

# Good essay about racism (african american us prisons)

[Technology](#), [Development](#)



## **Community presentation:**

- Racism.

Racism as a concept could be associated to group of people who inhabit the same land and share similar physical characteristics. It is a development that never seems to have an end. Ideally everyone has encountered this problem either as a concept or in practice. It is the explicit biasness towards a person based on their race either in deeds or in words. It is a problem that affects many people. There is not one group of people that racism has not affected. There are some groups that are affected more by this vice than other groups. Racism can lead to a lot of additional problems that can be detrimental to a person in many ways. For example low self esteem could come up as a result of a person being racially abused or discriminated against. Racism could also lead to a lot of social disorder. This could be as a consequence of misunderstandings between the different groups involved in this antagonism.

- Request of Proposals:

Racism being an increasing problem all around the United States, I would like to propose that we should have different races engage with each other.

Change starts with one person. If we get one person to change their outlook on racism and different races other people will follow suit. I believe the best solution to this problem is by getting groups of different races together and have them engage in dialogue with each other. One way to provide this engagement is through workshops, workshops that get everyone talking and workshops that get everyone together.

Education is another important way to make people aware of this problem.

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Education will show that every race is not bad and show that one race is not different from another race at least on the human aspect. Through integrated education system, people of different races would get to mingle and appreciate one another as fellow human beings. This will lead to the different races embracing one another and believing that in human beings race is nothing as we are all human. Parents also have to play an important role in educating their kids on how to treat people and also educate them that the racism is a vice that should be eradicated from the human mind. In addition to that, they should also teach them that we are all human beings and that there is no big difference despite the differences we have in terms of race, color and nation.

#### - Historical Review

Racism is not something that just started yesterday. Racism has been in existence since time immemorial. Racism is believed to have begun with capitalism and the slave trade. The concept of dividing people by their race began with the slave trade. Prior to the advent of capitalism, racism did not exist. In the time of the ancient Greek and Roman societies there was no distinction of people according to race nor was there racial oppression. The Greek and Romans created the ideology that their slave system was natural and this was the same concept for the modern slave- owning class. History bears all this out for the simple fact that if slavery did exist before the slave trade African Americans would not be the primary target. It is my submission that racism was, therefore, created from capitalism. African Americans being the first group to be targeted with racism were illiterate, and were forbidden from getting educated in many places. There were laws in place to keep

them uneducated. The Civil War stopped all forms of education in the United States after the policy of separation was mooted. The schools that were meant for blacks were of poor quality and did not compare to the schools that were meant for the white people. Then there was another aspect of racism that astonished many. There existed different punishments for African Americans as compared to the whites for the same offences. This double application of the laws was evident in the imposition of penalties for possession of crack cocaine where race and class were the major determinants

As early as 1950, a court case of *Brown v. Board of Education* was the first fundamental step in working towards education for the African Americans. Marshall argued that black parents in several different schools were getting their education rights violated. Marshall won this case, but still there was separation in the schools for years to come. The second major breakthrough for anti-racism was the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The act eliminated all sorts of segregation in school, colleges, and created a commission that stated there would be no discrimination based on sex, race, color, religion, or national origin. Many people took this as a chance to close down black schools and fire teachers to achieve equality in as far as racial discrimination was concerned. This obviously would then take time to take root, but as time passed by, these changes began to take shape. Racism was then regarded as a violation of human rights and people would then see it as a vice that should not have been accepted in the society. These changes would be slow, but there will come a time when racism will be kicked out of the education system.

### - Affected Population

There is not one population that does not face racism as some point in time. Some races face it more. One of the populations that face racism more than any other race is African Americans of the United States of America. African Americans are also the race with highest number of people in prisons.

According to <http://www.naacp.org/pages/criminal-justice-fact-sheet>, there were nearly 1 million African Americans in the US prisons as at 2008. In this number of African Americans in the prisons, about 60% or 600,000 were males. According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics that the prison population grew by 700 percent from 1970 to 2005, and 1 in every 15 African American men and 1 in every 36 Hispanic men are incarcerated in comparison to 1 in every 106 white men. According to the US justice department, there are about 40% African American inmates in the US prisons as per the 2009 census results representing about 2.1 million people. What was shocking was the fact that there were claims one in three black men aged between 20 -29 years could expect to go to prison in their lifetime. And that one out of nine African Americans aged between 20 - 34 years are likely to be incarcerated. Averagely, the African Americans between the ages of 20 - 40 years form the highest percentage of blacks in the US prisons. African Americans began their experiences in the US working as slaves for their American masters. During the uprising to end slavery, most of these blacks were either arrested and sent to jails or convicted. So the experience that began with working for their white masters would occasionally end in them in jails for refusal to obey their masters.

The NAACP Legal Defense Fund is an American based non-profit agency. The

association was first founded in 1954 in New York. The goal of this non-profit agency is to fight for racial justice, to enhance human rights practices under law, and to promote civil and human rights around the world. The association has provided leadership in the development and enforcement of needed statutes and ordinances- local, state, and federal- to safeguard the human and civil rights of all people. Through advocacy, courtroom processes and public education, the NAACP LDF seeks to find an end to racial biasness in the criminal justice system and to protect the voting rights and achieve full African-American civic engagement in public processes. It also seeks to increase economic equity and promote equal remuneration for all Americans and to increase equity in education by helping remove the existing racial barriers to educational opportunity. The NAACP LDF fulfills their mission through their objectives. This association mainly dealt with cases of promoting justice in the society by advocating for fairness in racial treatment in both public and private institutions that include schools, hospitals and other social amenities. Over the years, the NAACP LDF has won landmark cases that would forever change the perception towards racism. According to <http://naacplegaldefensefund.org/landing/support/join-the-fight.php?track=ggrldf> in 1965, they contributed to the congress passing the voting rights for all Americans regardless of race and later the fair housing act in 1968. They continued with their advocacy work and in 1971, racial discriminatory tests that were carried out in employment and promotions were ruled as illegal in America and later in 1983, tax-exemption status was denied to schools that discriminated on the basis of race.

- Goals and Objectives of the Proposal

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The goal of this proposal is to advocate for the total eradication of racism. I concur that there will never be a cure or a way to completely end racism, but with concerted efforts, it could be greatly reduced. In this proposal we have suggested that engagement through dialogue and provision of educational fora would be a useful step towards the elimination of racism. It is important to engage different races with one another. Like we previously stated, the elimination of racism starts with changing one person's view. Education is also important. People need to be educated on racism and they need to know how serious crime it actually is. It is important to educate people so that, for instance, the incident that happened in Cleveland in 1975 when Ronnie Bridgeman also known as Kwame Ajamu was exonerated in the slaying of a businessman. Ajamu had been fixed by the prosecution presumably because of his race. The witness had confessed to have been coerced by Cleveland police to give false testimony. He was exonerated from the charges and released from prison in 2003. His co accused who were sentenced to life imprisonment were also released. People need to know that not all races are bad, there may be a few bad people in each race, but it is not every person. Education will help get this point across that even fixing people for crimes they did not commit was also an injustice.

### **The objectives of this proposal would be;**

- Engagement; that would entail getting people interacting with different races. Essentially put people out their comfort zones.
- Workshops need to be set up to help with engagement.
- Education: education classes or workshops need to be set up that provide

information on racism, different races, and the problems that are associated with racism.

## **The goals would be about educating people on the dangers of racism**

- People need to know that all people are not bad. Since one cop shot Michael Brown does not mean all white people are racist.
- People need to know how serious racism is, and how it actually affects a lot of people. There is not one person who has not faced some form of racism, racism victims are not alone.
- Community Problem

Racism today is different than it was back in the day. There is still some instance where racism is practiced in the United States. On the news there are always stories about some form of racism. The major story that was presented on the news was the Michael Brown story. This instance happened a couple months ago and it is still very prevalent on the news, because of the recent trail. Racism, therefore, should be portrayed as a serious societal problem that negates the positive steps that have been made in an effort to end this vice. It should be made clear that racism is a great contributor to moral decadence and that the society would be better off if racism was altogether eliminated from our midst. It should, therefore, not be viewed as a problem of one or two races that have been involved in this vice but should be tackled by everybody in the society to ensure that it was completely wiped out by the society.

- Ecological Perspective
- Micro system: Micro system is the direct relationships that individuals have



in common. Depending on who people hang out with, everyone can play a role on reducing and further completely eliminating racism. An example that could be effective in this aspect could be interracial relationships.

- Meso-system: The mesosystem makes up two factors of the micro system. These could be the incidents that are happening like the shootings. It also incorporates the people who are involved in the racial incidents.

- Exosystem: Exo system deals with the environmental issues that play the role of the environment in racial discrimination. One major environmental issue that has contributed to racism is location. There are some cities that may have more cases of racism as compared to the rest. It would, therefore, be imperative that these educational and dialogue forums to be taken to the cities that have registered the most cases that are related to racism.

- Macro-system: The macro-system can be the hardest one to make change in. This one deals with the government and all the beliefs. It is hard to make change in this one when they are so powerful. One way would be to get the government involved in anti racism activities and all the government officials. Appointing people of all races to government positions would help curb this vice.

- Chrono-system: Change towards racism may take forever. Racism has been ongoing problem that has been slowly decreasing over the years. It may take years or even decades to lessen racism in the United States. But that said and done, additional efforts need to be put forth to address this issue. There should not be any let up and the society needs to build up on the gains that have been made to address the issue of racism.

- Motivation for Change

Racism can lead to other major problems, like people dying or people being killed because of their race. A particular action has to take place in order for there to be change. Change will come slowly, but it has to happen to stop further deaths and further negative attitude towards other races. Motivation for change has to come from the person, they have to want to make a change.

Malcolm X was born on May 19, 1925 in Omaha Nebraska. Malcolm was Black Nationalist leader who was a spokesperson for the Nation of Islam. With his efforts he helped the population grow from 400 members to 40, 000 members. Malcolm X encouraged blacks to cast off the shackles of racism by any means necessary. His father Earl Little, was also a campaigner against racist activities and was often targeted by the Ku Klux Klan, a white Christian group. Little would later die under mysterious circumstances which Malcolm X believed to have been a racial assassination for his stand on racism. This also included violence. Malcolm was killed on February 21, 1965 right before giving a speech (Hatch, 1979).

Before the death of Malcolm X, he did a lot of work with the Nation of Islam and Elijah Muhammad. Malcolm X did work with Elijah Muhammad in Detroit, Michigan. He was the minister of Temple No. 7 in Harlem and Temple No. 11 in Boston. Malcolm X had a main goal to cast away the perception of racism. In 1960 Malcolm X was the main voice for the Civil Right movement. He was presenting an alternative to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr's vision.

Malcolm X was a civil right activist who was African American and Muslim. He fought to end the stigma of racism. He was an orphan in his early life and a prisoner at some point in his time. He did not let his struggles stop him from

doing what he thought was the best. He was a Muslim who followed the Sunni Islam (Columbia, n. d)

While being part of the Nation of Islam he followed and taught the nation.

The national teachings were that that black people are the original people of the world, that white people are devils and that blacks are superior to whites, and that the demise of the white race is imminent. He followed these teachings very closely. Malcolm X while in the civil right movement thought badly about Martin Luther King Jnr and often times called him bad things. He thought the same thing about other civil right activists (Hatch, 1979).

- SWOT

- Strengths: New ideas and new ways to lessen racism in the United States.

With the power of engagement and education there will be less racism that is taking place around the world. This would lead to a reduction to cases of racial discrimination and segregation. It would also lead to a more united society. The society would look at every member as a human being and race was something God given.

- Weaknesses: The weaknesses would be the cost and the time that would be taken. This engagement and education process may take lots of money to execute, so funding will be needed. The cost of building learning centers as compared to building prisons for holding racists. People will have to devote their time to this particular problem. This problem is not going to disappear tomorrow, so a lot of effort from everyone is going to be needed. In addition, it would not be clear if everyone who would attend these fora would be unanimous in the decisions to eradicate racism from the midst of our society.

- Opportunities: With the help of engagement and education there will be less crimes being committed and people will get along better. There would also be equal opportunities for everyone in the society to participate in the nation building process and not look at any one based on race.
- Threats: People may not agree and may not want this change so they will try to fight back. New methods of racism could also spring up in the unforeseen future. This threat could be difficult to handle in this proposal.
- Plan for Evaluation

**Success will be achieved when the numbers are decreased and there are less people being affected by racism.**

- Racism will never be completely eradicated, but the numbers need to decrease.
- The number needs to be decreased to help save lives and there be less shootings and killings due to racial related cases.
- Advocacy and education needs to keep going on for the numbers of racial discrimination cases to decrease.

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