

Definitions

Race: A social construct that artificially divides people into distinct groups based on characteristics such as physical appearance (particularly color), ancestral heritage, cultural affiliation, cultural history, ethnic classification, and the social, economic, and political needs of a society at a given period of time. Racial categories subsume ethnic groups.

Ethnicity: A social construct which divides people into smaller social groups based on characteristics such as shared sense of group membership, values, behavioral patterns, language, political and economic interests, history and ancestral geographical base.

Prejudice: Favorable or unfavorable opinion or feeling about a person or group, formed without knowledge, or thought or reason.

Power: The ability to do or affect something or anything or to act upon a person or thing; possession of control or command over others.

Racism: Any attitude, action or inaction, which subordinates a person or group because of her/his race/color/ethnicity. Racism is the systemic mistreatment experienced by people of color.

Bigotry: Obstinate and irrational devotion to one's own party, belief or opinion.

Discrimination: The act, practice or instance of restricting something categorically rather than individually as the according or deferential treatment of person of an "alien" race or religion.

Ethnocentrism: Attending to view other cultures as alien and/or inferior.

Institutional Racism: Institutions have the power to reward and penalize. Career opportunities are available to some and closed to others. They reward by the way of social goods are distributed, deciding who receives training and skills, medical care, formal education, political influence, moral support and self-respect, productivity employment, fair housing, self confidence and the promise of a secure future for self or children.

Individual vs. Institutional Racism: Racism is overt and covert. It takes two closely related forms; Individuals acting against individual minorities, and acts by total white society against minority communities. The first consists of overt acts by individuals, which cause death, injury, destruction of property, for example. The second type is less overt: it originates in the operation on established and respected forces in our society.

When white terrorists bombed a black church and killed five black children in Alabama in 1967, which was an act of individual racism, which was deplored by most white people.

However, 500 black babies die each year because of lack of food, clothing, shelter, and proper medical facilities, and thousands more are destroyed and maimed physically and emotionally as well as intellectually because of poverty and discrimination against the black community, that is a function of institutional racism.

Paternalistic Racism: Whites set the standards to which all peoples are expected to conform. These standards perpetuate the assumption of white superiority.