

# **Anti-Racism 101**

# Why Discuss Race at an LGBTQ Organization?

## Because racist ideology exists everywhere, even amongst LGBTQ people

- Profiles on LGBTQ dating apps regularly say “no fats, no fems, no blacks, no rice, no spice.”
- A “Gays for Trump” account on Twitter says “Everything I needed to know about Islam I learned on 9/11” and “Intelligent and beautiful women support #trump2016. Overweight feminists support the @democrats.”
- At some gay clubs “white, shirts, baggy pants, and boots” are prohibited in their dress code.
- In 2016 a gay bar owner in Philadelphia was recorded using racial slurs.
- Black queer people (especially trans women) are fighting for literal survival and white queer people (especially white gay men) are fighting exclusively for marriage equality.
- Non-Black LGBTQ people constantly asking “Is your hair real?” or “I like your wig/extensions!” rather than simply saying “I like your hair” or saying nothing at all.
- Gay/Queer men feeling entitled to talk about and touch a curvy black woman’s body because they are gay and aren’t romantically interested.

# Why Discuss Race at an LGBTQ Organization? (continued)

Race and being LGBTQ are not synonymous. Race and LGBTQ identities are just a few of multiple intersecting identities that shape the ways people see us, understand us, and interact with us in society, AND how we see and understand ourselves. Other oppressed groups, and in this instance LGBTQ folks, are not exempt from racism simply because they hold the subordinated identity of being LGBTQ.

As we begin the endeavor into our lifelong journey of understanding and working to become Anti-racist, it is important for each of us to individually understand and acknowledge, regardless of any of our identities or intersections, that we all have the ability to be oppressors. At some point in our lives, past and future, we have and will cause someone pain and/or trauma because of our decisions and biases.

# Race & Ethnicity

**Race :** A social construct that artificially divides people based on characteristics such as physical appearance (especially skin color), ancestral heritage, cultural affiliation and history, and the social/economic/political needs of the society doing the defining of race at any given time.

**Ethnicity:** A subset of Racial categories. A social construct that divides people into even smaller groups based on characteristics such as shared sense of group membership, behavioral patterns, language, political and economic interests, and ancestral geographic base.

Ex. Cape Verdean, Haitian, African American, Dominican (Black)

Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese (Asian)

French, Polish, Irish (White)

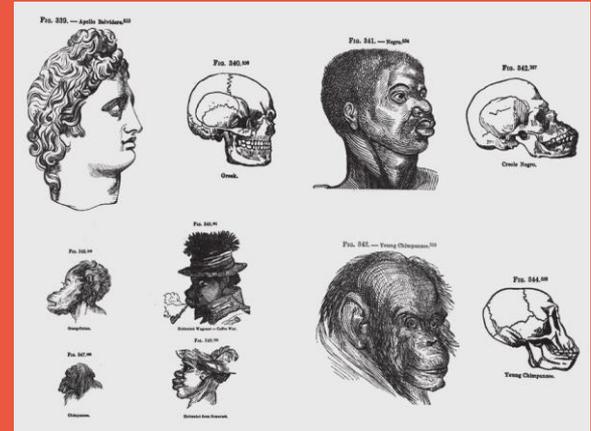
# Finding Respectful Language

- People of color (POC) = all non-white people, belonging to marginalized or oppressed groups
- Black/African American; Asian American; Latino/Hispanic; Native American; Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander
- Or other words used by those groups and peoples themselves to define their identity (ex. Latinx, Chicano)
- Mixed race, biracial, multiracial individuals

# Race is a fiction that's real

Race is a social construction rather than a biological fact. Physical anthropology research shows there is just as much diversity within racial groups as there is between racial groups. Despite these similarities, racial difference continues to play a huge role in social life -- in who has power (or access to resources).

Racial categories have been created by white Europeans and North Americans and used to justify colonialism, slavery, genocide, murder, and theft of cultures. Racial categories artificially emphasize relatively small external physical differences among people and open up space for the creation of false notions of mental, emotional, and intellectual differences as well.



*Illustration from Types of Mankind (1854), implying a connection between Black people and chimpanzees.*

# History of Whiteness

European immigrants to the U.S. were not always seen as White. Before the 20th century, they were mostly seen along national lines (as Swedes, Germans, etc.) and also class and religious lines. Italian and Irish immigrants were poor and Catholic and hence were at the bottom of the social hierarchy.



*1881 Editorial Cartoon in The London Serio-Comic Journal, portraying the Irish as violent and subhuman.*

**How would you define  
racism?**

# Racism

**Power:** access to resources and participation in society

**Prejudice:** beliefs, attitudes, and actions based on stereotypes

**Racism = Prejudice + Power**

or

**Racism:** racial prejudice plus institutional and systemic power to dominate, exclude, discriminate against or abuse targeted groups of people based on race.

*From The People's Institute for Survival and Beyond*

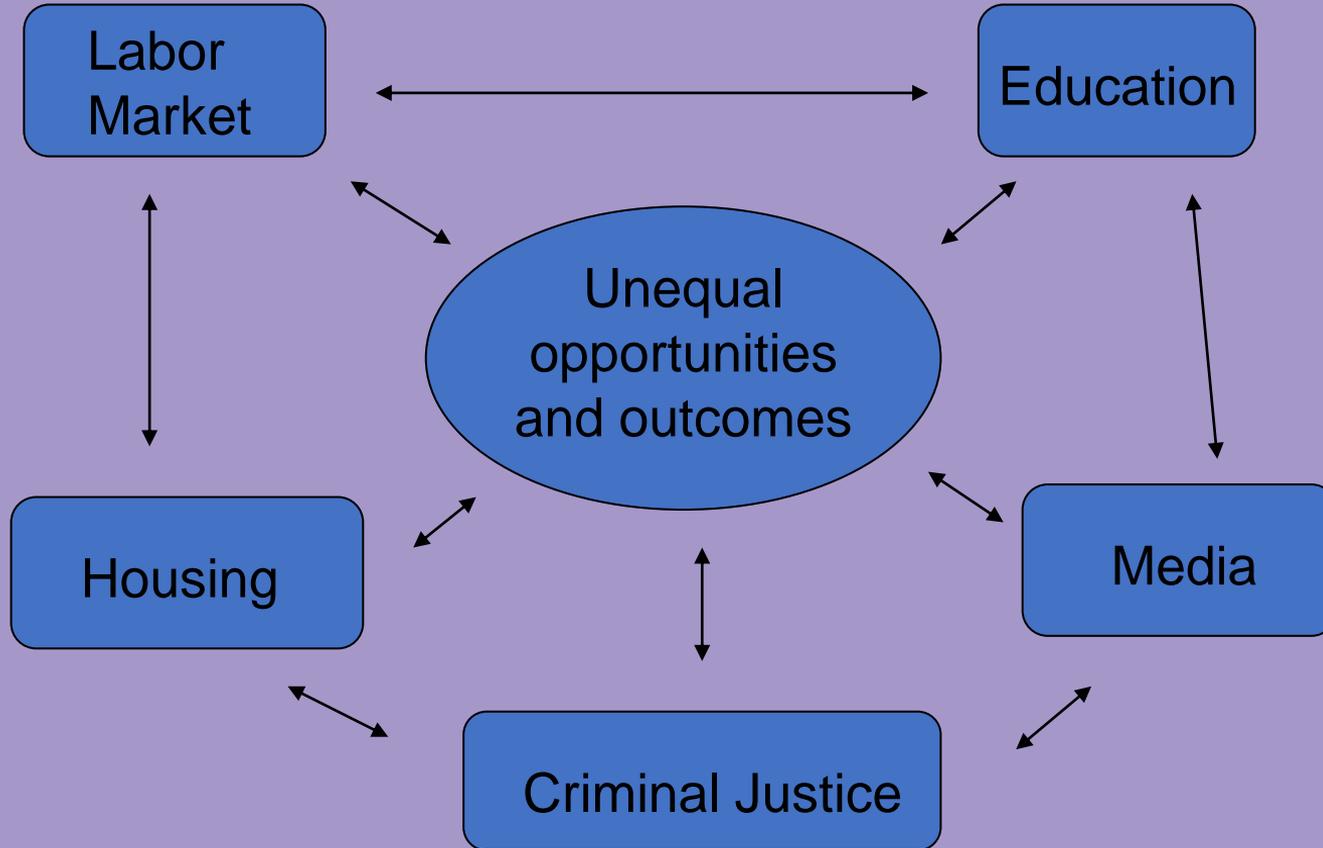
# Oppression

While anyone can hold racial prejudice and any racial prejudice can result in mistreatment, racism results in a special type of mistreatment: oppression.

**Oppression** results when

- racism is a part of the dominant culture's national consciousness.
- it is reinforced through its social institutions.
- there is an imbalance of social and economic power in society.

# Web of Racism



# Who benefits from racism? Who suffers because of it?

## **Agent / dominant group**

(in U.S. and Europe, as well as other places like sites of colonization)  
people of European descent

## **Target / oppressed group**

people of color = non-white people  
i.e. Latinx, Asian, Black, Middle Eastern, and Indigenous persons

# Active vs. Passive Racism

## **Active Racism (Overt):**

- openly and explicitly state desire to maintain system of racism
- advocate continued subjugation of targeted racial groups, and maintenance of 'rights' of members of the agent group
- belief in inferiority of targeted racial group, superiority of agent group

## **Passive racism (Covert):**

- beliefs, attitudes, and actions which contribute to the maintenance of a system of racism, without openly advocating violence or oppression
- conscious or unconscious
- ex. laughing at racist jokes, remaining silent when one sees racist actions

# Microaggressions

Brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioural, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative prejudicial slights and insults toward any group, particularly culturally marginalized groups.

[Here's a quick dive into the effect of microaggressions](#)

# Societal/Cultural Norms

**Ethnocentrism:** the belief that one's own racial or ethnic group's beliefs, values, and practices are the standard by which all things are measured or valued

Institutions often reflect the cultural assumptions of the dominant group, so that the practices of that group are seen as the norm to which other cultural practices should conform (Anderson and Taylor, 2006).

# Internalized Racism

**Horizontal Racism:** The result of people of marginalized 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 marginalized racial groups.

Ex. A Latinx person telling another Latinx person to stop speaking Spanish; An Asian person fearing a Black person walking by.

**Internalized Racism:** The result of people of marginalized racial groups believing, acting on, or enforcing the dominant system of beliefs about themselves and members of their own racial group.

Ex. Using creams to lighten dark skin, POC believing that racism is the result of not being able to “raise yourself up by your own bootstraps,” changing a name to make it easier to pronounce.

# Individual vs Institutional Racism

**Individual/interpersonal** racism is the expression of personal prejudice, institutional racism is the expression of a whole organization's racist practice and culture.

**Institutional/Structural/Systemic** racism is that which, covertly or overtly, resides in the policies, procedures, operations and culture of public or private institutions - reinforcing individual prejudices and being reinforced by them in turn.

# Examples of Institutional Racism in U.S. History

- In 1935, the U.S. Congress passed the Social Security Act, guaranteeing an income for millions of workers after their retirements, however, the Act specifically excluded domestic and agricultural workers – many of whom were Mexican American, African American, and Asian American. These workers, therefore, were not guaranteed an income after retirement, thus had less opportunity to save, accumulate, and pass wealth to their future generations.
- Because schools are funded mostly with the property taxes of the surrounding areas, a school in a poor black community cannot buy nice computers, textbooks, and other resources.
- Exclusion from unions, social organizations, and clubs based on race.

# Examples of Institutional Racism in U.S. History

- Less access to loans, mortgages, credit, and government benefits, leading to less possibility to start one's own business, own one's own home, send one's children to college.
- 1 in 3 black men in America will spend some time in prison in his lifetime.
- Mandatory sentence for possessing 5 grams of crack = 5 years in prison. For possessing 500 grams of powder cocaine = 5 years in prison.

**In each of these situations, people of color experience disadvantages that flow from one generation to another in reference to income and wealth, decision making, health status, knowledge and skill development, quality of life, and sense of entitlement to resources like higher education, decent work, etc.**

# Designing a Non-Racist Institution

- What is the underlying philosophy of this institution towards race?
- How does this institution acknowledge race, if it does at all?
- What racial groups are represented in this institution, and what roles do they fill?
- What are some of the norms and values of this institution?

# Dealing with Whiteness

## **White Privilege**

The concrete benefits of access to resources and social rewards and the power to shape the norms and values of a society which whites receive, unconsciously or consciously, by virtue of their skin color in a racist society. Ex.s include: the ability to be unaware of race, the ability to have a job hire or promotion attributed to their skills and not affirmative action.

## **White Fragility**

A state in which even a minimal amount of racial stress becomes intolerable, 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.

## **Collusion**

Thinking and acting in ways that support the system of racism, ex. telling racist jokes, remaining silent when observing a racist incident or remark.

# Cost/Benefit of Racism

- How do white people benefit from racism?
- What is the cost of racism for white people?

# Color-Blindness vs. Color-Consciousness

**Color-blind Approach:** To move beyond racism we must disregard race in all considerations, striving for equality by treating all people equally.

Ex. A housing agency simply outlaws discrimination based on race to solve racial segregation.

Ex. A teacher uses the standard materials to appeal to all students.

**Color-Conscious Approach:** To move beyond racism we must first take race into account, striving for equity by treating all people equitably.

Ex. A housing agency examines racial disparities and takes affirmative steps against contributing factors to solve racial segregation.

Ex. A teacher seeks out materials (classroom posters, literature, music, relevant newspaper clippings, etc.) that reflect the identities of all students.

# From Equality to Liberation

