

## ISSUE BRIEF

### ACNM Anti-Racism Glossary

The racial justice movement that coalesced and swept across the United States following the murder of George Floyd, Jr, has prompted many organizations to begin to confront racism within their own structures and history. Among those, the American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM) began to heed the decades-long call for a thorough examination of racism within midwifery education and practice and the organization itself. As part of that process, ACNM formed the Racism in Midwifery Education Task Force.

During the Task Force’s work, it became apparent that many important words relevant to antiracism work and conversations did not have widely shared definitions within the midwifery community. A shared lexicon is essential to further the antiracism work of ACNM and midwifery education programs. In response, the Task Force’s Program Content Subgroup developed a glossary of relevant terms to establish a shared understanding.

The glossary pulls from several organizations that are already active in antiracism work. Those include the Canadian Race Relations Foundation, Racial Equity Tools, and the University of California San Francisco. The definitions are either directly from the cited sources or slightly adapted. Where a term was coined or developed by an individual or group—or a new dimension elucidated by someone—it is cited, where possible. Cited persons include Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, SisterSong, Ibram X. Kendi, and Alice Walker.

As language is a constantly changing phenomenon, this glossary should be viewed as a starting place for the ongoing antiracism work of the ACNM. As new words become necessary, they should be added, and as definitions change, the glossary should be able to reflect those changes.

*The definitions in this glossary are from other authors and have been quoted or paraphrased for ACNM use. See citations for the origin of each definition.*

#### **Accountability**

In the context of racial equity work, accountability refers to the ways in which individuals and communities hold themselves to their goals and actions and acknowledge the values and groups to which they are responsible.

To be accountable, one must be visible, with a transparent agenda and process. Invisibility defies examination; it is, in fact, employed to avoid detection and examination. Accountability demands

commitment. It might be defined as “what kicks in when convenience runs out.” Accountability requires some sense of urgency and one to become a true stakeholder in the outcome. Accountability can be externally imposed (legal or organizational requirements) or internally applied (moral, relational, faith based, or recognized as some combination of the 2) on a continuum from the institutional/organizational level to the individual level. From a relational point of view, accountability is not always “doing it right”; sometimes it is really about what happens after it is done wrong.<sup>1</sup>

### **Adverse impact**

The impact, whether intended or not, of employment practices that disproportionately affect groups such as visible minorities and women. Though a practice may appear to be neutral, it has discriminatory effects on groups protected by human rights and/or employment legislation.<sup>2</sup>

### **Ally**

1. Someone who makes the commitment and effort to recognize their privilege (based on gender, class, race, sexual identity, etc) and who works 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.<sup>1</sup>
2. Allies commit to reducing their own complicity or collusion in the oppression of those groups and invest in strengthening their own knowledge and awareness of oppression.<sup>3</sup>

Note: Those who are the best arbiters of whether someone is or is not an ally are those with whom an alliance is made; that is, it is not a term that people should necessarily ascribe to themselves.

### **Ancestry**

A line of people from whom one is descended; family or ethnic descent.<sup>2</sup>

### **Anti-Black**

The Council for Democratizing Education defines anti-Blackness as being a 2-part formation that voids Blackness of value, while also systematically marginalizing Black people and their issues. The first form of anti-Blackness is overt racism. Beneath this anti-Black racism is the covert structural and systemic racism which categorically predetermines the socioeconomic status of Black people in this country. The structure is held in place by anti-Black policies, institutions, and ideologies.

The second form of anti-Blackness is the unethical ignoring and/or disregarding of anti-Black institutions and policies. This disregard is the product of class, race, and/or gender privilege certain individuals experience because of anti-Black institutions and policies. This form of anti-Blackness is protected by the first form of overt racism.<sup>1</sup>

## **Antiracism**

The active process of identifying and eliminating racism by changing systems, organizational structures, policies, practices, and attitudes, so that power is redistributed and shared equitably. Antiracism examines and disrupts existing power imbalances. To practice antiracism, a person must first understand the following:

- How racism affects the lived experience of people of color and Indigenous people
- How racism is systemic and manifested in both individual attitudes and behaviors as well as formal policies and practices within institutions
- How both white people and people of color can, often unknowingly, participate in racism through perpetuating inequitable systems
- That dismantling racism requires dismantling systems that perpetuate inequity such as exploitative capitalism<sup>4</sup>

## **Antiracist**

Someone who expresses an antiracist idea or supports an antiracist policy or action that yields racial equity.<sup>4</sup>

## **Antiracist education**

Antiracist education is based in the notion of race and racial discrimination as being embedded within the policies and practices of institutional structures. Its goal is to aid students in understanding the nature and characteristics of these discriminatory barriers and to work to dismantle them.<sup>2</sup>

## **Antiracist ideas**

Any idea that suggests that racial groups are equal in all of their apparent differences and that there is nothing wrong with any racial group. Antiracists argue that racist policies are the cause of racial injustices.<sup>1</sup>

## **Barrier**

An overt or covert obstacle which must be overcome for equality and progress to be possible.<sup>2</sup>

## **Bias**

A subjective opinion, preference, prejudice, or inclination, often formed without reasonable justification, that influences the ability of an individual or group to evaluate a particular situation objectively or accurately.<sup>2</sup>

## **Bigotry**

Intolerant prejudice that glorifies one's own group and denigrates members of other groups.<sup>1</sup>

## **BIPOC**

Acronym for Black Indigenous people of color.

## **BILPOC**

Acronym for Black Indigenous Latinx people of color.

## **Black Lives Matter**

A political movement to address systemic and state violence against African Americans. Per the Black Lives Matter organizers, “In 2013, 3 radical Black organizers—Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, and Opal Tometi—created a Black-centered political will and movement building project called #BlackLivesMatter. It was in response to the acquittal of Trayvon Martin’s murderer, George Zimmerman. The project is now a member-led global network of more than 40 chapters. Members organize and build local power to intervene in violence inflicted on Black communities by the state and vigilantes. Black Lives Matter is an ideological and political intervention in a world where Black lives are systematically and intentionally targeted for demise. It is an affirmation of Black folks’ humanity, our contributions to this society, and our resilience in the face of deadly oppression.”<sup>1</sup>

## **Caucusing (affinity groups)**

White people and people of color have work to do separately and together. Caucuses provide spaces for people to work within their own racial/ethnic groups. For white people, a caucus provides time and space to work explicitly and intentionally on understanding white culture and white privilege, and to increase one’s critical analysis around these concepts. A white caucus also puts the onus on white people to teach each other about these ideas rather than rely on people of color to teach them (as often occurs in integrated spaces). For people of color, a caucus is a place to work with their peers on their experiences of internalized racism both for healing and to work on liberation.<sup>1</sup>

## **Censorship**

The act of implementing a policy or program designed to suppress, either in whole or in part, the production of or access to information, such as sources, literature, the performing arts, music, theater/movies, letters, documents, or ideologies which are considered unacceptable or dangerous for political, moral, or religious reasons.<sup>2</sup>

## **Collusion**

When people act to perpetuate oppression or prevent others from working to eliminate oppression. An example is able-bodied people who object to strategies for making buildings accessible because of the expense of doing so.<sup>1</sup>

## **Colonization**

Some form of invasion, dispossession, and subjugation of a people. The invasion need not be military; it can begin—or continue—as geographical intrusion in the form of agricultural, urban, or industrial encroachments. The result of such incursion is the dispossession of vast amounts of lands from the original inhabitants. This is often legalized after the fact. The long-term result of

such massive dispossession is institutionalized inequality. The colonizer/colonized relationship is by nature an unequal one that benefits the colonizer at the expense of the colonized.

Ongoing and legacy colonialism affect power relations in most of the world today. For example, white supremacy as a philosophy was developed largely to justify European colonial exploitation of the Global South (including enslaving African peoples, extracting resources from much of Asia and Latin America, and enshrining cultural norms of whiteness as desirable both in colonizing and colonizer nations).<sup>1</sup> See also: Decolonization.

### **Colorblindness**

One mainstream approach to race in the United States is to insist that race is unimportant (or unseen) and does not impact a person's achievements or abilities. However, because of racism, people of different races have different lived experiences. Espousing a colorblind ideology that race does not matter ignores the actual differences in lived experience that people have based on how others perceive and respond to them in conscious, subconscious, and systemic ways. Becoming conscious of how race affects one's experiences in the world, or becoming color-conscious, is an important step in addressing racism.<sup>4</sup>

### **Colorism**

A prejudice or discrimination against individuals with a dark skin tone, typically among people of the same ethnic or racial group; a form of oppression that is expressed through the differential treatment of individuals and groups based on skin color. Typically, favoritism is demonstrated toward those with lighter complexions, whereas those with darker complexions experience rejection and mistreatment. Colorism is an extension of white supremacy.

Alice Walker is credited with first using the term "colorism." Walker used the term in a 1983 essay titled "If the present looks like the past, what does the future look like?" that appeared in her book *In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens*.<sup>2</sup>

### **Critical race theory**

The critical race theory (CRT) movement is a collection of activists and scholars interested in studying and transforming the relationships among race, racism, and power.

The CRT movement considers many of the same issues that conventional civil rights and ethnic studies take up but places them in a broader perspective that includes economics, history, and even feelings and the unconscious. Unlike traditional civil rights, which embraces incrementalism and step-by-step progress, CRT questions the very foundations of the liberal order, including equality theory, legal reasoning, Enlightenment rationalism, and principles of constitutional law.<sup>6</sup>

### **Cultural appropriation**

Theft of cultural elements for one's own use, commodification, or profit—including symbols, art, language, and customs—often without understanding, acknowledgment, or respect for its value in the original culture. This results from the assumption of a dominant (ie, white) culture's right to take other cultural elements.<sup>1</sup>

### **Cultural assimilation**

The process by which minority groups come to resemble majority groups. The process does not function outside white supremacy and the belief that the default culture is that of white people and is inherently preferable or superior.<sup>7</sup>

### **Cultural competency in health care**

The ability of providers and organizations to effectively deliver health care services that meet the social, cultural, and linguistic needs of patients.<sup>8</sup>

Note: Cultural competency is often criticized as too limited and descriptive to create real change. It may continue to play a role at the organizational level, for example, in the provision of essential services dependent on the recognition of varied needs of diverse populations.

### **Cultural humility**

The “ability to maintain an interpersonal stance that is other oriented (or open to the other) in relation to aspects of cultural identity that are most important to the (person).”

Cultural humility has 3 specific facets:

- A dedication to lifelong self-critique
- Recognition of power dynamics and imbalances and a dedication to challenging them
- Affiliation with advocacy groups/organizations<sup>9,10</sup>

### **Cultural misappropriation**

Distinguished from the neutrality of cultural exchange, appreciation, and appropriation because of the instance of colonialism and capitalism; cultural misappropriation occurs when a cultural fixture of a marginalized culture/community is copied, mimicked, or recreated by the dominant culture against the will of the original community and, above all else, commodified. One can understand the use of “misappropriation” as a distinguishing tool because it assumes that 1) there are instances of neutral appropriation; 2) the specifically referenced instance is nonneutral and problematic, even if benevolent in intention; 3) some act of theft or dishonest attribution has taken place; and 4) moral judgment of the act of appropriation is subjective to the specific culture which is being engaged.<sup>1</sup>

## **Cultural racism**

Representations, messages, and stories conveying the idea that behaviors and values associated with white people or “whiteness” are automatically “better” or more “normal” than are those associated with other racially defined groups. Cultural racism shows up in advertising, movies, history books, definitions of patriotism, and policies and laws. Cultural racism is also a powerful force in maintaining systems of internalized supremacy and internalized racism. It does that by influencing collective beliefs about what constitutes appropriate behavior, what is seen as beautiful, and the value placed on various forms of expression. All of these cultural norms and values in the United States have explicitly or implicitly racialized ideals and assumptions (eg, what “nude” means as a color, which facial features and body types are considered beautiful, and which child-rearing practices are considered appropriate).<sup>1</sup>

## **Culture**

A social system of meaning and custom that is developed by a group of people to ensure its adaptation and survival. These groups are distinguished by a set of unspoken rules that shape values, beliefs, habits, patterns of thinking, behaviors, and styles of communication.<sup>1</sup>

## **Decolonization**

Active resistance against colonial powers and a shifting of power towards political, economic, educational, cultural, psychic independence and power that originate from a colonized nation’s indigenous culture. This process occurs politically, and also applies to personal and societal psychic, cultural, political, agricultural, and educational deconstruction of colonial oppression.

Per Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang, “Decolonization doesn’t have a synonym.” It is not a substitute for “human rights” or “social justice,” though undoubtedly, they are connected in various ways. Decolonization demands an Indigenous framework and a centering of Indigenous land, Indigenous sovereignty, and Indigenous ways of thinking.<sup>1</sup>

## **Denial**

Refusal to acknowledge the societal privileges (see also: Privilege) that are granted or denied based on an individual’s ethnicity or other grouping. Those who are in a stage of denial tend to believe “people are people. We are all alike regardless of the color of our skin.” In this way, the existence of a hierarchical system or privileges based on ethnicity or race can be ignored.<sup>11</sup>

## **Diaspora**

The voluntary or forcible movement of peoples from their homelands into new regions . . . a common element in all forms of diaspora; these are people who live outside their natal (or imagined natal) territories and recognize that their traditional homelands are reflected deeply in the languages they speak, religions they adopt, and the cultures they produce.<sup>12</sup>

## **Discrimination**

1. The unequal treatment of members of various groups based on race, gender, social class, sexual orientation, physical ability, religion, and other categories.<sup>1</sup>
2. (In the United States), the law makes it illegal to discriminate against someone on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, or sex. The law also makes it illegal to retaliate against a person because the person complained about discrimination, filed a charge of discrimination, or participated in an employment discrimination investigation or lawsuit. The law also requires that employers reasonably accommodate applicants' and employees' sincerely held religious practices, unless doing so would impose an undue hardship on the operation of the employer's business.<sup>13</sup>

Note: Ibram X. Kendi writes that discriminating based on race is not an inherently racist act. He says, "if racial discrimination is defined as treating, considering, or making a distinction in favor or against an individual based on that person's race, then racial discrimination is not inherently racist. The defining question is whether the discrimination is creating equity or inequity."<sup>14</sup>

## **Diversity**

Includes all the ways in which people differ, and it encompasses all the different characteristics that make one individual or group different from another. Diversity is all inclusive and recognizes everyone and every group as part of the diversity that should be valued. A broad definition includes not only race, ethnicity, and gender—the groups that most often come to mind when the term "diversity" is used—but also age, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, education, marital status, language, and physical appearance. It also involves different ideas, perspectives, and values.

It is important to note that many activists and thinkers critique diversity alone as a strategy. For instance, Baltimore Racial Justice Action states, "Diversity is silent on the subject of equity. In an anti-oppression context, therefore, the issue is not diversity, but rather equity. Often when people talk about diversity, they are thinking only of the 'nondominant' groups."<sup>1</sup>

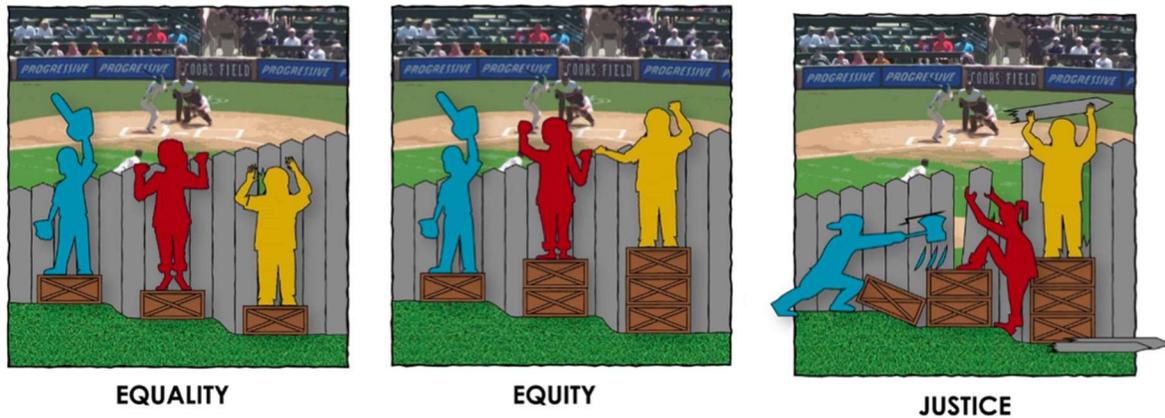
## **Employment equity**

A program designed to remove barriers to equality in employment for reasons unrelated to ability, by identifying and eliminating discriminatory policies and practices, remedying the effects of past discrimination, and ensuring appropriate representation of the designated groups (eg, women, Aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities, and visible minorities). Employment equity can be used as an active effort to improve the employment or educational opportunities of members of minority groups and women through explicit actions, policies, or programs.<sup>2</sup>

**Environmental racism:** see Racism

## **Equity**

The process by which resources are distributed according to need. Equity is fairness.<sup>4</sup>



*Image credit: Paul Kuttner*

### **Equality**

A state/outcome that is the same among different groups of people. Equality is sameness.<sup>4</sup>

### **Ethnicity**

Ethnicity, like race, is a social construct that has been used for categorizing people based on perceived differences in appearance and behavior. Historically, race has been tied to biology and ethnicity to culture, though the definitions are fluid and have shifted over time, and the 2 concepts are not clearly distinct from one another. According to the American Anthropological Society, “ethnicity may be defined as the identification with population groups characterized by common ancestry, language, and custom. Because of common origins and intermarriage, ethnic groups often share physical characteristics which also then become a part of their identification—by themselves and/or by others. However, populations with similar physical appearance may have different ethnic identities, and populations with different physical appearances may have a common ethnic identity.” Race and ethnicity, which are social constructions, are often conflated with, and used as a surrogate for, ancestry. Ancestry more specifically and accurately identifies ancestral genetic lineage than does race or ethnicity.<sup>4</sup>

### **Genocide**

The United Nations defines genocide as any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group: killing members of the group; causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group; and forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.<sup>2</sup>

### **Global South**

Refers broadly to the regions of Latin America, Asia, Africa, and Oceania. It denotes regions outside Europe and North America which are mostly though not entirely low- to middle-income

countries and often politically or culturally marginalized. The Global South does not correlate precisely with the Southern Hemisphere; some countries in the Northern Hemisphere may be considered part of the Global South, and some countries in the Southern Hemisphere may not be considered part of the Global South. The use of the phrase “Global South” marks a shift from a central focus on development or cultural difference toward an emphasis on geopolitical relations of power.

Note: Terms such as “developing country” carry an implication of a hierarchy of nations which share a singular goal. The term “Third World” is othering and originates in the Cold War mentality that the United States and allies were the First World, the (former) Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) and its allies were the Second World, and all remaining countries were simply the Third World.<sup>15</sup>

### **Health equity**

Everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible. This requires removing obstacles to health, such as poverty, discrimination, and their consequences, including powerlessness and lack of access to good jobs with fair pay, quality education and housing, safe environments, and health care.<sup>16</sup>

### **Health inequities**

Systematic differences in the health statuses of different population groups. These inequities have significant social and economic costs both to individuals and societies.<sup>17</sup>

### **Implicit bias**

Also known as unconscious or hidden bias, implicit biases are negative associations that people unknowingly hold. They are expressed automatically, without conscious awareness. Many studies have indicated that implicit biases affect individuals’ attitudes and actions, thus creating real-world implications, even though individuals may not even be aware that those biases exist within themselves. Notably, under certain circumstances, implicit biases have been shown to overpower individuals’ stated commitments to equality and fairness, thereby producing behavior that diverges from the explicit attitudes that many people profess.<sup>1</sup>

### **Inclusion**

Authentically bringing traditionally excluded individuals and/or groups into processes, activities, and decision-making/policy making in a way that shares power.<sup>1</sup>

### **Indigeneity**

Indigenous populations are the existing descendants of the peoples who inhabited the present territory of a country wholly or partially at the time when persons of a different culture or ethnic origin arrived there from other parts of the world, overcame them, by conquest, settlement or other means, and reduced them to a nondominant or colonial condition; today, they live more in

conformity with their particular social, economic, and cultural customs and traditions than with the institutions of the country of which they now form part, under a state structure which incorporates mainly national, social, and cultural characteristics of other segments of the population that predominate.

Examples are the Maori in the territory now defined as New Zealand; Mexicans in the territory now defined as Texas, California, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, Nevada, and parts of Colorado, Wyoming, Kansas, and Oklahoma; and Native American tribes in the territory now defined as the United States.<sup>1</sup>

**Individual racism:** see Racism

**Institutional racism:** see Racism

### **Integration**

The process of amalgamating diverse groups within a single social context, usually applied to interracial interactions in housing, education, political, and socioeconomic spheres or activity. People who are integrated still retain their cultural identity. Integration is the implemented policy that ends segregation.<sup>2</sup>

### **Internalized dominance**

Individuals are unconsciously conditioned to believe they are superior or inferior in status, thereby affecting their social interaction. Internalized domination or dominance is likely to involve feelings of superiority, normalcy, and self-righteousness, together with guilt, fear, projection, and denial of demonstrated inequity.<sup>2</sup>

### **Internalized oppression**

Patterns of mistreatment of racialized groups and acceptance of the negative messages of the dominant group become established in their cultures, and members assume roles as victims.<sup>2</sup>

**Internalized racism:** see Racism

**Interpersonal racism:** see Racism

### **Intersectionality**

1. Per Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, “Intersectionality is 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. ‘Intersectionality 102,’ then, is to say that these distinct problems create challenges for movements that are only organized around these problems as separate and individual. So, when

racial justice doesn't have a critique of patriarchy and homophobia, the particular way that racism is experienced and exacerbated by heterosexism, classism etc, falls outside of our political organizing. It means that significant numbers of people in our communities aren't being served by social justice frames because they don't address the particular ways that they're experiencing discrimination."

2. Exposing (one's) multiple identities can help clarify the ways in which a person can simultaneously experience privilege and oppression. For example, a Black woman in America does not experience gender inequalities in exactly the same way as a white woman, nor racial oppression identical to that experienced by a Black man. Each race and gender intersection produces a qualitatively distinct life.<sup>1</sup>

### **Intolerance**

Bigotry or narrow-mindedness which results in a refusal to respect or acknowledge persons of different backgrounds.<sup>2</sup>

### **Isms**

A way of describing any attitude, action, or institutional structure that subordinates (oppresses) a person or group because of their target group, color (racism), gender (sexism), economic status (classism), older age (ageism), religion (eg, anti-Semitism), sexual orientation (heterosexism), language/immigrant status (xenophobia), etc.<sup>18</sup>

### **Macroaggression**

An act of racism towards everyone of that race.<sup>19</sup>

### **Marginalization**

With reference to race and culture, the experience of persons outside the dominant group who face barriers to full and equal participating members of society. Marginalization refers also to the process of being "left out" of or silenced within a social group.<sup>2</sup>

### **Marginalized populations**

Groups and communities that experience discrimination and exclusion (social, political, and economic) because of unequal power relationships across economic, political, social, and cultural dimensions.<sup>20</sup>

### **Microaggression**

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.<sup>1</sup>

## **Microinterventions**

The everyday words or deeds, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate to targets of microaggressions validation of their experiential reality, their value as a person, affirmation of their racial or group identity, support and encouragement, and reassurance that they are not alone.

Microinterventions have 2 primary functions. First, they serve to enhance psychological well-being and provide targets, allies, and bystanders with a sense of control and self-efficacy. Second, they provide a repertoire of responses that can be used to directly disarm or counteract the effects of microaggressions by challenging perpetrators. They are interpersonal tools that are intended to counteract, change, or stop microaggressions by subtly or overtly confronting and educating the perpetrator.<sup>21</sup>

## **Microinvalidations**

Communications that subtly exclude, negate, or nullify the thoughts, feelings, or experiential reality of a person of color. For instance, white people often ask Asian American persons where they were born, conveying the message that they are perpetual foreigners in their own land.<sup>21</sup>

## **Model minority**

A term created by sociologist William Peterson to describe the Japanese community, whom he saw as being able to overcome oppression because of their cultural values.

While individuals employing the model minority trope may think they are being complimentary, in fact, the term is related to colorism and its root, anti-Blackness. The model minority myth creates an understanding of ethnic groups, including Asian Americans, as a monolith, or as a mass whose parts cannot be distinguished from each other. The model minority myth can be understood as a tool that white supremacy uses to pit people of color against each other to protect its status.<sup>1</sup>

## **Movement building**

The effort of social change agents to engage power holders and the broader society to address a systemic problem or injustice while promoting an alternative vision or solution. Movement building requires a range of intersecting approaches through a set of distinct stages over a long-term period. Through movement building, organizers can:

- Propose solutions to the root causes of social problems;
- Enable people to exercise their collective power;
- Humanize groups who have been denied basic human rights and improve conditions for the groups affected;
- Create structural change by building something larger than a particular organization or campaign; and
- Promote visions and values for society based on fairness, justice, and democracy.<sup>1</sup>

## **Multicultural competency**

Cultural competency is the ability to understand another culture well enough to be able to communicate and work with people from that culture. Multicultural competence is fluency in more than one culture in whichever cultures are part of your surroundings.<sup>22</sup>

## **Multiculturalism**

The coexistence of diverse cultures, where culture includes racial, religious, or cultural groups and is manifested in customary behaviors, cultural assumptions and values, patterns of thinking, and communicative styles.<sup>23</sup>

## **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. Rita Hardiman and Bailey Jackson state that oppression exists when the following 4 conditions are found:

- The oppressor group has the power to define reality for themselves and others;
- The target groups take in and internalize the negative messages about them and end up cooperating with the oppressors (thinking and acting like them);
- Genocide, harassment, and discrimination are systematic and institutionalized, so that individuals are not necessary to keep it going; and
- Members of both the oppressor and target groups are socialized to play their roles as normal and correct.<sup>1</sup>

Oppression = Power + Prejudice<sup>1</sup>

## **People of color**

Often the preferred collective term for referring to non-white racial groups. Racial justice advocates have been using the term “people of color” (not to be confused with the pejorative “colored people”) since the late 1970s as an inclusive and unifying frame across different racial groups who are not white to address racial inequities. Although “people of color” can be a politically useful term and describes people with their own attributes (as opposed to what they are not, eg, “non-white”), it is also important whenever possible to identify people through their own racial/ethnic group, as each has its own distinct experience and meaning and may be more appropriate.<sup>1</sup>

## **Power**

Power is unequally distributed globally and in US society; some individuals or groups wield greater power than do others, thereby allowing them greater access and control over resources. Wealth, whiteness, citizenship, patriarchy, heterosexism, and education are some key social mechanisms through which power operates. Although power is often conceptualized as power over other individuals or groups, other variations are power with (used in the context of

building collective strength) and power within (which references an individual's internal strength). Learning to "see" and understand relations of power is vital to organizing for progressive social change.

Power may also be understood as the ability to influence others and impose one's beliefs. All power is relational, and the different relationships either reinforce or disrupt one another. The importance of the concept of power to antiracism is clear: racism cannot be understood without understanding that power is not only an individual relationship but a cultural one, and that power relationships are shifting constantly. Power can be used malignantly and intentionally, but need not be, and individuals within a culture may benefit from power of which they are unaware.<sup>1</sup>

### **Prejudice**

A prejudgment or unjustifiable, and usually negative, attitude of one type of individual or group toward another group and its members. Such negative attitudes are typically based on unsupported generalizations (or stereotypes) that deny the right of individual members of certain groups to be recognized and treated as individuals with individual characteristics.<sup>1</sup>

### **Privilege**

Unearned social power accorded by the formal and informal institutions of society to *all* members of a dominant group (eg, white privilege, male privilege). Privilege is usually invisible to those who have it because we are taught not to see it; nevertheless, it puts them at an advantage over those who do not have it.<sup>1</sup>

### **Race**

The concept of race was constructed as a tool to categorize people with the purpose of validating racism. Race has no biological basis. During historical projects such as colonialism and slavery, race was artificially imposed on people in different political positions to create a moral hierarchy used to justify the harm inflicted by inequitable systems, exploitive capitalism, and white supremacy. Although the construct of race is dynamic and evolves with changing social, political, and historical norms, the construct perpetuated the false idea that there are static, innate characteristics that apply to sets of people despite diverse origins, life experiences, and genetic makeups. However, race is distinct from ancestry; ancestry denotes people's shared traits based on genetic similarities of their ancestors and accounts for the complexity of geographic variation and fluidity. Although race is socially constructed, the consequences of this social construct are experienced individually and collectively by communities in the form of racism. The effects of racism can be seen in differential outcomes in health, wealth, socioeconomic status, education, and social mobility in the United States.<sup>4</sup>

### **Racial and ethnic identity**

An individual's awareness and experience of being a member of a racial and ethnic group; the racial and ethnic categories that an individual chooses to describe themselves based on such factors as biological heritage, physical appearance, cultural affiliation, early socialization, and personal experience.<sup>1</sup>

### **Racial anxiety**

The heightened levels of stress and emotion that we confront when interacting with people of other races. People of color experience concern that they will be the subject of discrimination and hostility. White people, meanwhile, worry that they will be assumed to be racist. Studies have shown that interracial interaction can cause physical symptoms of anxiety and that our nonverbal behaviors—making eye contact, using welcoming gestures or a pleasant tone of voice, for example—can be affected as well. When everyone in a conversation is anxious that it will turn negative, it often does. This causes a kind of feedback loop in which the fears and anxieties of both white people and people of color are confirmed by their everyday interactions.<sup>24</sup>

### **Racial discrimination**

According to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (to which Canada is a signatory), racial discrimination is “any distinction, exclusion, restriction, or preference based on race, color, descent, or national or ethnic origin which nullifies or impairs the recognition, enjoyment or exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, or any other field of public life.”<sup>2</sup>

### **Racial equity**

The condition that would be achieved if one's racial identity no longer predicted, in a statistical sense, how one fares. When we use the term, we are thinking about racial equity as one part of racial justice, and thus we also include work to address root causes of inequities and not just their manifestation. This includes elimination of policies, practices, attitudes, and cultural messages that reinforce differential outcomes by race or fail to eliminate them.<sup>1</sup>

### **Racial healing**

Racial healing recognizes the need to acknowledge and tell the truth about past wrongs created by individual and systemic racism and to address the present consequences. It is a process and tool that can facilitate trust and build authentic relationships that bridge divides created by real and perceived differences. We believe it is essential to pursue racial healing before doing change-making work in a community.<sup>25</sup>

### **Racial identity development theory**

Racial identity development theory discusses how people in various racial groups and with multiracial identities form their particular self-concept. It also describes some typical phases in

the remaking of that identity based on learning and awareness of systems of privilege and structural racism, cultural and historical meanings attached to racial categories, and factors operating on the larger sociohistorical level (eg, globalization, technology, immigration, and increasing multiracial population).<sup>1</sup>

### **Racial inequity**

When 2 or more racial groups are not standing on approximately equal footing, such as the percentages of each ethnic group in terms of dropout rates, single-family-home ownership, and access to health care.<sup>1</sup>

### **Racial justice**

The systematic fair treatment of people of all races, resulting in equitable opportunities and outcomes for all. Racial justice—or racial equity—goes beyond “antiracism.” It is not just the absence of discrimination and inequities, but also the presence of deliberate systems and supports to achieve and sustain racial equity through proactive and preventative measures.<sup>1</sup>

Racial justice (is defined) as the proactive reinforcement of policies, practices, attitudes, and actions that produce equitable power, access, opportunities, treatment, impacts, and outcomes for all.<sup>26</sup>

### **Racial profiling**

Any action undertaken for purported reasons of safety, security, or public protection that relies on assumptions about race, color, ethnicity, ancestry, religion, or place of origin rather than on reasonable suspicion to single out an individual for greater scrutiny or differential treatment. Profiling can occur because of a combination of the above-listed factors, and age and/or gender can influence the experience of profiling. In contrast to criminal profiling, racial profiling is based on stereotypical assumptions because of one’s race, color, ethnicity, etc, rather than relying on actual behavior or on information about suspected activity by someone who meets the description of a specific individual.<sup>2</sup>

### **Racial reconciliation**

Reconciliation involves 3 ideas. First, it recognizes that racism in America is both systemic and institutionalized, with far-reaching effects on both political engagement and economic opportunities for minorities. Second, reconciliation is engendered by empowering local communities through relationship building and truth telling. Last, justice is the essential component of the conciliatory process—justice that is best termed as restorative rather than retributive, while still maintaining its vital punitive character.<sup>1</sup>

### **Racial trauma (or race-based traumatic stress [RBTS])**

The mental and emotional injury caused by encounters with racial bias and ethnic discrimination, racism, and hate crimes.<sup>27</sup>

## **Racialization**

The very complex and contradictory process through which groups come to be designated as being of a particular “race” and on that basis are subjected to differential and/or unequal treatment. Put simply, racialization (is) the process of manufacturing and using the notion of race in any capacity. Although 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.”<sup>1</sup>

## **Racism**

- Racism = race prejudice + social and institutional power
- Racism = a system of advantage based on race
- Racism = a system of oppression based on race
- Racism = a white supremacy system

Racism is different from racial prejudice, hatred, or discrimination. Racism involves one group having the power to carry out systematic discrimination through the institutional policies and practices of the society and by shaping the cultural beliefs and values that support those racist policies and practices.<sup>1</sup>

The following are definitions of specific manifestations/institutions of racism:

### **Behavioral racism**

Making individuals responsible for the perceived behavior of racial groups and making racial groups responsible for the behavior of individuals.<sup>14</sup>

### **Biological racism**

The idea that races are meaningfully different in their biology and that these differences create a hierarchy of value.<sup>14</sup>

### **Cultural racism**

The creation of a cultural standard and imposing a cultural hierarchy among racial groups.<sup>14</sup>

### **Environmental racism**

A systemic form of racism in which toxic wastes are introduced into or near marginalized communities. People of color, Indigenous peoples, the working class, and poor communities suffer disproportionately from environmental hazards and the location of dangerous, toxic facilities, such as incinerators and toxic waste dumps. Pollution of lands, air, and waterways often causes chronic illness to the inhabitants and changes to their lifestyle.<sup>2</sup>

### **Individual racism**

The beliefs, attitudes, and actions of individuals that support or perpetuate racism. Individual racism can be deliberate, or the individual may act to perpetuate or support racism without knowing that is what he or she is doing.

Examples:

- Telling a racist joke, using a racial epithet, or believing in the inherent superiority of white people over other groups
- Avoiding people of color whom you do not know personally but not white people whom you do not know personally (eg, white people crossing the street to avoid a group of Latinx young people, locking their doors when they see African American families sitting on their doorsteps in a city neighborhood, or not hiring a person of color because “something doesn’t feel right”)
- Accepting things as they are (a form of collusion).<sup>1</sup>

### **Institutional racism**

Refers specifically to the ways in which institutional policies and practices create different outcomes for different racial groups. The institutional policies may never mention any racial group, but their effect is to create advantages for white people and oppression and disadvantage for people from groups classified as people of color. In addition, as Camara Jones notes, “. . . institutionalized racism is often evident as inaction in the face of need.”<sup>1</sup>

Examples:

- Government policies that explicitly restricted the ability of people to obtain loans to buy or improve their homes in neighborhoods with high concentrations of African American people (also known as “red-lining”)
- City sanitation department policies that concentrate trash transfer stations and other environmental hazards disproportionately in communities of color.<sup>1</sup>

### **Internalized racism**

The situation that occurs in a racist system when a racial group oppressed by racism supports the supremacy and dominance of the dominating group by maintaining or participating in the set of attitudes, behaviors, social structures, and ideologies that undergird the dominating group’s power. It involves the following 4 essential and interconnected elements:

- **Decision-making:** Because of racism, people of color do not have the ultimate decision-making power over the decisions that control their lives and resources. As a result, on a personal level, we may think white people know more about what needs to be done for them than they do. On an interpersonal level, we may not support each other’s authority and power, especially if it is in opposition to the dominating racial

- group. Structurally, there is a system in place that rewards people of color who support white supremacy and power and coerces or punishes those who do not.
- Resources: Resources, broadly defined (eg, money, time), are unequally in the hands and under the control of white people. Internalized racism is the system in place that makes it difficult for people of color to obtain access to resources for their own communities and to control the resources of their community. People of color learn to believe that serving and using resources for themselves and their particular community is not serving “everybody.”
  - Standards: With internalized racism, the standards for what is appropriate or “normal” that people of color accept are white people’s or Eurocentric standards. People of color have difficulty naming, communicating, and living up to their deepest standards and values, and holding themselves and each other accountable to them.
  - Naming the problem: There is a system in place that misnames the problem of racism as a problem of or caused by people of color and blames the disease—emotional, economic, political, etc—on people of color. With internalized racism, people of color might, for example, believe they are more violent than are white people and not consider state-sanctioned political violence or the hidden or privatized violence of white people and the systems they put in place and support.<sup>1</sup>

### **Interpersonal racism**

Racism that occurs between individuals. Once we bring our private beliefs into our interaction with others, racism is now in the interpersonal realm. Examples are public expressions of racial prejudice, hate, bias, and bigotry between individuals.<sup>1</sup>

### **Structural racism**

1. The normalization and legitimization of an array of dynamics—historical, cultural, institutional, and interpersonal—that routinely provide advantage to white persons while producing cumulative and chronic adverse outcomes for people of color. Structural racism encompasses the entire system of white domination, diffused and infused in all aspects of society, including its history, culture, politics, economics, and entire social fabric. Structural racism is more difficult to pinpoint in a particular institution because it involves the reinforcing effects of multiple institutions and cultural norms, past and present, continually reproducing old and producing new forms of racism. Structural racism is the most profound and pervasive form of racism; all other forms of racism emerge from structural racism.
2. For example, 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 than for white men. These 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.<sup>1</sup>

### **Systemic racism**

This is an interlocking and reciprocal relationship between the individual, institutional, and structural levels which function as a **system of racism**. These various levels of racism operate together in a lockstep model and function together as a whole system. These levels are:

- **Individual** (within interactions between people)
- **Institutional** (within institutions and systems of power)
- **Structural or societal** (among institutional and across society)<sup>1</sup>

### **Racist**

One who is supporting a racist policy through their actions or interaction or expressing a racist idea.

Note: Kendi notes that the term “racist” is action specific. One can be acting as a racist while upholding a racist idea, but that does not mean that individual’s identity is fixed as a racist.<sup>14</sup>

### **Racist idea**

Any idea that suggests that one racial group is inferior or superior to another racial group in any way.<sup>14</sup>

### **Racist policy**

Any measure that produces or sustains racial inequity between or among racial groups. Policies are written and unwritten laws, rules, procedures, processes, regulations, and guidelines that govern people. There is no such thing as a nonracist or race-neutral policy; every policy in every institution in every community in every nation is producing or sustaining either racial inequity or equity between racial groups. Racist policies are also expressed through other terms such as “structural racism” or “systemic racism.” Racism itself is institutional, structural, and systemic.<sup>1</sup>

### **Reparations**

States have a legal duty to acknowledge and address widespread or systematic human rights violations in cases where the state caused the violations or did not seriously try to prevent them. Reparation initiatives seek to address the harms caused by these violations. They can take the form of compensating for the losses suffered, which helps overcome some of the consequences of abuse. They can also be future oriented—providing rehabilitation and a better life for victims—and help change the underlying causes of abuse. Reparations publicly affirm that victims are rights holders entitled to redress.<sup>1</sup>

### **Reproductive justice**

The human right to maintain personal bodily autonomy, have children, not have children, and parent the children we have in safe and sustainable communities.

Reproductive justice is a theoretical framework conceptualized and drafted in 1994 by a group of Black women who called themselves Women of African Descent for Reproductive Justice. Reproductive justice is not a synonym for reproductive rights. The framework addresses the failure of the reproductive rights movement—led largely by middle-class white women—to acknowledge intersecting factors such as race and class and inability to uplift the needs of the most marginalized.<sup>28</sup>

### **Restorative justice**

A theory of justice that emphasizes repairing the harm caused by crime and conflict. It places decisions in the hands of those who have been most affected by a wrongdoing and gives equal concern to the victim, the offender, and the surrounding community. Restorative responses are meant to repair harm, heal broken relationships, and address the underlying reasons for the offense. Restorative justice emphasizes individual and collective accountability. Crime and conflict generate opportunities to build community and increase grassroots power when restorative practices are employed.<sup>1</sup>

### **Segregation**

The social, physical, political, and economic separation of diverse groups of people based on racial or ethnic groups. This particularly refers to ideological and structural barriers to civil liberties, equal opportunity, and participation by minorities within the larger society.<sup>2</sup>

### **Settler colonialism**

Colonization in which colonizing powers create permanent or long-term settlement on land owned and/or occupied by other peoples, often by force. This contrasts with colonialism, where colonizers focus only on extracting resources back to their countries of origin. Settler colonialism typically includes oppressive governance, dismantling of Indigenous cultural forms, and enforcement of codes of superiority (such as white supremacy). Examples include white European occupations of land in what is now the United States, Spain's settlements throughout Latin America, and the Apartheid government established by white Europeans in South Africa.

Per Dino Gilio-Whitaker, “Settler colonialism may be said to be a structure, not an historic event, whose endgame is always the elimination of the Natives in order to acquire their land, which it does in countless seen and unseen ways. These techniques are woven throughout the US's national discourse at all levels of society. Manifest Destiny—that is, the US's divinely sanctioned inevitability—is like a computer program always operating unnoticeably in the background. In this program, genocide and land dispossession are continually both justified and denied.”<sup>1</sup>

### **Social determinants of health (SDOH)**

The interrelated social, political, and economic factors that create the conditions in which people live, learn, work, and play. The intersection of the social determinants of health causes these

conditions to shift and change over time and across the life span, affecting the health of individuals, groups, and communities in different ways. SDOH include the following:

- Race/racialization
- Gender/gender identity
- Ethnicity
- Indigeneity
- Colonization
- Migrant and refugee experiences
- Religion
- Culture
- Discrimination/social exclusion/social inclusion
- Education/literacy
- Health literacy
- Occupation/working conditions
- Income/income security
- Employment/job security
- Early life experiences
- Disability
- Nutrition/food security
- Housing/housing security
- Natural and built environments
- Social safety net/social protection
- Access to health services<sup>29</sup>

### **Social justice**

A concept premised upon the belief that each individual and group within society is to be given equal opportunity, fairness, civil liberties, and participation in the social, educational, economic, institutional, and moral freedoms and responsibilities valued by the society.<sup>2</sup>

### **Social oppression**

Oppression that is achieved through social means and that is social in scope; it affects whole categories of people. This kind of oppression includes the systematic mistreatment, exploitation, and abuse of a group (or groups) of people by another group (or groups). It occurs whenever one group holds power over another in society through the control of social institutions, along with society's laws, customs, and norms. The outcome of social oppression is that groups in society are sorted into different positions within the social hierarchies of race, class, gender, sexuality, and ability. Those in the controlling, or dominant, group benefit from the oppression of other groups through heightened privileges relative to others, greater access to rights and resources, a better quality of life, and overall greater life chances. Those who experience the brunt of oppression have fewer rights, less access to resources, less political power, lower economic potential, worse health, higher mortality rates, and lower overall life chances.<sup>1</sup>

## **Stereotype**

A preconceived generalization of a group of people. This generalization ascribes the same characteristic(s) to all members of the group, regardless of their individual differences.<sup>2</sup>

## **Structural racialization**

The dynamic process that creates cumulative and durable inequalities based on race. Interactions between individuals are shaped by and reflect underlying and often hidden structures that shape biases and create disparate outcomes even in the absence of racist actors or racist intentions. The presence of structural racialization is evidenced by consistent differences in outcomes in education attainment, family wealth, and even life span.<sup>1</sup>

**Structural racism:** see Racism

## **Systemic discrimination**

The institutionalization of discrimination through policies and practices which may appear neutral on the surface, but which have an exclusionary impact on particular groups. This occurs in institutions and organizations, including the government, where the policies, practices, and procedures (eg, employment systems, job requirements, hiring practices, and promotion procedures) exclude and/or act as barriers to racialized groups.<sup>2</sup>

**Systemic racism:** see Racism

## **Targeted universalism**

Setting universal goals pursued by targeted processes to achieve those goals. Targeted universalism is a platform to operationalize programs that move all groups toward the universal policy goal and is a way of communicating and publicly marketing such programs in an inclusive manner.<sup>30</sup>

## **Tolerance**

A liberal attitude toward those whose race, religion, nationality, etc, are different from one's own. Because it has the connotation of "to put up with," the term "acceptance" is now preferred.<sup>2</sup>

## **Weathering theory/hypothesis**

Evidence of early health deterioration among Black individuals and racial differences in health are evident at all socioeconomic levels. To account for early health deterioration among Black individuals, Arline T. Geronimus proposed the "weathering" hypothesis, which posits that Black individuals experience early health deterioration as a consequence of the cumulative effects of repeated experience with social or economic adversity and political marginalization. On a physiological level, persistent, high-effort coping with acute and chronic stressors can have a profound effect on health. The stress inherent in living in a race-conscious society that stigmatizes and disadvantages Black individuals may cause disproportionate physiological

deterioration, such that a Black individual may show the morbidity and mortality typical of a white individual who is significantly older. Not only do Black individuals experience poor health at earlier ages than do white individuals, but this deterioration in health accumulates, producing ever-greater racial inequality in health with age through middle adulthood.<sup>31</sup>

### **White fragility**

Multicultural education scholar Dr Robin DiAngelo describes white fragility as “a state in which even a minimum 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. Racial stress results from an interruption to what is racially familiar.” White fragility may be learned and is often a subconscious emotional response resulting from white people lacking experience to develop the tools for constructive engagement across racial divides. It is nefarious in that it works to protect, maintain, and reproduce white privilege by centering the emotions of white people in dialogues about racism, thus impeding discussions about racist systems that need dismantling.<sup>4</sup>

### **White privilege**

The unquestioned and unearned set of advantages, entitlements, benefits, and choices bestowed on people solely because they are white. Generally, white people who experience such privilege do so without being conscious of it.

- **Structural white privilege:** A system of white domination that creates and maintains belief systems that make current racial advantages and disadvantages seem normal. The system includes powerful incentives for maintaining white privilege and its consequences, and powerful negative consequences for trying to interrupt white privilege or reduce its consequences in meaningful ways. The system includes internal and external manifestations at the individual, interpersonal, cultural, and institutional levels.
- The accumulated and interrelated advantages and disadvantages of white privilege are reflected in racial/ethnic inequities in life expectancy and other health outcomes, income and wealth, and other areas of life, in part through different access to opportunities and resources. These differences are maintained in part by denying that these advantages and disadvantages exist at the structural, institutional, cultural, interpersonal, and individual levels and by refusing to redress them or eliminate the systems, policies, practices, cultural norms, and other behaviors and assumptions that maintain them.
- **Interpersonal white privilege:** Behavior between people that consciously or unconsciously reflects white superiority or entitlement.
- **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.
- **Institutional white privilege:** Policies, practices and behaviors of institutions—such as schools, banks, nonprofits, or the Supreme Court—that have the effect of maintaining or increasing accumulated advantages for those groups currently defined as white and

maintaining or increasing disadvantages for those racial or ethnic groups not defined as white. Institutions survive and thrive even when their policies, practices, and behaviors maintain, expand, or fail to redress accumulated disadvantages and/or inequitable outcomes for people of color.<sup>1,32</sup>

### **White supremacy**

The idea (ideology) that white people and the ideas, thoughts, beliefs, and actions of white people are superior to those of people of color. Although 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, and inhuman and “undeserving.” Drawing from CRT, the term “white supremacy” also refers to a political or socioeconomic system where white people enjoy structural advantage and rights that other racial and ethnic groups do not, both at a collective and an individual level.<sup>1</sup>

### **White supremacy culture**

1. The dominant, unquestioned standards of behavior and ways of functioning embodied by the vast majority of institutions in the United States. These standards may be seen as mainstream, dominant cultural practices; they have evolved from the United States’ history of white supremacy. Because it is so normalized, white supremacy can be hard to see, which only adds to its powerful hold. In many ways, it is indistinguishable from what we might call US culture or norms—a focus on individuals over groups, for example, or an emphasis on the written word as a form of professional communication. But white supremacy culture operates in even more subtle ways, by actually defining what “normal” is, and likewise, what “professional,” “effective,” or even “good” is. In turn, white culture also defines what is not good, “at risk,” or “unsustainable.” White culture values some ways—ways that are more familiar and come more naturally to those from a white, Western tradition—of thinking, behaving, deciding, and knowing, while devaluing or rendering invisible other ways, and it does this without ever having to explicitly say so.
2. An artificial, historically constructed culture which expresses, justifies, and binds together the US white supremacy system. It is the glue that binds together white-controlled institutions into systems and white-controlled systems into the global white supremacy system.<sup>1</sup>

### **Whiteness**

Whiteness goes beyond white skin; it refers to a systematic prioritization that advantages white people and disadvantages people of color. The fundamental premise of the concept of whiteness is that being white is the standard and being a person of color is a deviation from this norm. Whiteness influences everyone because it is a ubiquitous set of cultural assumptions to which we are all pressured to conform. It is, essentially, the proverbial water in which we all swim. For example, consider what understood to be “normal” when Band-Aid describes a pale tan bandage as “skin tone,” when a patient expresses surprise that their doctor is Black, or when a person’s

name is described as “unusual” when it is really just unfamiliar to someone. The normative ideals of whiteness often go unnamed, unexamined, and unquestioned. This has tangible consequences, and often violent effects, for those who do not default to the norms of whiteness. Whiteness, and its consequent white supremacy, permeate medicine and health care in complex and nuanced ways. A discussion or critique of whiteness is not a critique of white people, but of a system from which they benefit and often uphold.<sup>4</sup>

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