

Why are all the black kids sitting together in the cafeteria parts 1 and 2

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



Why Are All The Black Kids Sitting Together In The Cafeteria Parts 1-3 Racism cannot be defined by prejudice alone. Prejudice is a preconceived judgement or opinion, usually based on limited information and is one of the inescapable consequences of living in a racist society. Racism is a system of advantage based on race. It is a system involving cultural messages and institutional policies and practices as well as the beliefs and actions of individuals. Tatum gives examples of the types of prejudices she see's everyday and how people do not base opinion off first hand knowledge, but rather second hand such as things they see on t. v or in magazines. Another point she makes is that it is not even that we look past first hand knowledge, its that we ommit information such as the point she makes about Cleopatra. She goes on to talk about how just simply walking through an elementary school cafeteria you can already see the shappings of racial diversity and how you move into middle school and high school it is even more noticable. Dr. Tatum also brings up the idea of white privilege and how most white people have never considered the benefits of being white. While she does bring out many good points, I feel like since she is also not white, she can not fully see what it is like to have the " white privilege". Reading on it angers me when Tatum talks about racial prejudice and how basically only white people can be racists because African Americans do not systematically gain from racism. I just do not understand how a statement like that could be made and feel it is very untrue. The next chapter goes on to talk about identity and defining who you are as a person. Dr. Tatum discusses that usually when we think of our identity, the parts that capture our attention are those that other people notice, such as a women being called a female.

Where a person is a member of a dominant or advantaged social group, the category is usually not mentioned. Tatum goes on to talk about how whites and dominant groups have all the power. She says that subordinate groups are usually labeled and are not up to the standard. Dominant groups supply roles to subordinate groups. The interesting point here is that dominants do not really know what the experience of the subordinates is. The opposite can also be said that the subordinates usually are very well informed about the dominants. She says this is because the dominant view of the world has saturated the culture for all to learn. Dr. Tatum mentions and discusses over and over the guilt that arises amongst people of the dominant group, once they become aware of how their group is experienced. It is her hope that through awareness we can build alliances that will free us all. Part 2 focuses on many theories that we have learned about in class and is all about the models for identity development. Tatum uses Cross's Model to try to explain just why all the black kids are sitting together in the cafeteria. She talks about how we all use the 5 stages to racial identity development: pre-encounter, encounter, immersion/emersion, internalization, and internalization-commitment. The first two stages are learned in childhood and can shape who we are and why we are like this but she goes on to say that we may or may not experience these stages in our lifetime. All in all from the first two parts of the book *Why are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria*, I have very mixed opinions. I just find it hard to basically be called out for being white and being called a racist. How can someone of color try to explain how white people function? This would be the same way if were a white person who wrote the book and were trying to

explain that black people are racists. I think that while Tatum makes some very valid points about just how messy things are in today's society, it does not accurately depict our world as a whole. Part three of the book talks about understanding whiteness in a white context. Tatum brings up Helms and the theory that white people need to develop a positive white identity, it is not assumed. We must become aware of our whiteness, accept it as personally and socially significant, and learn to feel good about it. It just really bothers me how much Tatum makes it look like all white people are racist. In my honest opinion, what is not racist? Could we find one person who has never done wrong, never spoken words or have made actions that were considered racist? No one on this earth is perfect therefore no one can be what you would consider a saint. Everyone is different and while I think some people are more racist than others, not all white people are racist and neither are black people or Asian people. I think we are all just people, different in skin color, or ethnicity, but we all possess our own views and live different lives. Who are we to judge someone else for being imperfect when we ourselves can not even walk through one day without thinking about racism. I think it's all about a mind set, I try to go through each day taking the information I have gathered from the past to make smarter decisions and to better understand myself and others. As I keep reading it just bothers me more and more to think this is how one person of another race views white people as a whole as racist. The seventh chapter talks in depth about affirmative action and its very broad definition. Overall affirmative action can never really have a set definition because everyone views it differently and I don't think our nation as a whole is ever going to agree upon one set definition. Affirmative

action has also been confused over the years because people often associate the word quota, which has a history of discrimination and exclusion. Most affirmative action programs do not work with quotas, but goals. Unlike quotas, goals are voluntary, legal and may be exceeded. Goals are not a ceiling meant to limit. Affirmative action was put in place in 1965 by President Johnson, it helped to more fairly employ white women, and black men and women. Race, color, religion, sex, or national origin would no longer play a role in the process of obtaining and holding a job. I feel like affirmative action really did work and is a pretty effective tool for getting diversity in the work place. While I feel like the diversity in the work place has broadened, the definition is so open to opinion that many times it gets thrown out the window and things such as race to begin to play a role in jobs, bank loans, etc. In all, Doctor Beverly Tatum's views and philosophies on development of racial identity are all very valid points but I feel like with most of her points I tend to disagree more often than not. As I talked about earlier, I find it very hard to explain the white perspective of all these situations when she in fact is not white. The same could also be said if someone such as myself tried to define the black perspective. Without actually being that race it seems so hard to actually get a full grip on things and I think that is where some of her points are a little off. On the contrary though, I feel like just from the three parts of the book I have read that I did kind of change some of my thoughts on racism. Everyone will always experience racism no matter what color, ethnicity, gender, but it's how we deal with it that makes it easier or harder on ourselves. The same could be said about being racist without even realizing it, it's just something that you

need to constantly work on. Even though no one will ever be perfect, if you take it step by step you can and will eventually be not only a better person, but will understand things you previously did not know.