

Levels of Racism

Individual/Interpersonal Racism

An individual phenomenon that reflects prejudice or bias

- Happens **intentionally** when individuals express or act on racist ideas and assumptions
 - Ex: white person uses racially derogatory terms to describe black and Latinx people
- Happens **unintentionally** or unconsciously by people who may honestly believe they are not racist >>> this is most common.
 - Ex: A white person who unconsciously clutches their personal belongings in the presence of black or Latinx men
 - Ex: A white person who is amazed that a Latin American or Asian immigrant speaks “good” English

Overt Racism

Conscious attitudes and behaviors (public or private) that intentionally harm people of color (as individuals or groups) or define them as inferior to whites and less entitled to society’s benefits

- Historically: lynching, legally sanctioned segregation
- Today: white supremacist rallies, violence perpetrated by racist police and attempts to worsen or terminate the voting rights of people of color
 - Ex: When immigrants (or those perceived to be immigrants) are told, “Go back to where you came from.”
 - Emails with explicit racist jokes or images
 - Nooses hung on doors

Institutional Racism

Reflected in the policies, laws, rules, norms, and customs enacted by organizations and social institutions that advantage whites as a group and disadvantage groups of color

- Housing, education, the labor market, the criminal justice system, the media, politics, healthcare
- Racial differences in opportunities and outcomes in these institutions are particularly critical to a person’s (and group’s) social, economic, and political standing in society

Societal/Cultural Racism

Social norms, roles, rituals, language, music, and art that reinforce the belief that white (European) culture is superior to other cultures

- Ex: Asserting English as the official language of the U.S. and viewing people who speak with a Spanish or Chinese accent as less educated and cultured than people who speak with a French or British accent
- Cultural appropriation
 - Ex: White youth who adopt hip-hop dress, styles, and language while remaining ignorant of the culture that produced these forms