

# Key Terms ~ Race and Racism

**Source: Wijeyesinghe, C. L., Griffin, P, and Love, B. (1997). Racism Curriculum Design. In M. Adams, L. A. Bell, & P. Griffin (Eds.), Teaching for diversity and social justice: A sourcebook (pp. 82-109). New York: Routledge.**

## **Race**

“A social construct that artificially divides people into distinct groups based on certain characteristics such as physical appearance (particularly skin color) ancestral heritage, cultural affiliation, cultural history, ethnic classification...Racial categories subsume ethnic groups.” (p. 88)

## **Ethnicity**

“A social construct that artificially 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.” (p. 88)

## **Racism**

“The systemic subordination of members of targeted racial groups who have relatively little social power in the United States (Blacks, Latino/as, Native Americans, and Asians), by the members of the agent racial group who have relatively more social power (Whites). This subordination is supported by the actions of individuals, cultural norms and values, and the institutional structures and practices of society.” (p. 88-89)

## **Individual Racism**

“The beliefs, attitudes, and actions of individual that support or perpetuate racism. Individual racism can occur at both an unconscious and conscious level, and can be both active and passive. Examples include telling a racist joke, using a racial epithet, or believing in the inherent superiority of Whites.” (p. 89)

## **Active Racism**

“Actions which have as their stated or explicit goal the maintenance of the system of racism and the oppression of those in targeted racial groups. People who participate in active racism advocate the continual subjugation of members of the targeted racial groups and protection of ‘the rights’ of members of the agent group. These goals are often supported by a belief in the inferiority of People of Color and the superiority of white people, culture and values.” (p. 89)

## **Passive Racism**

Beliefs, attitudes and actions that contribute to the maintenance of racism, without openly advocating violence or oppression. The conscious and unconscious maintenance of attitudes, beliefs and behaviors that support the system of racism, racial prejudice and racial dominance.” (p. 89)

## **Cultural Racism (Racism at the Cultural Level)**

“Those aspects of society that overtly and covertly attribute value and normality to white people and Whiteness, and devalue, stereotype, and label People of Color as “other,” different, less than, or render them invisible.” (p. 93)

## **Institutional Racism (Racism at the Institutional Level)**

“The network of institutional structures, policies, and practices that create advantages and benefits for Whites, and discrimination, oppression, and disadvantage for people from targeted racial groups. The advantages created for Whites are often invisible to them. Or are considered “rights’ available to everyone as opposed to “privileges” awarded to only some individuals and groups.” (P. 93)

## **White Privilege**

“The concrete benefits of access to resources and social rewards and the power to shape the norms and values of society which Whites receive, unconsciously and consciously, by virtue of their skin color in a racist society.” (p. 97)

## **Collusion**

“Thinking and acting in ways which the support the system of racism... We believe that both Whites and People of Color can collude with racism through their attitudes, beliefs and actions.” (p. 98)

## **Internalized domination**

“When members of the agent group (Whites) accept their group’s socially superior status as normal and deserved.” (p. 76)

Source: Griffin, P. (1997). Introductory Module for Single Issue Courses. In M. Adams, L. A. Bell, & P. Griffin (Eds.), Teaching for diversity and social justice: A sourcebook (pp. 61-81). New York: Routledge.

## **Internalized racism**

“The result of people of targeted racial groups believing, acting on, or enforcing the dominant system of beliefs about themselves and members of their own racial group. (p. 98)

### **Horizontal Prejudice**

“The result of people of targeted racial groups believing, acting on, or enforcing the dominant (White) system of racial discrimination and oppression. Horizontal racism can occur between members of the same racial group...or between members of different targeted racial groups.” (p. 98)

### **Ally**

“A white person who actively works to eliminate racism. This person may be motivated by self-interest in ending racism, a sense of moral obligation, or a commitment to foster social justice, as opposed to a patronizing agenda of ‘wanting to help those poor People of Color.’ A white ally may engage in anti-racism work with other Whites and/or People of Color.” (p. 98)

### **Empowered Person of Color**

“An empowered person of color has an understanding of racism and its impact on one’s life without responding to the events and circumstances as a victim. Rather, being empowered means the capacity to engage individuals and institutions with an expectation of being treated well.” (p. 98)