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## I ran from it and was still in it

William L. Blizek

University of Nebraska at Omaha, wblizek@unomaha.edu

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## I ran from it and was still in it

### Abstract

This is a film review of the short film, *I ran from it and was still in it* (2020), directed by Darol Oku Kae.

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### Author Notes

William Blizek is the Founding Editor of the Journal of Religion and Film and is Emeritus Professor of Philosophy and Religion at the University of Nebraska-Omaha. He is also the editor of the *Continuum Companion to Religion and Film* (2009).



**I ran from it and was still in it (2020), dir. Darol Oku Kae**

This is an amazing and remarkably timely film. It deals with racism in America. Although many of its images come from the past, it could not be more important to understand racism in 21<sup>st</sup> century America.

Early in the film we see someone's claim that "Negroes live on another level of experience." The images of this short film then **show** the viewer the truth of this statement—filmmaking at its best. This reminds me of watching Van Jones talking about having "the talk" with his son on CNN. What's changed?

Later in the film we see Malcolm X claiming that in order to deal with the situation we have to "go to the root." We have to "go to the cause." "Dealing with the condition itself is not enough. We have to get to the cause of it all." These comments were made in 1962 and we are still talking about whether or not there is systemic racism. In making those comments Malcolm X is still challenging our approach to racism in America. We are still trying to deal with the condition itself and failing to deal with the root, the cause.

From the perspective of religion, we must ask where the voices of religion are to be found. When a state legislator promotes voter suppression, does the religious community shout out to condemn such efforts. When we find people of color going hungry, does the religious community shout out to condemn poverty (the root, the cause), or do religions simply ask for more contributions to their food banks—the condition itself?

All of this and more comes in roughly ten minutes.