



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on March 30, 2015

Seeing Racism Everywhere: Even in Toddlers

Representative Vanessa Summers apparently sees “racism” everywhere.

Even in 18-month-old babies.

During a debate in the Indiana House of Representatives last Monday on the state’s Religious Freedom Restoration Act, it became apparent that Summers (D-Indianapolis) believes that white toddlers who fear her are bigoted. And, as *PJ Media* [put it](#), “Rather than follow the well-trod path of her progressive brethren by writing a Masters [sic] thesis — say, “Changes in Postmodern White Toddler Microaggression in Middle America, Pre- and Post-LBJ” — she took her revelation to an open mic on the statehouse floor.” The *Indy Star* has the [rest](#) of the story:



[The] Democratic lawmaker said that a Republican lawmaker’s child was “scared” of her because she is black.

The comment by Rep. Vanessa Summers drew audible gasps, in no small part because the child — the son of Rep. Jud McMillin — is 18 months old.

“I told Jud McMillin I love his son, but he’s scared of me because of my color,” Summers told McMillin, who is white, during debate over the Religious Freedom Restoration Act in the House.

“It’s hard,” said Summers, D-Indianapolis. Then, as other lawmakers groaned at the comments, she followed up with, “It’s true.”

“He looked at me like I was a monster and turned around and cried. And I told him you need to introduce your child to some people that are dark-skinned so he will not be scared,” she said.

This placed the Republican in the position of explaining the obvious. The *Star* again:

“I can tell you that if he reacted the same way he reacts with anybody brand new, he buries his head in his dad’s shoulder,” McMillin said. “Whoever it is, it’s what he does. He’s an 18-month-old kid; he’s in a new environment up here in the place like the Statehouse but doesn’t know anybody. I honestly don’t remember anything out of the ordinary.”

Though the national media has ignored this story, the pundits who have addressed it have taken Summers to task. Don Surber quotes the politician more completely and then weighs in, [writing](#):

“I love his little son, but he’s scared of me because of my color — and that’s horrible.”

Really?

Maybe he’s scared of her because she is a big woman with a loud mouth.

Or perhaps it was because Summers is grossly overweight and sports a visible tattoo or because she



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advocates a destructive leftist agenda, which includes opposition to the Indiana religious-freedom act. Any of the above explanations are as plausible as Summers' paranoid suspicion, but the actual answer is far simpler. As Surber also wrote, "I want to tell Vanessa Summers it is not all about you. White people behave...toward other white people the same way. His [the toddler's] instinct to be wary of strangers and to turn to his father for protection are signs of a normal young child."

I can't tell you how many times I've approached a parent and had the experience of seeing his little child cower behind his legs, and I'm a lovable (big) little ray of sunshine. It's likely a survival mechanism: It wouldn't be healthy for young children if, instead of being fearful of strangers, they gravitated toward them — though pedophiles would love it.

It's striking that Summers, after her 56 years on this planet, cannot properly interpret standard toddler behavior. Perhaps she takes W.C. Fields' view of children and avoids them like the plague, or maybe she was influenced by Britain's National Children's Bureau, which [issued guidance to play leaders and nursery teachers](#) in 2008 advising them that toddlers who say "yuk" in reference to unfamiliar foreign food may be guilty of a "racist" act (no fooling — though I wish I were). Again, however, the answer is found elsewhere. As *American Thinker's* Thomas Lifson [writes](#), "Instead of treating the young McMillian [sic] lad as a normal child, Summers accused him of the cardinal sin of our age. Just because of his race. If that is not racism, I would like to know what is."

And that's what explains Summers' paranoia: When you're prejudiced against people, you naturally think the worst of them and ascribe negative motives where none exist.

But the reality is that too many things are interpreted today — or, to be more precise, are misinterpreted — through a racist lens. For example, when certain black celebrities, such as Beyoncé, try to look white, it's explained by way of the "stigmatization of blackness." But what of the millions of whites who frequent tanning salons? Moreover, when a black child says [he wants to be white](#) or chooses a white doll to play with, we're offered the same biased explanation. But consider a story from my childhood.

On occasion, my mother would hire a cleaning lady to come to our home for a few hours to help out. One time when I was approximately four years old, the person was a young, quite striking black woman. Sometime afterwards I said to my mother, "I wish I was black." Did I have a negative view of my race? Hardly.

The reality is that this cleaning woman was probably one of the first black people I'd seen close up, and, coupled with the fact that she was a 20-something and not at all bad to look at, I found her appearance intriguing and alluring. Mind you, for similar reasons I also told my mother at some point that I wished I wore glasses (now I'm close to a point where I'll wish I didn't need them). These are simply things little children say — and their wishes change continuously. They're essentially meaningless.

(People ought to bear this in mind when attaching significance to a boy's saying he wants to be a girl.)

As for McMillin's wee lad, he's not alone: I'm distressed by Summers, too. It's not because of her skin color, however, but because she can't understand that not everything is racial — except to racists.



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