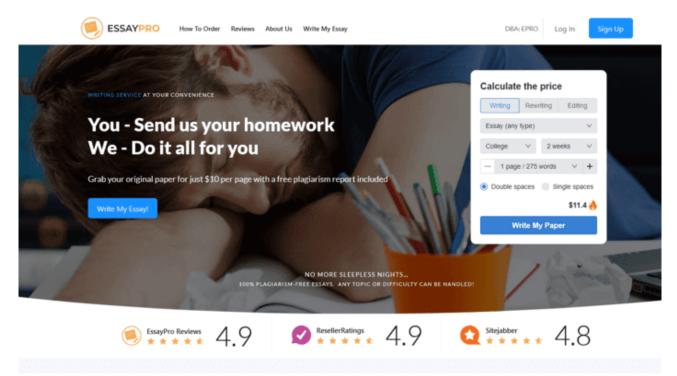
## Race and Racism - Racial Implications of an Advertisment



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Race and Racism - Racial Implications of an Advertisment
The other day, as I was trying to find a picture for this assignment, I stumbled across the picture at the top of the "personals" section of a local paper. On the surface, it seemed racially balanced. It certainly wasn't structured to make an outward statement about race. However, just the way it's laid out reflects subtle and probably unconscious judgements of the nature of race, and how it affects us. It has small, individual photos of six people, of varying race and age. The two people farthest to the left are a bit older, perhaps in their forties. I was not sure about one of the pictures: my first opinion was that it was a young Hispanic man, but she is really a partially African female. In short, there was variety here. However, the ad uses race to sell by avoiding the implication of interracial relationships, showing predominantly "white" people, and showing a mix of people from different races.
The ad does not explicitly show an interracial couple, even though people of many races advertise in the personals. The ad seems to avoid pairing people together as couples too much. There aren't any words like "Look what perfect couple found each other!" The

people probably are not professional models, either. The implication is that the people shown represent either the people who are advertising or all potential readers of an ad that one might place. Perhaps it is significant that there is a bit of a bias toward men in the ad; they are placed more to the left. A reader will generally see the men first as he scans the ad. This could mean that the service is trying to sell more to women. If so, it is also avoiding the implication that a customer might be placed in a ra...

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... even though it is not likely.

How many people look at the personal ads and decide not to date because they don't see their race there? Not many. That is what the creators of the ad intended. In a liberal society, people should not be overly concerned about racial differences when they are dating. They should not worry about class differences either. I have heard advice that it is harder for interracial couples to have a successful marriage, because of cultural differences, but the person who issued this hastily remarked that this was the only problem, and that one says a false doctrine by saying that one race or another is inferior. In the end, one could use this ad in racist or race-unifying arguments, in spite of the intentions of the authors. I am simply glad that I don't have to use it to find potential dating contacts. (At any rate, I haven't done so yet.)

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