

Terminology sheet on Racism

from the Collective Liberation Project

Ahistorical	Not considering the historical context and its current social, economic and political impact.
Ally (White ally)	The active, consistent and uncomfortable process of unlearning and re-evaluating, in which a White person leverages their privilege in order to work in solidarity with people of colour. [A verb rather than a noun - calling yourself an ally doesn't make you one].
Anti-Blackness or Anti-Black Racism	A term to acknowledge the specific racial prejudice directed towards black people. Ex// Non-black people of colour can be complicit in reproducing the colonial hierarchy of race that dehumanises black people.
Colour blindness	A belief that the best way to end racism is to treat people without regard to race, culture or ethnicity; the 'I don't see skin colour' pretence; a product of White privilege.
Cultural appropriation	White people having a sense of entitlement to 'borrow', 'enjoy' or economically exploit the culture of an oppressed or marginalised group. Ex// Native American Headdresses
Credentiailling	Attempting to 'demonstrate' or give 'examples of things that make us less racist. Ex// Being quick to say "I'm married to a POC..." "I work in Racial Justice". Sharing further resources in a group chat when a POC is presenting.
Intersectionality	A theoretical framework to illuminate how different dynamics of oppression work, rooted in the tradition of black feminism. The term was coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw in her 1989 legal essay on how black women were erased at the intersection of gender and race discrimination law.
Microaggression	A term to describe commonplace verbal or behavioural indignities that communicate hostile, derogatory or prejudiced ideas about marginalised groups. Ex// 'Where are you from?' or, 'Your English is so good!'
Misogynoir	A word to describe the convergence of misogyny and anti-blackness that black women face. This includes the objectification, violence,

	mistreatment and erasure experienced by black women. Also refers to tropes projected onto black women, e.g. the 'hypersexual jezebel' or 'angry black woman'. Coined by Moya Bailey.
People of Colour (PoC/POC)	A term that refers to all people that identify as non-White. It emphasises common experiences of systemic racism. Be aware that POC have a variety of different lived experiences so avoid making generalisations about POC.
People of the Global Majority (POGM)	A term that seeks to empower non-White people by acknowledging that the majority of human beings alive on the planet are not White.
Politics of respectability	Marginalised individuals police themselves (dress, behaviour, speech etc.) within a White supremacist society to avoid racist, sexist or classist assumptions and maintain 'respectability' or increase their status within normative society.
Passing	To be White passing is to have your identity assumed as White by people in the society you live in. Many White passing people identify as POC or have a parent that does. Passing has a complex history in the UK and USA as POC who passed for White could make more money, subscribe to White beauty standards and experience less discrimination.
Racial Fetishism	Sexually fetishizing a person or culture belonging to a specific race or ethnic group. Connects to exoticism, which justified sexual violence against people of colour in colonial conquest.
Racism	'Whiteness scholars define racism as encompassing economic, political, social, and cultural structures, actions, and beliefs that systematize and perpetuate an unequal distribution of privileges, resources, and power among white people and people of color' (Hilliard cited in DiAngelo, 2012)
Shadism (also called colourism)	Discrimination based on skin tone between POC. Historically, lighter skin tones are given value because of White supremacy culture inherent in our society.
Tone policing	When a White person or group demands their racist behaviour is pointed out 'nicely', shifting the focus to White needs. It is a silencing and victimising tactic. [See also White fragility, entitlement].
Tokenism	When a person or group utilises a person of colour for economic gain, artistic exploitation or to demonstrate they are not racist.

	Ex// A White dominated environmental group claiming they are not racist because they have one POC member.
In/visible	Whiteness as an identity is normalised in our society so it's invisible as a racial category. White people are just seen as normal rather than the 'other'. PoC are very visible in White dominated spaces, labelled by perceived race and often viewed as the 'other'.
Whiteness	'Whiteness' like 'Blackness' are social constructs applied to human beings. Whiteness is manifested by the ways in which racialized Whiteness becomes transformed into social, political, economic, and cultural behaviour. White culture, norms, and values in all these areas become normative or natural. They become the standard against which all other cultures, groups, and individuals are measured and usually found to be inferior (Henry & Tator, 2006, pp. 46-67).
Whitewashing	Process erasing the presence of POC, often from their own cultural or artistic endeavours. Ex// Casting a White person as a non White character in a film such as Scarlett Johansson in "Ghost in the Shell".
Whitesplaining	To explain or comment on something in a condescending, overconfident, and often inaccurate or oversimplified manner, from the perspective of White normative society. Ex// A White person condescendingly correcting a POC who talks about mass incarceration or experiences in the mental health system.
White Approval Syndrome	The desire of white people to be liked or approved of by people of colour, particularly for anti-racism work. Also referred to as 'wanting allyship cookies'
White apathy	A feeling of apathy about racism by white privileged people. 'White Apathy shows up as laziness, tiredness, fear, boredom, numbness, perfectionism, turning away from the news, and other apathetic feelings and actions when it comes to engaging in anti-racism practice.' - Layla F. Saad
White entitlement	When a White person/institution feels they have the right to time, emotional labour or resources on the basis of superiority complex developed from White privilege. Ex// Demanding an explanation from a POC about racism.
White fragility	'White Fragility is 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'

	- Robin DiAngelo
White gaze	The norms of Whiteness as a specific gaze, a way of seeing the world. Ex// Believing White people to be the most beautiful in the world, or believing white people to be more capable, intelligent, rational or otherwise superior to POC.
White guilt	White guilt is the individual or collective guilt felt by some white people for harm resulting from racist treatment of ethnic minorities by other white people both historically and currently.
White imagination	The external fantasies and projections of white people onto people of colour which are used to justify prejudice and violence. The white imagination originates in the European construction of race, which was used to justify colonial invasion, enslaving African peoples and killing Indigenous peoples (e.g. with words like 'savage' and 'primitive') 'One becomes a deposit for <i>white</i> fears from the realm of either aggression or sexuality' - Grada Kilomba, Plantation Memories, p.44
White narratives	Constructing a story with no reference to race or acknowledgment of POC. Ex// English period dramas that erase any existence of POC.
White privilege	White privilege (or White skin privilege) is a term for societal privileges that benefit people identified as white, beyond what is commonly experienced by non-white people under the same social, political, or economic circumstances. (coined by Peggy Mackintosh)
White saviour complex	Originating from missionaries in the colonial era, the White saviour rescues POC from suffering as a way to alleviate White guilt. Ex// White youth going to the global south to work on development projects to "save African children".
White silence	A term that refers to the collective and individual silence that White people have in relation to racism and other oppressions that affect people of colour.
White Solidarity	'White solidarity is the unspoken agreement among whites to protect white advantage and not cause another white person to feel racial discomfort by confronting them when they say or do something racially problematic. Educational researcher Christine Sleeter describes this solidarity as white "racial bonding." She observes that when whites interact, they affirm "a common stance on race-related issues, legitimating particular interpretations of groups of color, and drawing conspiratorial we-they boundaries." White solidarity requires both silence about anything that exposes the advantages of the white

	position and tacit agreement to remain racially united in the protection of white supremacy. To break white solidarity is to break rank.' p.57, White Fragility, Robin DiAngelo
White Supremacy	White supremacy is an historically based, institutionally perpetuated system of exploitation and oppression of continents, nations, and peoples of color by White peoples and nations of the European continent, for the purpose of maintaining and defending a system of wealth, power, privilege. It is a system, a web of interlocking, reinforcing institutions: political, economic, social, cultural, legal, military, educational, all our institutions. As a system, racism affects every aspect of life in a country. "Racism is not just a personal issue – it's a social hierarchy. We can call this hierarchy white supremacy." - White Awake [Can be a better term to refer to system of racism]
White tears	Links to White fragility. When a White person is upset over being exposed to conversations about race or is confronted by their White privilege being questioned. White tears are often weaponised by white women to harm black lives. Ex// white women calling the cops on black men Ex// a white woman bursting into tears during the Q & A in a talk about racism

This terminology sheet was originally sourced from The Collective Liberation Project, but has since been added to. It is not the be-all and end-all, and therefore we welcome more additions and feedback!