

INTRODUCTION TO STRUCTURAL RACISM: FROM AWARENESS TO ACTION

DR. CHRISTIAN BRANEON
DEAN STEPHANIE L. RAY

WHY SO LITTLE HAS CHANGED



- Fish Don't See Water
- Diversity initiatives are repackaged and renamed
- Reactive and follow critical incidents
- Students and activists depart from the institution
- The focus shifts and no real change occurs

Paper Clip Communications, 2016

Rev. Dr. Jamie Washington

Kathy Obear, Ed.D.

KEY TERMS & CONCEPTS



- Prejudice
- Power
- Racism
- Individual Racism
- Institutional Racism
- Structural Racism
- Racial Justice

Keith Lawrence and Terry Keleher, Race and Public Policy Conference 2004

ASPEN INSTITUTE Roundtable on Community Change, June 2004

THE HUMAN RACE: BORN AND BRED IN AFRICA



- There is only one species of human
- Race as a biological concept was created in 15th century Spain
- In the 16th & 17th centuries, race allowed for a theological justification for conquest
- The 18th & 19th centuries, "scientists" created racial categories
 - Caucasoid
 - Mongoloid
 - Negroid

Keith Lawrence and Terry Keleher, Race and Public Policy Conference 2004

ASPEN INSTITUTE Roundtable on Community Change, June 2004

THE INVENTION OF THE “WHITE” RACE



- European laborers who came to the colonies are referred to as *indentured servants* to distinguish them
- In 1691, the term “white” is first used in law
 - The first legal use of “white” was used to ban racial intermarriage
 - The law focused the punishment on the “white” lover
 - The law distinguished “white” from all others in the colonies: “Negro,” “mulatto,” and “Indian”
 - The law created a new synonym: English equals white
 - Other European immigrants could later be included in the new legal category of “white”

Keith Lawrence and Terry Kelcher, Race and Public Policy Conference 2004

ASPEN INSTITUTE Roundtable on Community Change, June 2004

RACISM = PREJUDICE + POWER



- A **prejudice** is a pre-judgment in favor of or against a person, a group, an event, an idea, or a thing.
 - An action based on prejudice is **discrimination**.
 - A negative prejudice is often called a **stereotype**.
 - An action based on a stereotype is called **bigotry**.
- **Power** is a relational term.
 - It can only be understood as a relationship between human beings in a specific setting.
 - It must be exercised to be visible.

Keith Lawrence and Terry Keleher, Race and Public Policy Conference 2004

ASPEN INSTITUTE Roundtable on Community Change, June 2004

RACISM = PREJUDICE + POWER



- Power is control of, or access to, those institutions sanctioned by the state.
- Power is ownership and control of the major resources of a state; and the capacity to make and enforce decisions based on this ownership and control;
- Power is the capacity of a group of people to decide what they want and to act in an organized way to get it.

Keith Lawrence and Terry Keleher, Race and Public Policy Conference 2004

ASPEN INSTITUTE Roundtable on Community Change, June 2004

INSTITUTIONAL RACISM VS STRUCTURAL RACISM



Institutional Racism

Institutional Racism occurs within and between institutions. Institutional racism is discriminatory treatment, unfair policies and inequitable opportunities and impacted, based on race, produced and perpetuated by institutions (schools, mass media, etc.)

Structural Racism

Structural Racism lies underneath, all around and across society. It encompasses (1) history, (2) culture, (3) interconnected institutions and policies, the key relationships and rules across society providing the legitimacy and reinforcements to maintain and perpetuate racism.

WHAT CAN WE DO



- Engage in self-work
 - Awareness
 - Knowledge
 - Skills
 - Action
- Refrain from reactionary response (PAN)
- Don't be afraid to have candid conversations about race
- Don't forget the power of individual action
- Develop strategies to combat resistance