

Press Kit



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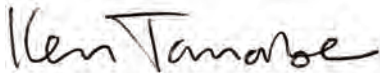
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- Access to experts

Please don't hesitate to contact me at any time. My team and I look forward to assisting you.

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ken Tanabe". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ken Tanabe
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ken@lovingday.org
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Loving Day Events Grow Globally As 9 Million Americans Identify as Multiracial

New York, NY (May 29, 2011)

Loving Day, the world's largest network of multiracial celebrations, is experiencing record growth in the wake of the 2010 Census results.

The Loving Day Campaign is pleased to announce its eighth year of global celebrations to mark the anniversary of Loving v Virginia (1967), the Supreme Court decision that legalized interracial marriage in the United States. According to the recent US Census Brief entitled "Overview of Race and Hispanic Origin: 2010," over 9 million people selected "Two or More Races." That's over 2 million more than in 2000, which is a 32% increase. Before 2000, it was not possible to select more than one race. According to the Pew Research Center, one in seven new marriages in the United States are between people of different races. Loving Day Celebrations are positioned to become more popular than ever as more people embrace their multicultural identity.

The Loving Day Flagship Celebration in New York City will be the largest event in 2011 with over 1000 guests expected. It will be held on Sunday, June 12th from 3:00-7:00 PM at Solar 1, located on the East River waterfront at 23rd Street in Manhattan (2420 FDR Drive, Service Road East, New York, NY 10010). Free barbecue will be served all day and free beer will be served for the first hour. There will be free performances by one of New York City's top DJ's, DJ Spooky, among others. This year's celebration is generously sponsored by Asahi, Puma, Mixed Child, World Up, and Solar One and, as always, the event is open to everyone of all ages.

Thousands of others will participate in annual Loving Day Celebrations on or around June 12th by attending large public events in major cities or by hosting private celebrations for their friends and families. The celebrations are as diverse as the people who host and attend them. Events range in size from about twenty guests for private groups to many hundreds for the largest public gatherings. Events are planned in cities nationwide, and as far away as Japan.

Story Corps will hold a special community recording and art-making day for multiracial, multiethnic and mixed heritage individuals, couples and families at the Contemporary Jewish Museum in San Francisco. The Mixed Roots Film and Literary Festival is the largest Loving Day Celebration on the West Coast. It will be held at the Japanese American National Museum in Los Angeles. As of this writing, public Loving Day events will also take place in Washington, DC; Chicago IL; New Orleans, LA; Cambridge, MA; Seattle WA; Philadelphia PA; Miami FL; Orlando FL; Tallahassee, FL; Atlanta, GA; Wichita KS; Wilmington DE; St. Louis, MO; Fort Collins CO; Fulton MS; Griffin, GA; Mayfield Village, OH; and Middletown CT. In Japan, Loving Day Celebrations will take place in Tokyo and Kobe.

Through an ever-growing number of celebrations and through a year-round online campaign, The Loving Day Project fights racial prejudice through education and builds multicultural community. For more information on this year's Loving Day events, please visit us online at: <http://www.lovingday.org>

About the Loving Day Project

The annual Loving Day celebrations commemorate Loving v. Virginia (1967), the Supreme Court case that legalized interracial relationships in America. The project uses digital media to provide educational resources and to encourage people nationwide to host their own celebrations on or around June 12th. Loving Day teaches people about the history of interracial couples in America. Loving Day Celebrations are an annual tradition that will one day make the Loving case a universally recognized civil rights landmark.

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Quick Facts

Background:

- Loving Day is named after Loving v. Virginia (1967), the Supreme Court case that legalized interracial marriage in the United States.
- Loving Day's mission is to fight racial prejudice through education and to build multicultural community.
- We encourage people and organizations to celebrate Loving Day on (or around) the anniversary of the Loving v. Virginia court decision on June 12th.

Context:

- According to the latest US Census, over 9 million people selected "Two or More Races" (2 million more than in 2000, a 32% increase).
- According to a 2010 Pew Research Center study, one in seven new U.S. marriages is interracial or interethnic.
- When Barack Obama's parents got married, it was illegal in 22 states.

Loving Day Celebrations:

- We host the largest event: the Loving Day Flagship Celebration in New York City. Every year, a diverse group of about 1,000 guests enjoy free BBQ, drinks, and DJ's in a community festival atmosphere on the East River waterfront.
- Loving Day is celebrated nationwide in large cities like New York and Los Angeles, small cities like Wichita, KS and Idaho Falls, ID, and internationally in cities like Tokyo and Barcelona.
- Loving Day Celebrations are as diverse as the people who participate. These events take many forms, like a backyard barbecue, a picnic in the park, or a gathering at a restaurant or bar. Larger events include the Mixed Roots Film and Literary Festival at the Japanese American National Museum in Los Angeles.

Educational Activities:

- Loving Day participates in academic conferences, including the Harvard SWAYA conference on mixed heritage, the Hapa Japan Conference at the University of California (Berkeley), and the Critical Mixed Race Studies Conference at DePaul University in Chicago.

- Loving Day collaborates with student organizations to host film screenings, panel discussions, and other educational events at universities including Columbia and NYU.
- Loving Day provides free educational resources on the LovingDay.org website, including an interactive legal map, courtroom history, and links to additional educational materials.

The Vision:

- We see Loving Day becoming a global annual tradition that is shared among friends and passed down from generation to generation.
- We see Loving Day as a way for people to discover their multiethnic/multicultural identity, and to provide a shared experience that connects them.
- Loving Day has already been officially recognized by a few local governments, it has been mentioned on the floor of House of Representatives, and we would like to see more official recognition of Loving Day.

Fun Facts:

- Many people choose to get married on Loving Day (June 12th).
- Some of the more unusual Loving Day Celebration ideas include a Loving Day cruise, and a Loving Day celebration at Disney World.
- The Loving Day heart/shield logo has been expressed in many forms, including cakes and tattoos.

The Founder/President:

- Loving Day was founded by Ken Tanabe in 2004 as his graduate thesis project at Parsons the New School for Design in New York City.
- Ken Tanabe is of multiethnic heritage: his father is Japanese and his mother is Belgian.
- Ken Tanabe is a freelance art director and graphic designer working in New York City. He also teaches at Parsons the New School for Design.



BRIEF HISTORY

Loving Day

By **CHRISTOPHER SHAY** Friday, Jun. 11, 2010

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Mildred and Richard Loving at a press conference after the Supreme Court ruled that their interracial marriage was legal in *Loving v. Virginia*
Francis Miller / Time & Life Pictures / Getty Images

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In February 1961, Barack Obama's parents did something that was illegal in 22 states and that 96% of the population disapproved of: they got married. In fact, interracial marriage, sex and cohabitation would remain illegal in much of the U.S. for another six years. Then on June 12, 1967, in the case *Loving v. Virginia*, the Supreme Court unanimously struck down the country's anti-miscegenation laws, allowing interracial couples across the country to marry. Thirteen years after *Brown v. Board of Education*, the court took the last legal teeth out of the Jim Crow era, ridding the U.S. of its last major piece of state-sanctioned segregation. June 12 has since become a grass-roots holiday in the U.S., especially for multiracial couples and families. Known as Loving Day, the celebration commemorates the 1967 case and fights prejudice against mixed-race couples, and is a reason to throw an awesome, inclusive party.

As the long-running state-tourism campaign claims, Virginia is for lovers, but that hasn't always been true. In 1958, Richard and Mildred Loving got married in Washington, D.C., where interracial marriage was legal. But one night when Richard, who was white, and Mildred, who was black and Native American, were sleeping in their Virginia home, three police officers burst inside, shined flashlights in their faces and told them that their Washington marriage certificate was "no good." The newlyweds were arrested and threatened with jail time. A Virginia judge looked down at the couple from his bench and

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told them, "Almighty God created the races white, black, yellow, Malay and red, and he placed them on separate continents. The fact that he separated the races shows that he did not intend for the races to mix." He sentenced Richard and Mildred to a year in jail each, citing an 1883 Supreme Court case that said if a mixed-race couple were punished equally, there would be no discrimination.

(See pictures of the civil rights movement.)

To avoid prison, the Lovings agreed to move to Washington and not return to Virginia for 25 years. After five years, however, the couple longed to see their family and friends in Virginia. With the help of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), they fought their way to the Supreme Court. An ACLU lawyer recalled when Richard simply stated what the legal argument should be: "Tell the court I love my wife, and it is just unfair that I can't live with her in Virginia." On June 12, 1967, the Supreme Court agreed. Chief Justice Earl Warren delivered the opinion, writing that anti-miscegenation laws "deprive the Lovings of liberty" and that the "freedom to marry has long been recognized as one of the vital personal rights essential to the orderly pursuit of happiness." Virginia's anti-miscegenation laws had been on the books for 305 years.

(See a 1967 TIME story on the Loving v. Virginia ruling.)

Sadly, the happy marriage was cut short. Richard was killed in a car accident in 1975. Mildred, who never remarried, passed away in 2008. The Lovings' case may have ended the last vestiges of legal segregation, but attitudes take longer to change. As late as 1987, a full 20 years after the case, only 48% of Americans said it was acceptable for blacks and whites to date. That number has since jumped to 83%, according to the Pew Research Center. In 2010, the center estimated that 1 in 7 new marriages in the U.S. is now an interracial coupling. In 1961, the year Obama's parents married, only 1 in a 1,000 marriages included a black person and a white person; today, it's 1 in 60.

The idea for Loving Day came from one person, Ken Tanabe. In 2004, while a student at Parsons the New School for Design, Tanabe created Loving Day as part of his senior thesis. Growing up, he had never heard of the Lovings, and as a person of mixed-race heritage, he wanted that to change. He created a [website](#) to educate people about the history of mixed-race marriages and encouraged people to host their own Loving Day gatherings to create an annual tradition for the mixed-race community. In 2004, there were two large public celebrations — one in New York City and one in Seattle. Now Loving Day is the biggest multiracial celebration in the U.S., with public events in most large cities across the country. This year will be the seventh annual Loving Day celebration, and if previous years are any indication, it will be the biggest yet.

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Loving Day Recalls a Time When the Union of a Man And a Woman Was Banned

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By [Neely Tucker](#)
Washington Post Staff Writer
Tuesday, June 13, 2006; Page C01

The word "miscegenation" is a linguistic artifact, a sort of postmodern joke, a term most often used with a sense of irony.

But at a backyard barbecue in the District on Sunday afternoon that was dedicated to the joys and intricacies of interracial love, sex and marriage, Lydia and Peter Mosher remembered when bans on interracial relationships were deadly serious. Such laws began in Maryland in 1661, multiplied across the country and did not end until a Virginia case in 1967. No one needs a reminder about the fate of black men who had sex with white women in the Jim Crow era.

Even for others, it wasn't easy: "We keep things as normalized as possible." This is Peter Mosher talking in a follow-up phone call, describing his marriage of 43 years. "But maybe we still carry some baggage from the 1950s, the 1960s. Maybe we watch our backs a little more." Peter is white; his wife is black.

Monday was, by city proclamation, Loving Day in the nation's capital, recognizing the 39th anniversary of *Loving v. Virginia*, the 1967 Supreme Court decision that overturned miscegenation laws in Virginia and 15 other states, all in the South. It was the end of the last piece of state-sanctioned segregation.

That decision has, in the ensuing years, changed the way the nation looks -- the percentage of interracial marriages has increased fivefold from 1970 to 2000, according the U.S. Census, from 1 percent of all marriages to more than 5 percent. The number of children living in interracial families has quadrupled in that time period, going from 900,000 to more than 3 million, and the Census Bureau predicts that such interracial unions will continue to increase.

District-born Ken Tanabe, a 28-year-old product of that interracial boom, is laboring

[Enlarge This Photo](#)



The lovingday.org Web site celebrates the legalization of interracial marriage. Yesterday was proclaimed Loving Day in Washington. (Lovingday.org)

TUESDAY, JUNE 13, AT 11 A.M. ET

[Black Men in Interracial Relationships](#)

Kellina Craig-Henderson, professor of psychology at Howard University, discussed her new book, *Black Men in Interracial Relationships*, which examines the role race plays in relationships between black men and women of other races. Craig-Henderson was online Tuesday, June 13 at 11 a.m. ET.

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mightily to turn June 12 into a national *Loving Day* -- a grass-roots observation of the court case and the nation's growing mixed-race heritage. Starting from scratch three years ago, he's built a history-filled Web site (<http://www.lovingday.org/>) and networked with multiracial advocacy groups to create parties and celebrations in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Seattle and other cities. Lydia and Peter Mosher attended a small backyard barbecue in the Takoma neighborhood of Northwest Washington to mark the occasion in the city where so much of the *Loving v. Virginia* case took place.

"The primary focus is to fight the racism that still exists today," Tanabe, a broadcast graphics designer in New York, said in a telephone interview yesterday. He was fresh off interviews in the Gotham media circuit, hitting CBS's morning show and appearing as the subject of a question-and-answer feature in the *Village Voice*. (Tanabe is the son of Francis Tanabe, an editor in The Washington Post's Book World section). "We're talking about hundreds of years of history, laws from the Colonial era that extended even past segregation; Alabama didn't take their law off the books until six years ago. The idea is to build it into a type of Juneteenth celebration that people observe across the country."

That may be possible, says Jungmiwha Bullock, president of the Association of Multi-Ethnic Americans, a Los Angeles-based umbrella organization that advocates for multiracial Americans on such issues as categories on census forms and mixed-race adoptions. The organization sponsored several parties over the weekend, and will host a nationwide conference call this month to plan for a major national observation next year, on the 40th anniversary.

"I don't know that people know about and understand the impact of that court case," Bullock says. "I mean, how many of us mixed-race kids would have been born without it? That's a pretty fundamental change in society."

The *Loving* case started in rural Caroline County, Va., about 100 miles south of the District. Richard Loving and Mildred Jeter were young people in love. She was just 18. She was black and he was white. They traveled in 1958 to the District, where interracial marriages were legal, took their vows, came home and, at 2 a.m., were arrested in bed by deputies. They were prosecuted and sentenced to a year in jail. Caroline County Circuit Court Judge Leon Bazile suspended the sentence -- so long as the couple left the state and did not return together for a quarter-century.

"Almighty God created the races, white, black, yellow, Malay, and red and placed them on separate continents, and but for the interference with his arrangement there would be no cause for such marriages. The fact that he separated the races shows that he did not intend the races to mix," Bazile ruled.

The Lovings moved in exile to the District. And then they sued.

It was not until 1967, 13 years after *Brown v. Board of Education* ended segregated schools, that the U.S. Supreme Court struck down the law.

Richard Loving was killed in a car accident in 1975; Mildred Loving, now in her late sixties, still lives in Virginia but rarely gives interviews.

"Since the older generation is dying," she told *The Post* in a 1992 interview, "the younger ones . . . realize that if someone loves someone they have a right to marry."

Nearly 15 years later, a young man who is part Japanese and part Belgian says it is a point worth remembering.

"Most people don't think of the *Loving* decision as a civil rights case, but more as a personal preference thing," Ken Tanabe says in a phone interview. "But it goes to the most fundamental sense of who we are as human beings, and how we live our lives."

'Loving Day' Personified in Presidential Race

by JOHN RIDLEY



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June 12, 2008

text size **A A A**

June 12 is celebrated by many interracial couples and families as "Loving Day." It's the day in 1967 when the U.S. Supreme Court overturned the laws banning interracial marriage. The day is named for the couple who brought the case to court, Richard and Mildred Loving.

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STEVE INSKEEP, host:

This day, June 12th, is a holiday for some Americans. It's not on the federal holiday calendar, but it is on the calendar of MORNING EDITION commentator John Ridley.

JOHN RIDLEY: Forty-one years ago the Green Bay Packers were champs of the first Super Bowl; the Jimi Hendrix Experience released their debut album; and interracial couples could still not legally marry in 16 of these 50 United States. Hence the significance of June 12th - Loving Day, a little observed by considerable day of remembrance, particularly for those with some connection to an interracial relationship, as Loving Day marks the end of one of the last slave laws that remained on the books in many Southern states.

Now, Loving Day is not named for the emotion loving, but fittingly for Richard Loving and his wife Mildred. Richard was white and Mildred was black, and when they were married in 1958 their home state of Virginia was one of those 16 that considered the two of them being together just plain criminal.

Now, for a lot of you youngsters raised in a multicultural society I'm sure it's hard to believe people could get so bent that actually write laws restricting affairs of the heart. But interracial marriage was once a severely odious concept.

In 1912, Congressman Seaborn Roddenberry of Georgia tried to introduce an amendment to the Constitution banning such unions. To his colleagues in Congress he lectured: It is contrary and adverse to every sentiment to pure American spirit; no more voracious parasite ever sucked at the heart of pure society and moral status than the one which welcomes or recognizes everywhere the sacred ties of wedlock between Africa and America.

Aren't you glad we're living in a time when politicians don't use relationships between consenting adults as wedge issues? But I digress.

The Lovings spent time in jail for the high crime of being married to each other, were forced to move from Virginia, and then on June 12th of 1967 the U.S. Supreme Court overturned the Lovings' criminal conviction and struck down all laws against interracial marriage.

Though their only desire was to spend a lifetime together, sadly it was not meant to be for the

Lovings. Richard was killed in a 1975 car accident; Mildred passed away on May 2nd of this year. Well, they're together again now.

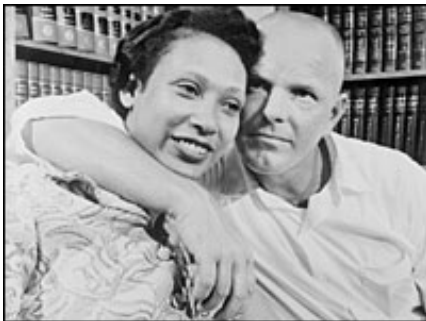
For millions of mixed race couples and their families, this Loving Day is one to be particularly celebrated. It arrives on the heels of history and is personified in Barack Obama's candidacy. Forty-one years after the laws were struck down, just 41 years, and now the son of a relationship once considered contrary to every sentiment of pure American spirit is one step removed from the American people placing him into the highest office in the land.

INSKEEP: Commentator John Ridley.

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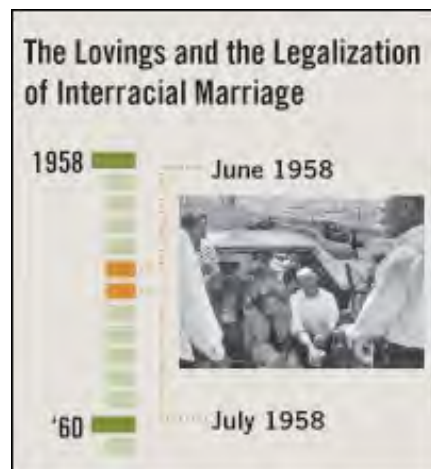
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Loving Decision: 40 Years of Legal Interracial Unions



Bettmann/Corbis

Richard and Mildred Loving gave their name to the landmark Supreme Court ruling that struck down anti-miscegenation laws in more than a dozen states.



Lindsay Mangum, NPR

[Follow a timeline of the Lovings' legal battle](#)

June 11, 2007

This week marks the 40th anniversary of a seminal moment in the civil rights movement: the legalization of interracial marriage. But the couple at the heart of the landmark Supreme Court case of *Loving v. Virginia* never intended to be in the spotlight.

On June 12, 1967, the nation's highest court voted unanimously to overturn the conviction of Richard and Mildred Loving, a young interracial couple from rural Caroline County, Va.

That decision struck down the anti-miscegenation laws — written to prevent the mixing of the races — that were on the books at the time in more than a dozen states, including Virginia.

'They Just Were in Love'

Richard Loving was white; his wife, Mildred, was black. In 1958, they went to Washington, D.C. — where interracial marriage was legal — to get married. But when they returned home, they were arrested, jailed and banished from the state for 25 years for violating the state's Racial Integrity Act.

To avoid jail, the Lovings agreed to leave Virginia and relocate to Washington.

For five years, the Lovings lived in Washington, where Richard

The Movies and 'Loving'

'Dinner' and a Show: Race, Romance in Pop Culture
June 15, 2007



Grey Villet/Time Life Pictures/Getty Images

Richard Loving poses with his son, Donald, in 1965.



Melissa Gray, NPR

Bernard Cohen and Michele Norris examine a scrapbook of newspaper clippings about the case. Cohen, now retired, was one of two lawyers who argued the *Loving* case before the Supreme Court.

Attorney Bernard Cohen Argues the Lovings' Case Before the Supreme Court

worked as a bricklayer. The couple had three children. Yet they longed to return home to their family and friends in Caroline County.

That's when the couple contacted Bernard Cohen, a young attorney who was volunteering at the ACLU. They requested that Cohen ask the Caroline County judge to reconsider his decision.

"They were very simple people, who were not interested in winning any civil rights principle," Cohen, now retired, tells Michele Norris.

"They just were in love with one another and wanted the right to live together as husband and wife in Virginia, without any interference from officialdom. When I told Richard that this case was, in all likelihood, going to go to the Supreme Court of the United States, he became wide-eyed and his jaw dropped," Cohen recalls.

Road to the High Court

Cohen and another lawyer challenged the Lovings' conviction, but the original judge in the case upheld his decision. Judge Leon Bazile wrote: "Almighty God created the races white, black, yellow, Malay and red, and he placed them on separate continents. ... The fact that he separated the races shows that he did not intend for the races to mix."

As Cohen predicted, the case moved all the way up to the Supreme Court, where the young ACLU attorney made a vivid and personal argument:

"The Lovings have the right to go to sleep at night knowing that if should they not wake in the morning, their children would have the right to inherit from them. They have the right to be secure in knowing that, if they go to sleep and do not wake in the morning, that one of them, a survivor of them, has the right to Social Security benefits. All of these are denied to them, and they will not be denied to them if the whole anti-miscegenistic scheme of Virginia... [is] found unconstitutional."

After the ruling — now known as the "Loving Decision" — the family, which had already quietly moved back to Virginia, finally returned home to Caroline County.

But their time together was cut short: Richard Loving died in a car crash in 1975. Mildred Loving, who never remarried, still lives in Caroline County in the house that Richard built. She politely refuses to give interviews.

Interracial Couples Today



Melissa Gray. NPR

The Lovings made front-page news around the country and were featured in magazines such as *Newsweek* and *Life*.



Courtesy of Anna Blazer

Bryan Walker, Anna Blazer and their two children, Brianna and Brandon, live just miles from the Caroline County courthouse. They have endured sneers, taunts and even violence from strangers.

Since that ruling 40 years ago, interracial marriage has become more common, but remains relatively rare. Sociologists estimate that 7 percent of the nation's 59 million marriages are mixed-race couplings.

And even now, interracial marriage remains a source of quiet debate over questions of identity, assimilation and acceptance.

Take Anna Blazer and Bryan Walker, for instance. The white woman and her black husband, with their two young children, live just miles from the Caroline County courthouse. Donald Loving, a grandson of Richard and Mildred Loving, introduced the couple when they were teenagers.

Blazer, now 23, says her family was initially wary of her then-boyfriend because of his race.

"My mom was a little weird with it, because he used to wear this really long — they call it bling-bling — he used to wear a bling-bling cross around his neck and baggy pants. And I don't know, she just kind of looked at him kind of funny when she first met him," Blazer remembers.

But over the years her mother has warmed to Walker, 21.

Blazer says that although many things have changed since the days of anti-miscegenation laws, life is still difficult for them in Caroline County. The couple endures sneers, sideways glances and more from strangers.

"Just a couple of months ago... Bryan got beat up in the Wal-Mart parking lot because he was with me and my sister, and these white men came up to him and they were yelling. The guy ripped off his shirt. He had racial slurs all over him...and they just started going at it," Blazer says.

"I think my life would be a whole lot easier if I was with a white man. And Bryan feels the same way, but he loves me. He really does. And we are meant to be together," Blazer says.

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