

Structural Racism

An Introduction

PURPOSE

To prepare students for a workshop on structural racism. (This lesson is intended to take 1-2 class periods and/or can be done as a class or individually.)

ACTIVITY



- Go to: ["Seeing White" -- White Affirmative Action \(Episode 44\)](#)
- *Listen to the podcast. (You can also read a transcript, but listening is better!)*
- *Journal: Spend 15 minutes recording your reactions.*
- *Review and reflect: Write short descriptions of key historical events mentioned in the podcast and jot down thoughts on some questions (see pp.2-3)*
- *Review: Definitions of structural racism*
<https://assets.aspeninstitute.org/content/uploads/files/content/docs/rcc/RCC-Structural-Racism-Glossary.pdf>
- *Dive deeper: Do some more reading on topics that you want to know more about. (You can start with some of the "further reading" suggestions on pp.3-4. Try to find studies that present data and research results.)*

Structural Racism

Historical Highlights

Part 1: Identify briefly then ask, Who benefitted from this? Who was excluded?

- Headright System, 1618
- Virginia Slave Code, 1705
- Land Ordinance Act, 1785
- Naturalization Act, 1790
- Homestead Act, 1862
- “40 Acres and a Mule”
- National Housing Act, 1934 (Federal Housing Administration)
- “Redlining”
- Social Security Act, 1935
- Servicemen’s Readjustment Act, 1944 (better known as the “GI Bill”)

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Historical Highlights

Part 2: Questions

- What do you associate with “Affirmative Action”?
- Why do they talk about “White Affirmative Action”?
- What do you think of Kathryn’s reaction to the workshop?
- What do you think of Dan’s reaction to the workshop?
- At one point, Chenjerai Kumanyika (Media Studies professor) asks, “Why is it so hard to recognize the way that white supremacy was built into this country?” What are your thoughts on this?
- At one point, John Biewen (the narrator) says, “If you’re white you can’t really make the claim to having been on the sidelines and not a party to this story of exclusion and exploitation, because you have benefitted from it.” What are your thoughts on this?
- The radio podcast mentions some laws and policies that established and perpetuated structural racism. Can you think of any more recent examples? (criminal justice, welfare, immigration, etc.)

For Further Reading

Health Care

<https://www.racialequityinstitute.com/blog/2019/11/20/racial-bias-in-medical-treatment>

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0033354918795891?journalCode=phrg>

<http://www.theroot.com/articles/culture/2016/09/black-morbidity-reproductive-health/>

Education

<https://cepa.stanford.edu/content/school-district-socioeconomic-stats-race-and-academic-achievement>

<https://www.racialequityinstitute.com/blog/2020/1/9/black-students-face-racial-bias-in-school-discipline>

Law Enforcement

<https://www.prisonpolicy.org/blog/2018/10/12/policing/>

Criminal Justice

<https://justmercy.eji.org/>

Child Welfare

www.sba.gov/sites/default/files/files/rs419.pdf

Wealth

<https://www.racialequityinstitute.com/blog/2018/4/24/the-road-to-zero-wealth-how-the-racial-wealth-divide-is-hollowing-out-americas-middle-class>

<https://www.racialequityinstitute.com/blog/2019/10/9/the-racial-wealth-divide>

<https://socialequity.duke.edu/portfolio-item/what-we-get-wrong-about-closing-the-racial-wealth-gap/>

Other

<https://www.racialequityinstitute.com/blog/2019/8/23/americas-unfair-rules-of-the-road>