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## ***The Tale of the Tee* Shares Honest Conversations Between Two Men -- BK Fulton and Jonathan Blank -- on Race in America Today**

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Richmond, VA (August 4, 2020) – A week-long discourse of chronicled emails and shared writings between two acquaintances – entrepreneur, filmmaker and author, BK Fulton, and attorney and activist, Jonathan Blank – during significant events in June 2020 to eradicate racial inequality has been published in *The Tale of the Tee: Be Kind and Just Believe*.

BK Fulton and Jonathan Blank did not know each other prior to June 14, 2020. A simple act of kindness prompted the two men, one African American and one Jewish, to begin a chain of emails and interactions that resulted in an extraordinary friendship. *The Tale of the Tee* captures the events that sparked a brotherhood.

Published by Owl Publishing, the 61-page narrative provides context around the tragic death of George Floyd on May 25, 2020, and the protests against police violence toward Black people that ignited in city streets across the United States and around the world. The book takes readers to Fulton and Blank’s hometown of Richmond, Virginia, once the so-called Capital of the Confederacy. It shares photos of the city’s people who peacefully support Black Lives Matter in opposition to the Confederate monuments once heralded in this city. The book includes a newspaper photo of Fulton’s wife, attorney Jacquelyn E. Stone, Esq., who also is Blank’s law partner, cleaning graffiti from an historical marker honoring Civil Rights pioneer Oliver Hill.

Seeing this simple act of kindness in his local paper, Blank wrote to Stone, who in turn connected him with Fulton. Throughout the week, the two men shared their thoughts and writings, which are encapsulated in *The Tale of the Tee*. The book includes:



- The first virtual Virginia Commonwealth University da Vinci Center [commencement address](#) which was delivered by Fulton entitled “Remembering Those on the Margins.” The powerful speech encourages graduates to not accept mediocrity and to recognize that many important contributions to humanity come from people on the margins of society;
- An [Op-Ed](#) by Fulton entitled “The Divine Puzzle of Life as Seen by a Native Son of Virginia”;
- Review excerpts from the critically acclaimed and recently released film, “[1 Angry Black Man](#),” produced by Fulton’s Soulidify Productions; and
- A [Letter to the Editor](#) by Blank, entitled “Confederate Symbols Must Go at Freeman High School,” published in the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*.

“Our friendship teaches us that small acts can have ripple effects,” said Fulton. “I hope it will guide those of different ethnic and economic backgrounds to talk to one another, to tell their stories. We need to continue this healing across the United States and around the globe, if we want to reconstruct a culture, a society, a country, a world in which all people are equal, recognized for their inherent value and contributions, and supported in order for all of us to become the best version of ourselves.”

The book’s title, *The Tale of the Tee*, reflects a golf tee that both men carry with them at all times, symbolizing their bond and the work they must continue to do to advance civil society. They also carry the tee in honor of Dr. George Franklin Grant, inventor of the golf tee, who is among many people of African descent whose inventions, art, theories and other contributions have been left out of history books.



“We’ve been wrong to glorify monuments, names and symbols of those who fought to keep people of color on the margins,” said Blank. “There is much anti-racism work left to be done in the United States. I hope the events of 2020 can truly start a healing process from our past, where history is truthfully told for the benefit of all people.”

*The Tale of the Tee: Be Kind and Just Believe* will be available from major online book sellers on August 6<sup>th</sup>, the anniversary of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Access here for pre-order: <https://www.soulidify.com/thetaleofthetee>.

## **About BK Fulton**

BK Fulton is the founding Chairman & CEO of [Soulidify Productions](#), a feature film and media investment company designed to promote a more inclusive narrative in contemporary media. Fulton is also the author of the popular *Mr. Business: The Adventures of Little BK* children's book series and founder of SoulVision Magazine and SoulVision.TV. Prior to becoming a full-time author and media entrepreneur, Fulton was Vice President of the Mid-Atlantic Region (VA, MD, DC, DE) for Verizon Communications, Inc. and President of Verizon Virginia and West Virginia. He has also held senior leadership, media, technology and policy development posts with the U.S. Department of Commerce, AOL, Time Warner and the National Urban League. BK is a ComputerWorld Smithsonian Laureate Medal recipient, and his thought-leading papers on technology and community building are permanently archived at the Smithsonian Institution. He holds a Bachelor's degree from Virginia Tech, a Master of Science degree and Sloan Fellowship from Harvard's Kennedy School of Government and the New School's Milano School of Management and Policy Analysis, and a Juris Doctorate from New York Law School. Fulton is the father of twin boys (Joshua and Terrell) and is married to Jacquelyn E. Stone, Esq.

## **About Jonathan Blank**

Since 1995, Jonathan Blank has practiced law with McGuireWoods from its Richmond, Baltimore and Charlottesville offices. His national commercial practice concentrates on energy law with a special interest in alternative energy. His pro bono practice has included co-leading America's seminal human trafficking case, Virginia's repeal of automatic suspension of licenses for failure to pay court costs and fines, and a number of Innocence Project cases. Jonathan worked for Governor L. Douglas Wilder's speechwriters and policy directors team, was appointed by Governor Mark Warner to serve on Virginia's Motor Vehicle Dealer Board, and was appointed by Governor Timothy Kaine to serve on Virginia's Board of Corrections. He served as the Charlottesville Democratic Party Chairman from 2008 to 2010. He also was President of the Virginia Legal Aid Justice Center, where he continues to serve on its Board. He and his wife, Dr. Susan Blank, have two sets of twin daughters – Madeline and Alexandra, and Caroline and Isabel.

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## **Acclaim for *The Tale of the Tee***

**CHRISTY S. COLEMAN, public historian and named by *Time* as one of "31 People Changing the South":** "The Tale of the Tee is an example of the power of listening, learning and truly hearing one another in an effort to forge deeper understanding and lasting relationships across cultural, ethnic and racial identity. It is a story of two men connecting one email at a time. BK Fulton and Jonathan Blank let us into their private exchanges as they delve deeper to examine what happens when society finds greater comfort in false, indoctrinating narratives than the historical truths. This is a read that will leave you considering how a simple object has the power to transform."

**DAVID L. ROBBINS, *New York Times* bestselling author:** "Using shared emails, speeches and articles the two have crafted, BK Fulton and Jonathan Blank have distilled the essence of our national conversation on race. The Tale of the Tee is both intense and important. It is one of the many matches that will ignite a new consciousness in America. Read it and see more clearly by its light."

**ADRIANA TRIGIANI, *New York Times* bestselling author, award-winning playwright, television writer/producer and film director/writer:** "BK Fulton and Jonathan Blank are in conversation about race in America. They explore the meaning of truth, and how to forge relationships and seek solutions in a

world that appears intent to divide us. Blessedly, Fulton and Blank are not having it - they seek connection, shared ideas for change and the notion that respect is not a destination but an acknowledgement of our mutual pain that leads to understanding. In this the watershed moment in American history, the authors are on the front lines with empathy, vision and open minds and hearts. The Tale of the Tee will lift you up, it is essential reading."