

Institutionalized racism and sexism essay (critical writing)

[Sociology](#), [Racism](#)



“ Some of the most flagrant symptoms of social deterioration are acknowledged as serious problems only when they have assumed such epidemic proportions that they appear to defy solution”(Davis).

This quote by Davis emphasizes the fact that the society has been able to deal with some obvious problems. However, it has not succeeded in addressing others which have unfortunately received approval from a section of the society. This trend has notably been championed by those individuals in power and eager to maintain the status quo especially when it comes to race, sexuality and rape.

The myth of rapists is one of the political tools created to oppress the people of color, especially black women. As West points out, “ black sexuality is a taboo subject in America principally because it is a form of black power over which white have little control.” In order to control races and maintain white supremacy in the hierarchy system, the dominant groups of the society were to make up lies about people of color that black males are immoral and sexually aggressive.

On the other hand, that black females are always hungry for sex and are extremely loose. Myths of this nature were aimed at degrading the sexuality of minority in the society and most importantly, it justified the brutality targeted towards the Black community. Arguably put by the whites, because black males are so sexually active, most of them must be rapists. Also, since black females are so loose, they will not mind casual sex with strangers.

In her article, Davis notes that the result of justifying these representations of black people is the leading cause of unreported oppression against the people of color, especially rape of black women by white mobs. Even in reported incidences, it generally believed by consensus that sex was on voluntary basis.

On the subject of racism, the standard of beauty has helped propagate this vice. In the modern society, the standard of beauty is based on white women with pale skin, curvy hair and light-colored eyes. Dark-skin individuals, dark-colored eyes and flat noses are widely considered ugly.

This is clearly a white supremacy ideology resulting only to self-inflicted hatred among black women as well as self-contempt towards their own bodies. The dominant class has succeeded in maintaining their status quo by controlling black female American's bodies and sexuality of the black in general.

It is evident that the results of the continued institutionalization of racism, rape, and sexuality will ultimately lead to more problems in the society. There is need for a candid dialogue on black sexuality or sexuality of different races in general for healthy race relations in the United States.

In her article, Yellow, Frank Wu points out that people know Asian American through fiction characters like Joy Luck or movies featuring Kong-Fu stars such as Jackie Chan (51). In their minds, "the fictional character becomes more believable than a real person." People follow Asian stereotypes that exist in media and easily conclude that Asian women are humble and quiet,

and usually do not speak good English. The same case applies to African Americans.

Since sexuality is such a taboo subject in our society (West), there is actually very little we know about sexualities of different races leading to racism and misrepresentation of facts. The society at large must be educated on sexuality of all races so as to demystify the existing myths that degrade other races. This move will ensure that racism and similar attitudes of oppression are wiped from the society.

Davis, Angela. Women, Race and Class (Chapter 11). Retrieved from

West, Cornel. Race Matters. Black Sexuality: the Taboo Subject. Web.

Wu, H. Frank. Yellow: race in America beyond black and white. Basic Books, 2003, pp. 40-130.