

10/28/2020

Additions to the glossary/definitions  
for the Civil Rights Committee workshop

## **DRAFT**

First, a frame within which the rest follows:

The first part is from *Dawnland*, by one of the Wabanaki women on the Maine Truth and Reconciliation Commission. I'm paraphrasing:

When Truth and Reconciliation gets put on the table, white folks want to rush to reconciliation while Indigenous folks require addressing the truth.

From another source:

If racism is understood as prejudice plus power\*, whites want to work on their prejudice but not share their power.

\*The interpersonal bias and bigotry plus the institutionalized white power = racism = white supremacy. What whites often want to focus on is the bias training, the educating of kids to not be prejudiced, while skirting around the whole issue of inequality of power and access to and control of resources. All of it needs activist attention.

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Those in bold come from here: <http://maineinitiatives.org/resource-guide-racial-justice-101/>

**Ally:** “A person who is a member of an advantaged social group who takes a stand against oppression, works to eliminate oppressive attitudes and beliefs in themselves and their communities, and works to interrogate and understand their privilege” ([Suffolk University](#)).

**Accomplice:** Similar to an ally but, “the actions of an Accomplice are meant to directly challenge institutionalized racism, colonization, and white supremacy by blocking or impeding racist people, policies, and structures. Realizing that our freedoms and liberations are bound together, retreat or withdrawal in the face of oppressive structures is not an option. Accomplices’ actions are informed by, directed and often coordinated with leaders who are Black, Brown, First Nations/Indigenous Peoples, and/or People of Color” ([White Accomplices](#)).

**Intersectionality:** Originally coined by scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw, and inspired by the work of the Combahee River Collective, intersectionality is a “sociological model and/or lens for critical analysis that focuses on the intersections of multiple, mutually-reinforcing systems of oppression, power, and privilege. Intersectional theorists look at how the individual experience is impacted by multiple axes of oppression and privilege. Variables include, but are not limited to: race, gender, ethnicity, religion ability, education, sexual orientation, sexuality, gender identity, gender expression, class, first language, citizenship, and age” ([Suffolk University](#)).

**Environmental Racism:** “Environmental racism refers to the institutional rules, regulations, policies or government and/or corporate decisions that deliberately target certain communities for locally undesirable land uses and lax enforcement of zoning and environmental laws,

resulting in communities being disproportionately exposed to toxic and hazardous waste based upon race. Environmental racism is caused by several factors, including intentional neglect, the alleged need for a receptacle for pollutants in urban areas, and a lack of institutional power and low land values of people of color. It is a well-documented fact that communities of color and low-income communities are disproportionately impacted by polluting industries (and very specifically, hazardous waste facilities) and lax regulation of these industries” ([Green Action](#)).

**White Privilege:** “White privilege refers to 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” ([Racial Equity Tools](#)).

**White Supremacy:** “White Supremacy is a 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, and privilege” ([Elizabeth Martínez](#)).

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**Caste:**

A more or less fixed socially stratified group of people classified by race, gender, economic standing, etc. Despite ruling class axioms and fictions, like *pulling oneself up by one's bootstraps* or *meritocracy*, movement up a caste system is designed to be impossible for everyone in a lower caste group. The poor cannot become the rich. Black and Indigenous people are never supposed to take ownership of white-ruled institutions.

**Oppression:** the condition of being dominated and subordinated, marginalized and exploited, enduring violence and violation, cultural appropriation and material theft, such as through gentrification of neighborhoods or acquisition of land through invalidation of treaties. This may include receiving a portion of resources to stay in place or result in genocide.

**Stigma:**

A mark of devaluation and degraded status used to support subordination, applied to groups and castes. It may be presumed to be inherent or inevitable in the caste. Example: inherently lazy, poor, or irresponsible.

**Status:**

A mark of valuation and elevated status used to support dominant social standing, applied to groups and castes. It may be presumed to be inherent or inevitable in the caste. Example: inherently good with money, reasonable, or having high moral character.

The oppressed, even when stasused in the eyes of the ruling caste, still carry the taint of stigma. The oppressors, however stigmatized, still control enough resources and institutions to protect their standing.

### Stereotypes:

Gross distortions and caricatures of groups of people. These can be afforded status or stigma. Examples: Blacks are seen as great athletes, or dangerous criminals; maternal care-givers to all children or whores. Asians are viewed as great violinists and STEM students, or double agents and spreaders of disease. White rich men may be viewed in stereotypical ways either positively or negatively: as great business people, generators of the economy, and charitable humanitarians, or as criminals, exploiters, and tax evaders.

### Bias:

Statusing and stigmatizing different groups of people based on socially constructed criteria. This may be carried into social life on all levels which may result in unconscious discriminatory practices. It does not 'come first' before oppression. It is a consequence of structural oppression, learned, such as through systematic messaging from the dominant culture. Bias training is often ineffective because trainers may fail to emphasize this.

### Bigotry:

The reduction of a group of people to negative caricatures and stigmatized stereotypes. The bigot usually sees such a negative portrait, irrationally, as unbiased.

### Prejudice:

Judging others with ignorance or bias, often with stereotypical preconceptions. Anyone can be prejudiced. Only some can use it structurally to oppressive ends. Racism has been defined as prejudice plus power but this can overstate the necessity of prejudice. Interpersonal and systemic discrimination may or may not utilize prejudicial thinking and attitudes. Children are oppressed but are also seen and loved as human beings.

### Tolerance (by the ruling caste):

Not opposing modest social change efforts, re: marginalized and oppressed groups.

### Acceptance (by the ruling caste):

Moving beyond tolerance, to being okay with social change as long as it maintains the status quo.

Neither of those are tolerable or acceptable to many oppressed people, whether by race, ethnicity, class, gender, or sexuality. What's more than acceptable to oppressed people? Celebration, loving community, justice, and especially: liberation from the ruling castes.

### Social Conditioning, also termed Socialization:

A social process of producing and reproducing political categories, social values and behaviors, cultural practices and identities, and individual and group attitudes and alliances. Family, religion, school, media, and other structural political realities do the conditioning or socializing in consistent or conflictual ways. For example, Queer people of any color may feel supported by a teacher or councilor within a school system or by some select media, but not by most of one's immediate family of origin or that family's religion. This is why a disproportionate number of

homeless youth are LGBTQ. Some races of people may feel supported by family and religion, but not by a school system or mass media. Women across race may have ambivalent or negative relationships to family obligations and roles, religious teachings, work options, and media representations.

Dehumanization:

a) a system-wide effort to prevent or remove dignity, self-determination, or sovereignty from a group or caste

b) a necessary consequence of being in an oppressor caste, experienced, in part, as moral conflict

For those who are comfortable with the status quo, liberally diversified or not, the remedy for that nagging moral conflict may be two-fold: a) to adapt by embracing the values of the ruling caste, and/or b) do enough diversity work, teaching tolerance, bias training, etc. to make one feel like one is a good, conscientious white person. Good enough to otherwise passively maintain a cruel system that promotes the holistic unwellness of lower castes, via massive stress and PTSD, overwork and lack of time for self-care, accelerated and disproportionate death by disallowing access to healthy food and health care, replacing it with polluted water, the looting of culture, theft of neighborhood or homeland. Also, through the multi-generational trauma of disassembled family and community via political violence and policy, and by intentionally flooding geographic areas with ridiculous drug laws, over-armament of police forces, and spreading of lethal disease (from small pox to COVID-19). Dehumanization is the privilege of maintaining psychological, spiritual, communal, and economic barriers to feeling rampant indignity, violence, terror, and rage. All of it termed by the ruling raced caste as Black and Native American self-destruction. The antidote is not, primarily, individual or collective members of the ruling race learning more about people of color or building relationships with them. This may or may not occur. The remedy is people of color controlling the distribution of resources and taking ownership of structural power. By shifting the status quo toward liberation for oppressed people, formerly ruling classes begin to experience what was once foreign to them--still without experiencing the endemic, generations-long trauma.

Degradation:

The imposition of lower caste position along with stigma upon a group or caste.

Male supremacy:

Akin to white supremacy, the ideology and practice of structurally subjugating women to men, keeping women as a lower caste relative to men in their group. This is accomplished through systematic rape, battery, coercion, other physical and mental cruelty, the maintenance of a class of women whose role is to provide men with sex on demand, the production of materials that sexualize domination and submission, systemic discrimination, impoverishment, and attribution of stigma and imposition of stereotype. This occurs in mutually reinforcing ways across all spheres of social existence, in every institution. It is as foundational to the U.S. as white supremacy. Aka, patriarchy: the system of male dominance and female subordination.

#### Sexism:

The exercise of male supremacy; the maintenance of patriarchy. As with racism, this is done by all means necessary, however brutal, from discrimination, to violation, to murder.

#### Misogyny:

Contempt expressed for women by men (and women) systematically.

The hatred and fear of women--an emotional and structural component of male supremacy and sexism. As with hatred of people based on race, men don't have to be misogynists interpersonally to practice sexism and male supremacy effectively. Many men profess love for women--as long as the women are in the lower caste position, subordinate to men in business, society, in the home, or in bed. See Systemic and Structural Racism for more.

#### Feminism:

The sustained, cross cultural political effort to remove male supremacy, eradicate patriarchy, and all manifestations so women may be free. As Aldous Huxley said, "Nothing short of everything will really do." As Andrea Dworkin said, "Feminism is hated because women are hated. Anti-feminism is a direct expression of misogyny; it is the political defense of women hating. There are many branches of feminism, some more focused on economic change, some on the environment, some on health care. What they share is a will to build a world in which women are not defined or controlled by men or male supremacist institutions and imperatives.

#### Whiteness:

An historically specific racial category created to consolidate economic power, social status, and ruling caste political position. The ruling race in the West for the last several hundred years. White 'culture' (usually: the appropriation and theft of cultures of color in service to the maintenance of white power), values, and economics have been globalized via Colonialism, Militarism, Imperialism, and Capitalism.

#### White Fragility:

A conditioned practice of displaying vulnerability and weakness, or defensiveness and aggression, when presented with evidence that one is racially stigmatized, atop a raced caste system, and in charge of maintaining it. Basically, white people freaking out when presented with raced reality.

#### The Maafa (also known as the African Holocaust):

*Maafa* is derived from a Swahili word meaning disaster, terrible occurrence, or great tragedy. The term today collectively refers to the Pan-African 500 hundred years of suffering of people of African heritage through Slavery, Imperialism, Colonialism, Apartheid, rape, xenophobia, oppression, invasions, and exploitation.

#### Colorism:

Attributing status or stigma based on skin color; a form of discrimination in which people who are usually members of the same race are treated differently based on the social implications which come with the cultural meanings which are attached to skin color. This comes from the

white supremacist caste system. In white society, the lighter the skin, the more opportunities one may have for limited and partial social advancement up the hierarchy, but only in some arenas, such as in acting and business. People of color who pass as white may gain entry into the privileged world of whites.

Black:

Respectfully capitalized when referring to people.

Not all Black people in the US are African American. All African Americans are categorized as Black in the white supremacist U.S. regardless of skin color which is sometimes seen within Black communities as ranging from blue-black to high yellow. Whites are trained to see all ranges as one color of one race: Black. Not all Black people are descended from Africa. 'Black' can also refer to how whites identify the Aboriginal Peoples in what is now Australia, regardless of the color of their skin. In US history, the terms *Negro* and *Colored* were once used pejoratively by whites. The latter is only pejorative. *Negro* is still sometimes used in African American communities but is rarely appropriate for whites to use.

Anti-Blackness:

Discrimination and marginalization of Black people by all other racial groups. It is also internalized. A distrust or contempt for people with darker skin. This is foundational to white supremacy wherein whiteness is measured in relation to Blackness.

African Americans:

*African Americans* are usually identified as the people descended from those Africans captured and forced to be chattel slaves working to establish the new economy of what became the U.S. Other Black U.S. Americans include immigrants, especially from sub-Saharan Africa, and immigrants from the Caribbean, many of whom were descended from African people abducted and sold for the trans-Atlantic slave trade not located in the continental US. Some Caribbean-descended Americans in the US do not identify as African American but rather, for example, as Jamaican American or Haitian American, even if born in the U.S.

Africa:

Geographically, *Africa* is never a nation, a country, or anything other than a continent. Sub-Saharan Africa is sometimes equated with Africa, distinguishing it from the Arab nations of North Africa.

Anglo terms for Indigenous Peoples:

Strongly recommended: Capitalize each.

*Indigenous Peoples* is perhaps the umbrella term which includes the rest.

*Aboriginal*, *First Nations*, *First People*, and *Indigenous Peoples* are relatively synonymous.

Some are the preferred term in a particular region.

*Alaska Native* is specific to Alaska.

*Aboriginal* comes from Latin roots meaning *from the beginning*. Obviously anglicized, it is not an Indigenous term but is chosen as a term to refer to *Indigenous Peoples*.

*Aboriginal* is most associated, in the Anglo West, with Australia. *Aboriginal Australians* are people with familial heritage to groups that lived in Australia before British colonization. They include the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

The term *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples* is often preferred, although the terms *First Nations of Australia*, *First Peoples of Australia* and *First Australians* are also increasingly common.

*First Nations* is often grouped with the Inuit and Métis when referring to the Indigenous Peoples from pre-colonial Canada and Northern Territories.

*Inuit* replaces the now pejorative term *Eskimo*.

*American Indian* or *Indian* is in common usage among Indigenous people in the U.S., in some regions more than others.

*Native American* has had mixed reception among Indigenous U.S. Americans. Some people find it a move away from the Imperial European colonizers' mistake of thinking they had landed in India. Some see it as a white Academic term or a term for white liberals to use. One argument: if you're Indigenous, you can't be 'native' to the Americas because America didn't exist over the thousands of years your people have. Note: *Indigenous Americans* means not only Indigenous U.S. Americans, or, even, only Indigenous North Americans. There are Indigenous Peoples across the Americas and across the globe.

Within North America, this term may be used: *The Indigenous People of Turtle Island*. *Turtle Island* existed prior to invasion by Europeans. It still does exist. It is a land mass with mythic meaning not marked by colonial boundaries. We are all on Turtle Island.

Socially, calling folks what they want to be called is always good! Pre-colonialism/pre-race, Indigenous peoples were called by their names and also what their National/Tribal affiliations were, in their own languages, of which there were many hundreds. While many languages are being reconstructed, whites generally use the sometimes anglicized terms using the English alphabet. There is little opposition to being referred to by whites by the National/Tribal affiliation. Preference: the actual name such as Penobscot, Cherokee, Lakota. It is appropriate to put the specific branch of a National/Tribal affiliation in parenthesis following the given name. Example: Sacagawea (Lemhi Shoshone).

Wabanaki:

The People of the Dawn, collectively, are called the *Wabanaki*. *The Wabanaki Confederacy* includes the Abenaki (now relocated or killed), Penobscot, Passamaquoddy, Maliseet, and the Mi'gmaq (meaning: the people). Mi'kmaq refers to one person. The formerly Anglicized term 'Micmac' is not generally used. *Mi'kmaq* (mih-c'mack) and *Mi'gmaw* (mih-ga-maw) are also Anglicized, which is why spellings and pronunciations vary.

People of Color:

All people designated as non-white by white society in the U.S., descended from Indigenous Peoples internationally, Black people and all non-white people descended from the following regions: sub-Saharan Africa; Arab countries; the Americas and Caribbean; all parts of Asia except North Asia; and people descended from the Pacific Islands. It is a political term, creating unity and alliance in the battle to gain liberation from settler colonialist white supremacy. More

recently, it is being distinguished from being Black or Indigenous as in a fairly recent moniker: BIPOC.

BIPOC:

Refers to *Black, Indigenous, and People of Color*. 'BIPOC' is a term created for political use, since 2013 and gaining in usage especially in 2020, by people with heritage and ethnicity not descended from Europe, by people identified by white people as *not white*.\* From the BIPOC Project page: "[We aim] to build authentic and lasting solidarity among Black, Indigenous and People of Color, in order to undo Native invisibility, anti-Blackness, dismantle white supremacy and advance racial justice. We use the term BIPOC to highlight the unique relationship to whiteness that Indigenous and Black (African American) people have, which shapes the experiences of and relationship to white supremacy for all people of color within a U.S. context."

\*When whites ask for terms that don't set people apart from whites, a response can be that it is whites who do this separating with systematic and institutional violence and have for generations. Racially oppressed people choose to identify in ways that promote solidarity and strength while battling colonial white supremacy. These terms are not meant to obscure or pretend we live in any other political situation. White liberals and conservatives like to pretend oppressive racial reality is not what it is. These terms refute such denial or delusion. This phrase comes to mind: "You will deal with us on our own terms."

That said, Brown in a US context, usually refers to people living in the country who are not white but are of color. Brown, a term rarely used by whites, can include Black people. Along with people of sub-Saharan African descent, Brown can also refer to people descended from many parts of Asia, the Americas, and North Africa.

Note: The colonial West identified Asia as the Near East, Middle East, and Far East. The so-called West defining the East only in relation to itself is part of the problem! The peoples of Asia, formerly and pejoratively *the Orient* and *Oriental*s, are far more complex, geographically and ethnically, than the West can conceive or appreciate.

*Oriental* now refers to rugs and other inanimate objects but would better be identified with the country or region in which they are produced, such as Persian or Japanese.

Latinx:

In Queer circles of color, especially, but also among non-queer folks also, "Latinx" is an umbrella term that includes the masculine term *Latino*, and feminine form *Latina*, but gives space for folks who identify as neither, both, or for whom gender is not fixed. Usually pronounced Lat-n-EX (emphasizing the X). Alternately pronounced: La-TEEN-ex (Latino, Latina, Latinx). By some Latinx people in some contexts, "Hispanic" is a gender-neutral term.

Acceptable and chosen by some, it is also viewed pejoratively by others as a US government-imposed catch-all term for regionally, culturally, ethnically, and linguistically--and racially--diverse peoples. *Latinx* may not be embraced by many who identify as Hispanic as it is a new term. Note to whites: calling people what they want to be called is the best practice.

Queer, Non-binary, Trans, Gender Non-conforming:

There are many terms in this category. The most broad umbrella terms in the Anglo world are Trans\*, Queer, and LGBTQ+. Each of these may include people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, Two Spirit, queer, intersex, and asexual and agender, each capitalized depending on context and preference. Many developed via marginalized offline activist communities, online communities and networks, and also flourished in the Academy. Note to all of us: just ask what one wants to be called and which pronouns they/we prefer.

Two-Spirit:

Also Two Spirit, is a modern umbrella term used by some Indigenous North Americans to describe Native people in their communities who fulfill a traditional third-gender (or other gender-variant) ceremonial and social role in their respective cultures. The term was created in 1990 at the Indigenous Lesbian and Gay international gathering in Winnipeg, and "specifically chosen to distinguish and distance Native American/First Nations people from non-Native peoples." The primary purpose of coining a new term was to encourage the replacement of the outdated and offensive, anthropological term, *berdache*.

*Two Spirit* was not intended to be interchangeable with "LGBT Native American" or "Gay Indian"; rather, it was created in English (and then translated into Ojibwe), to serve as a pan-Indian unifier, to be used for general audiences instead of the traditional terms in Indigenous languages for what are actually quite diverse, culturally-specific ceremonial and social roles, that can vary quite widely. There is no English language non-Indigenous corollary. One can learn more by reading work by Two Spirit writers and activists.

Anglo:

Anglo has several meanings. It refers to the English language; the dominant white culture in the U.S.--that descended from the U.K.; and also a non-Indigenous person. In the last meaning, Anglo refers to anyone of any European heritage.

Alternative definition of *Structural Racism*:

The normalization and legitimization of an array of dynamics — historical, cultural, institutional and interpersonal — that routinely advantage white people 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 locate 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.

Resources:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black\\_people](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black_people)

<https://upstanderproject.org/dawnland>

<https://www.mikmaqonline.org/>

<https://www.thebipocproject.org/>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Two-spirit>

<https://africanholocaust.net/africanholocaust/>

[https://www.maine.gov/labor/pcrit/reports/2020\\_LegReport.pdf](https://www.maine.gov/labor/pcrit/reports/2020_LegReport.pdf)

<https://libjournal.uncg.edu/ijcp/article/viewFile/249/116>

<https://robindiangelo.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/zeit-campus-transcript.pdf>

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