

It's not you against “the blacks,” it's just us!

 By [Tess Sulaman](#)

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For as long as I have been around and could think rationally I have been fascinated about the things that make up the intriguing, creative but sometimes self-loathing species we call *Homo sapiens*. It is by far one of the best things to have occurred in the Milky Way galaxy.



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Socially, we have not evolved as quickly as we should have (in my opinion). But when it comes to making tools, we have truly outdone ourselves.

Three decades ago, calling someone in Europe as an example, was rather tedious. Firstly, you had to go to a place where there was a phone. And then you had to know where the other person was at the exact moment, and what the landline number was. If they weren't next to the telephone, you couldn't make the call.

Today we have Twitter, WhatsApp, Telegram (not the old Morse code thing, but the competitor to WhatsApp) and many other chat platforms that allow you to speak to anyone around the world instantaneously. That is progress.

When it comes to social engineering, why are we still obsessed only about that which makes us different? Why are we not equally obsessed about praising that which also makes us one?

I get the argument for celebrating our diversity, considering where we come from – particularly as South Africans. Our history is yet another demonstration of the obsession we have with our differences.

Recognise that we are different and celebrate that diversity

Perhaps that is why I love science, because regardless of who comes up with a scientific concept, it doesn't belong to them. It may be named after them, but it belongs to all of humanity. No one owns an electron, for example. The scientists who first identified it and described its properties did not do something that no one else could have done; they simply did it first.

While on the subject of science, inventions and firsts, South Africans have also contributed immensely to the world's body of knowledge. We gave the world the first heart transplant, cheaper solar technology, digital laser, full body X-ray scanner, pre-paid airtime (did the guy get his millions?), pool cleaners, vaccine against yellow fever, Rocketseed email and many more.

We should recognise that we are different, and celebrate that diversity. But I think we should also actively seek and celebrate the things that make us a great species.

In case you did not know, none of us is going anywhere. We can like each other, get a heck lot more done to advance the species, or continue the braai talks of how “the blacks”, Indians, coloureds (mixed-race for the uninitiated) or whites are doing this or the other to some other group of people.

Not helpful. Human intelligence is very rare in the universe. Let us cherish our being, because we are special. All of us.

ABOUT TESS SULAMAN

Tess Sulaman is CEO of Rocketseed South Africa.

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