

Difficulties interracial couples experience

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



I see interracial couples all the time facing unique struggles and lacking support from family, friends and multiple others. Having knowledge of the reasoning behind this lack of acceptance will help one form a greater understanding that may enable an individual to adjust the judgmental difficulties that they are faced with in an interracial union. The interactions with people that mixed couples experience can be viewed as symbolic interactions because the gestures and words that are interpreted often in negative ways can contribute to the difficulties faced.

People deal with racial struggles all over the world. Different countries experience a greater degree of struggles than others. Since Canada is a multicultural country, one might assume that interracial couples would be more accepted and faced with less racial struggles. Unfortunately, that is not the case; couples are still ridiculed. In present day, it's true that interracial couples are more accepted now than years previous but support of exogamy is still low. A mere fifty years earlier, the thought of a mixed union was a taboo. During the era of segregation, a mixed union between an African Canadian and a Caucasian person was unthinkable. The federal government in Canada has a history of policies that have attempted to separate races from joining in relationships. A vivid example of Canada's attempt to control and prevent interracial intimacies is the Indian Act. " The Indian Act, with all its variations, clearly restricted and provided penalties for interracial sex and marriages. " (Real Canadian History, 2012) Some of the discrimination that mixed couples receive today, from individuals has been passed through the previous generations.

Though, as generations become more educated they are likely to be more open minded. The history of views on interracial relationships has contributed to the lacking acceptance experienced in present day. There is no one definitive answer as to why there is hatred toward mixed unions, what does exist in the scholar world are a few general statements that provide some understanding. Most Of the problems that interracial couples face relate to racism, discrimination and prejudice. Today's " young people, who have went to college are educated and more commonly opened-minded. (Bridge News, 2007) This generation is commonly the population participating in interracial unions and they are often more accepting. " Their parents however, are not as educated and are still strong believers of sticking to your own race. " (Bridge News, 2007) This is a reason why some parents disapprove of mixed relationships. Parent's opinions are often very important to their children. Stereotypes about different races can also influence the views that a parent could have regarding an interracial union that their child is apart of. Prejudice often results from the mismatch between beliefs about the attributes typically possessed by members of a social group (that is, their stereotype) and beliefs about the attributes that facilitate success in valued social roles" (On the Nature of Prejudice, p. 19). Similarly, "[On the Nature of Nature of Prejudice] argue[s] that the potential for prejudice exists when social perceivers hold a stereotype about a social group that is inconsistent with the attributes that are believed to be required for success in certain classes of social roles" (p. 3). Parents are non-accepting when such perceived stereotypes are negative. Jon K. Mills at Vanderbilt University did an investigation Of a group with 142

undergraduates on the receptions of family acceptance concerning interracial relationships. Mills concluded, " both Black and White students indicated that family perception of these interracial relationships would be negative" (Family Acceptance Involving Interracial Friendships, p. 349). The most common question that is asked of mixed couples is " what do your parents think of your relationship?"

This is more evidence that parental disapproval is a common difficulty that mixed couples endure. " Hate still looms as aforementioned because of the inherent survival mechanism that many racial groups want. It is a form of protection almost. " (Lotus, 201 3) Parents have a hard time accepting or even considering the idea of having a grandchild that is mixed with another race different from their own. " Ezekiel (1995) argues that racists often fear their own survival as a group and hate gives them comfort and assurance that their survival will be met or achieved. Another common issue in mixed unions is the joining of different religions and different cultures. Couples are usually supportive of each other's beliefs but often run into problems. Some religions pacifically disagree with marrying outside of the said religion. More generally couples run into issues such as dietary restrictions. As an example, practicing Muslims do not eat pork and all of their meat must be hall. Different religions lead to different holidays, which can keep couples wondering which traditions they Will pass onto their kids.

Interracial couples are ridiculed often because of the difficulties they will pass onto their children. " In October 2009, a Louisiana Justice of Peace refused to perform a marriage for a mixed-race couple because he was

concerned with the rejection and confusion their children would experience growing up" (Curry, 2010). Some mixed couples decide not to have children because they do not want their children to go through the things they have experienced and to avoid the difficult decisions of which traditions to pass forward.

This is another contributor to why individuals do not accept interracial couples and it is also a difficulty regarding important decisions that mixed couples must make. A lot of research regarding interracial couples reveals that such couples face difficulties that are often due to family opinions. There are multiple reasons why families, specifically parents, do not accept mixed unions. Such reasons have been elaborated on and it has been expressed that parental opinions are often a large influence in one's life.

When parents have negative views on mixed relationships, it places a burden upon children participating in such relationships. It is true that other factors such as religious and cultural differences, give difficult problems to mixed couples as well; such factors are not always as detrimental because they are outweighed by the benefits they receive in the relationship. Research on mixed relationships also revealed any unknown benefits of these relationships.