

Current day racism vs. traditional day racism essay

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



The foremost characteristic of a traditional racism is the fact that, while deriving out of an empirically obtained scientific data, which suggests the objective nature of people's inequality, this type of racism used to justify the institutionalization of a number of different racialist policies, such as Jim Crow laws in America, or the policy of apartheid in South Africa.

Traditional (or scientific) racism is based upon the assumption that the actual reason why, throughout the course of history, it were mostly White people who used to push forward cultural, social and scientific progress, is that unlike what it happened to be the case with non-Whites, they remain on the leading edge of biological evolution - hence, their socio-political, scientific and geopolitical dominance (Jackson & Weidman, 2005/2006, p. 66).

Nevertheless, even though that during the course of sixties and seventies, the manifestations of a traditional racism have been effectively eliminated out of just about all the spheres of public life in Western countries, the realities of Western living are now being increasingly affected by a so-called symbolic (or subtle) White racism.

According to Henry and Sears (2002): " Symbolic racism... is a coherent belief system combining the following ideas: that racial discrimination is no longer a serious obstacle to blacks' prospects for a good life and that blacks' continuing disadvantages are due to their own unwillingness to take responsibility for their lives" (p. 254).

While formally agreeing with the validity of socio-political policies, based upon the assumption of people's equality, regardless of what happened to be

<https://assignbuster.com/current-day-racism-vs-traditional-day-racism-essay/>

the particulars of their racial affiliation, symbolic racists nevertheless do subconsciously believe in the foremost provision of classical racism – namely, the fact that when compared with Whites, the people of color are indeed being inferior.

The earlier outlined conceptual differences between traditional and symbolical racisms are being revealed in how traditional and symbolical racists go about exposing others to their racist attitudes. Whereas, traditional racists are being known for their tendency to indulge in an outspoken racialist demagoguery, while promoting the deliberate (often violent) mistreatment of representatives of racial minorities, symbolical racists proceed with advancing their racist agenda in a more subtle manner.

For example, the owners of a real estate who share the ideas of symbolical racism, are being known for their tendency to create artificial obstacles on the way of people of color moving to live in a so-called ‘White suburbia’, such as asking for unreasonably high rent-payments.

Whereas, traditional racists promote the idea that there should be a law that would prevent White and non-White students from studying together (the idea of racial apartheid), symbolical racists suggest that, even though White and non-White students should be allowed to share classes, the latter should not be provided with any race-based preferences, when it comes to enrolling into colleges/universities (affirmative action policy).

Whereas, traditional racists believe that the lessened rate of non-White students’ educational attainment can be explained by these students’

reduced ability to operate with abstract categories (low IQ), symbolical racists explain this phenomena by the fact that the currently enacted policy of political correctness create objective preconditions for visibly ethnical students to remain rather unenthusiastic (lazy) about the very idea of studying.

Nevertheless, even though that, as it was shown earlier, there is number of conceptual differences between these two types of racism, they are both being similar in respect of how their affiliates perceive the surrounding reality. After all, just as it is being the case with traditional racists, symbolical racists appear subconsciously averted by the very idea of multicultural living.

The irony lays in the fact that, as practice indicates, the majority of Whites who formally support the policy of multiculturalism, nevertheless cannot not help the innermost workings of their psyche remaining symbolically racist - hence, their strive to reside in racially secluded ' White suburbia', which features ' better schools' and ' safer streets'. Apparently, just as Malcolm X once suggested, there are good reasons to believe that racism runs in White people's very blood - pure and simple.

Henry, P. J. & Sears, D. O. (2002). The symbolic racism 2000 scale. *Political Psychology*, 23 (2), 253-283.

Jackson, J. P. & Weidman, N. M. (2005/2006). The origins of scientific racism. *The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*, 50, 66-79.