

What is your name?

Jasmine Baldwin

What is your gender?

Female

What ethnicity do you identify as?

African-American

What race do you identify as?

Black

Where were you born?

Miami, Florida

Where were your parents born?

Miami, Florida

Is your blackness unique or does it have similarities to other ethnicities?

In Miami, we are so blended, so yes there are similarities. Food is a large similarity. However, I feel like African-Americans are not as united as other ethnicities. I have friends of other ethnicities and they appear more united. Perhaps being in America makes other ethnicities hold on to their culture more. Identifying as African-American makes me feel different.

Do you feel like your blackness is questioned? If so, what aspects?

Yes, because the first question you get is where are you from? Or your parents? Or grandparents, because no one is from Miami. So there's this required proof of residence. I'm not Caribbean, I eat the food. But I'm not from there. Depending on where you are from within South Florida you get a label.

Do you believe there to be an implicit or explicit hierarchy of blackness? i.e. Is Afro-Cuban seen as lower than African-American in society?

I don't think there is a hierarchy. I have a friend who is of Haitian descent and her parents did not want her to be friends with the African-American students. So while I do not have that sense, my perception is that there is definitely one.

Did you grow up in a house or apartment?

House

How many people lived there?

3 people

Which of the following rooms were in your living space? Bedroom, Bathroom, Kitchen, Dining Room, Living Room, Den, Foyer, Library, Office, Front Porch, Back Porch, Balcony, Basement, Laundry Room, Front Yard, Back Yard

Bedroom, Bathroom, Kitchen, Dining Room, Living Room, Den, Foyer, Office, Back Porch, Laundry Room, Front Yard, Back Yard

What activities did you participate or witness in the kitchen or on the porch that is unique to your culture? If you did not have a formal porch, was there a communal space that acted as a porch?

Definitely pouring old cooking grease into pickle jars to be used later. And for smoking. Here in the suburbs, there isn't any people watching or anyone to speak with.

What type of non-conventional activities did you participate or witness in the kitchen, on the porch? If you did not have a formal porch, was there a communal space that acted as a porch?

Definitely hair in the kitchen. Hair also on the porch. Hanging out in the kitchen also.

A Spectrum of Blackness

Interview with Jasmine Baldwin  
by Germane Barnes

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What is your relationship to water?

The first thing that comes to mind is both my hair and the beach. I probably go twice a year, not to swim because I do not want to get my hair damaged. My relationship with water is not a good one. I do need to live near water however, it's a source of direction for me. Water makes me think of family outings. We would go to the beach as a family and those are great memories.

In what spaces do you feel liberated?

I think I feel liberated in the kitchen. When I do spend time there. The kitchen is the primary area. I feel free in my room, but that's obvious.

In what spaces do you feel restricted?

I feel restricted in the living room. Because I am the child, I do not feel comfortable taking over the room. When I take calls, I leave the room. I don't have control over the remote. My parent's are typically here as well and I have less ownership.

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