
SYSTEMIC RACISM, BLACK LIVES MATTER AND THE WELLBEING ECONOMY

A Few Helpful Definitions (1/4)

Oppression - The systematic subjugation of one social group by a more powerful social group for the social, economic, and political benefit of the more powerful social group. Oppressed groups typically internalize the negative messages about them and end up cooperating with the oppressors (thinking and acting like them). Oppression = Power + Prejudice

Interpersonal Racism - When someone can take their misinformation and stereotypes towards another group and perform an act of harassment, exclusion, marginalization, discrimination, hate or violence they are committing an act of interpersonal racism towards an individual or group. But the system of racism is much larger than these personal acts. And racism would not be eliminated by ending these individual acts. If we limit our discussion to these interpersonal acts, we end up focusing on the impact of individual "rotten apples."

Institutional Racism - refers specifically to the ways in which institutional policies, procedures and practices create different outcomes for different racial groups. Racism is built into the policies, procedures, and everyday practices of the health care system, the education system, the job market, the housing market, the media, and the criminal "justice" system to name a few. That means that it operates both systematically and without the need for individual racist acts.

Examples:

- Government policies that explicitly restricted the ability of people to get loans to buy or improve their homes in neighborhoods with high concentrations of African Americans (also known as "red-lining").
- City sanitation department policies that concentrate trash transfer stations and other environmental hazards disproportionately in communities of color.

Structural Racism - The cumulative impact of interpersonal and institutional racism within our society. The racism of different institutions overlap, reinforce, and amplify each other. We can see structural racism in the many institutional, cultural and structural factors that contribute to lower life expectancy for African American and Native American men, compared to white men. They are playing out in real time with the COVID-19 pandemic and include higher exposure to environmental toxins, dangerous jobs and unhealthy housing stock, higher exposure to and more lethal consequences for reacting to violence, stress and racism, lower rates of health care coverage, access and quality of care and systematic refusal by the nation to fix these things.

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A Few Helpful Definitions (2/4)

White Supremacy - The ideology that white people and the thoughts, beliefs, and actions of white people are superior to People of Color and their ideas, thoughts, beliefs, and actions. While most people associate white supremacy with extremist groups like the Ku Klux Klan and the neo-Nazis, white supremacy is ever present in our institutional and cultural assumptions that assign value, morality, goodness, and humanity to the white group while casting people and communities of color as worthless (worth less), immoral, bad, inhuman and "undeserving."

Whiteness - The term white, referring to people, was created by Virginia slave owners and colonial rules in the 17th century. It replaced terms like Christian and Englishman to distinguish European colonists from Africans and indigenous peoples. European colonial powers established whiteness as a legal concept after Bacon's Rebellion in 1676, during which indentured servants of European and African descent had united against the colonial elite. The legal distinction of white separated the servant class on the basis of skin color and continental origin. The creation of 'whiteness' meant giving privileges to some, while denying them to others with the justification of biological and social inferiority.

White Fragility - A state in which even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable for white people, triggering a range of defensive moves. These moves include the outward display of emotions such as anger, fear, and guilt, and behaviors such as argumentation, silence, and leaving the stress-inducing situation. These behaviors, in turn, function to reinstate white racial equilibrium." Because most of us consciously experience ourselves as good, moral, and decent human beings, the realization that we hold a biased worldview is very disturbing; thus we prefer to deny, diminish, or avoid looking at ourselves honestly.

White Guilt - The individual or collective guilt felt by some white people for harm resulting from racist treatment of ethnic minorities such as African Americans and indigenous peoples by other white people, most specifically in the context of the Atlantic slave trade, European colonialism and the legacy of these eras.

"I feel like there is no "me" outside of my white/upper middle class/cisgender identity. I feel like my literal existence hurts people, like I'm always taking up space that should belong to someone else."

-Anonymous to the NYT advice column

Racialization - While white people are also racialized, this process is often rendered invisible or normative to those designated as white. As a result, white people may not see themselves as part of a race but still maintain the authority to name and racialize "others."

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A Few Helpful Definitions (3/4)

Privilege - Unearned social power accorded by the formal and informal institutions of society to ALL members of a dominant group (e.g. white privilege, male privilege, etc.). Privilege is usually invisible to those who have it because they're taught not to see it, but nevertheless it puts them at an advantage over those who do not have it.

- **Cultural White Privilege** - A set of dominant cultural assumptions about what is good, normal or appropriate that reflects Western European white world views and dismisses or demonizes other world views.

Anti-Racism - The work of actively opposing racism by advocating for changes in political, economic, and social life. Anti-racism tends to be an individualized approach, and set up in opposition to individual racist behaviors and impacts.

Ally - Someone who makes the commitment and effort to recognize their privilege (based on gender, class, race, sexual identity, etc.) and work in solidarity with oppressed groups in the struggle for justice. Allies understand that it is in their own interest to end all forms of oppression, even those from which they may benefit in concrete ways. Allies commit to reducing their own complicity or collusion in oppression of those groups and invest in strengthening their own knowledge and awareness of oppression.

Microaggressions - The everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership. The most detrimental forms of microaggressions are usually delivered by well-intentioned individuals unaware that they have engaged in harmful conduct toward a socially devalued group. These everyday occurrences may on the surface appear quite harmless or trivial, or be described as "small slights," but research indicates they have a powerful impact upon the psychological well-being of marginalized groups and affect their standard of living by creating inequities in health care, education, and employment.

- **Example:** An Asian American, born and raised in the United States, is complimented for speaking "good English." (Hidden message: You are not a true American. You are a perpetual foreigner in your own country.)

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A Few Helpful Definitions (4/4)

Intersectionality - simply a prism to see the interactive effects of various forms of discrimination and disempowerment. It looks at the way that racism, many times, interacts with patriarchy, heterosexism, classism, xenophobia — seeing that the overlapping vulnerabilities created by these systems actually create specific kinds of challenges. These distinct problems create challenges for movements that are only organized around these problems as separate and individual.

Targeted Universalism – Setting universal goals pursued by targeted processes to achieve those goals. Within a targeted universalism framework, universal goals are established for all groups concerned. The strategies developed to achieve those goals are targeted, based upon how different groups are situated within structures, culture, and across geographies to obtain the universal goal.

Neocolonialism - the practice of using capitalism, globalization, cultural imperialism, and conditional aid to influence a developing country instead of the previous colonial methods of direct military control (imperialism) or indirect political control (hegemony). Neocolonialism differs from standard globalization and development aid in that it typically results in a relationship of dependence, subservience, or financial obligation towards the neocolonialist nation. This may result in an undue degree of political control or spiraling debt obligations, functionally imitating the relationship of traditional colonialism. The result of neocolonialism is that foreign capital is used for the exploitation rather than for the development of the less developed parts of the world. Investment under neocolonialism increases, rather than decreases, the gap between the rich and the poor countries of the world.

Decolonization - The active resistance against colonial powers, and a shifting of power towards political, economic, educational, cultural, psychic independence and power that originate from a colonized nations' own indigenous culture.

Affirmative Action - A form of reparations; originally referred to a set of policies and practices preventing discrimination based on race, creed, color and national origins, now often refers policies positively supporting members of disadvantaged or underrepresented groups that have previously suffered discrimination in areas such as education, employment and housing.

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A Guide to Allyship (1/3)



SYSTEMIC RACISM, BLACK LIVES MATTER AND THE WELLBEING ECONOMY

A Guide to Allyship (2/3)



SYSTEMIC RACISM, BLACK LIVES MATTER AND THE WELLBEING ECONOMY

A Guide to Allyship (3/3)

