

Race, then and now

Exhibit at Museum of Man explores racial relations through history, science and experience



“Race: Are We So Different?” was developed by the American Anthropological Association and the Science Museum of Minnesota. Each day at 1:30 p.m., a trained volunteer will guide visitors through the small but highly detailed exhibit.

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SPECIAL TO THE U-T

Exploring race relations may not provide the typical panoramas you’d expect on your vacation or day off, but an exhibition at the San Diego Museum of Man is definitely eye-opening. “Race: Are We So Different?” runs through May 15 at the Balboa Park museum.

The exhibit not only gets the mind spinning, but can also be an emotional ride.

Thought-provoking videos and entertaining, hands-on activities are designed to appeal to adults, teens and middle-school-age children. Youngsters can play with puppets while parents and older siblings delve deeper into exhibit material. A display of posters about race — created by local students — should intrigue visitors of every age.

Developed by the American Anthropological Association and the Science Museum of Minnesota, this

small but detail-packed exhibition is divided into three themes: science, U.S. history and the “lived” experience of race. Each day at 1:30 p.m., one of eight trained volunteers introduces visitors to the concepts of the exhibit. Cheryl Phelps guided my group with insight and a warm sense of humor, important traits for a tour through such tricky terrain.

The scientific segment, which explains how people have adapted through the

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centuries, challenges many common assumptions about race. The historic segment explores the evolution of the U.S. Constitution and the census, in terms of race. Did you know there was a census category called “free white” in the 1800s?

Phelps led spirited conversations with the dozen or so visitors in my group, especially in the life-experience section. Disparities in privilege and wealth among races were two of the pro-

vocative topics discussed.

Tours, which run between 30 and 90 minutes, are not a must, but enhance individual exploration of the displays.

On May 1, in conjunction with this exhibition, Marcie Denberg-Serra will speak about the efforts of her organization, the Anti-Defamation League, which fights anti-Semitism and bigotry of all kinds. The talk will take place from 1 to 3 p.m. at the museum and is free with admission.

“Race: Are We So Different?”

Where: [Museum of Man](#),
1350 El Prado, Balboa
Park

Admission: Adults
\$12.50; ages 13-17 \$7.50;
seniors, students with
ID, active military with ID
\$7.50; ages 3-12 \$5.00;
children under 3 free.

Hours: 10 a.m. to 4:30
p.m. daily; guided tours
(free with admission):
1:30 p.m. daily.

Phone: (619) 239-2001

Online: [museumofman.org](#)

Bonus attraction

At no extra charge, check out these other worthwhile exhibitions at the Museum of Man:

“Counter Cultures: The Secret Lives of Games” (through June 27): Be a game piece and follow the board through the evolution of games. Explore all kinds — famous and obscure, U.S.-based and international — and then sit down and play, or even create, a game in the players’ lounge.

“Strange Bones: Curiosities of the Human Skeleton” (through January): Not just any bones are displayed here. Fractured bones that didn’t heal right and others impacted by scurvy are among those featured.