avoid. They rise from a single society, and even in one as polarized as ours they continually shape, absorb, and morph into one another. But their tendency is also to divide us, pitting tribe against tribe. These divisions impoverish each narrative into a cramped and ever more extreme version of itself.

[Developmental Politics: How America Can Grow Into a Better Version of Itself, 2020](#) by [Steve McIntosh](#) (Michael)

American politics are badly broken. Yet to solve the seemingly intractable problem of hyperpolarization, we need to look beyond the gridlocked politics of Washington D.C. In *Developmental Politics*, Steve McIntosh shows how this growing rift in the fabric of American society is a cultural problem that requires a cultural solution. He offers a pragmatic yet inspiring approach to our national political dilemma through a new politics of culture—one that goes right to the heart of this entrenched, complex issue. McIntosh presents a variety of innovative methods through which citizens and political leaders from across the political spectrum can reach agreement and achieve consensus.

The book is new and may not be available at local libraries, but here are the [TABLE OF CONTENTS](#), [Selected Book Excerpts](#), and [15 New Ideas](#) from the book that have some similarities with [Valarie Kaur's](#) ideas.