

# Talking about race, learning about racism



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What is the author Beverley Tatum's professional background? A professor and a clinical psychologist  
 What are the 5 working assumptions that Beverley Tatum uses to guide her discussions? 1. Racism is a system of advantage based on race.

2. Prejudice is a preconceived judgment or opinion often based on limited information.

3. In the U. S. the system of advantage benefits Whites.

4. As adults we have a responsibility to disrupt the cycle of oppression.

5. Understanding prejudice and racism is a lifelong process.

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What is the definition of racism according to Tatum? A system of advantage based on race. What is the definition of prejudice according to Tatum? A preconceived judgment or opinion, often based on limited information. According to Tatum, what are the 3 major sources of conflict often encountered in discussion of race and racism? 1.

Race as a taboo topic

2. The myth of meritocracy

3. "I'm not racist but..." (Denial of prejudice/racism)

Race as a taboo topic  
 The idea that fear of talking about or approaching the concept of racism, stops many people from discussing the topic. Many people, have been conditioned from childhood to be anxious when talking about race. Ex: After a White child points to a dark-skinned African American child, and asks, "Mom why is that boy Black." The mom tells the boy to hush and not to talk about it.

The Myth of Meritocracy  
 The false belief that the United States is a good place, a just society, where individual efforts are fairly rewarded on one's merit, and therefore racism is an uncommon occurrence. "I'm not racist but...." The

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initial denial of any personal connection to racism. Who developed the Black racial identity model? William Cross (1971, 1978) Who developed the White racial identity model? Janet Helms (1990) William Cross's 5 Stages of Black Racial Identity Development

1. Pre-encounter

2. Encounter

3. Immersion/Emersion

4. Internalization

5. Internalization-Commitment

Pre-encounter stage (Cross's stages of Black Racial Identity)

During this stage, the African American has absorbed many of the beliefs and values of the dominant White culture, including the notion that "White is right" and "Black is wrong". The person in this stage seeks to be accepted by whites, and actively or passively distances themselves from other Blacks. (Tatum 397)

Encounter stage (Cross's 5 stages of Black Racial Identity)

Brought about by an event or series of events that forces the individual to acknowledge the impact of racism in one's life. For example:

learning about racist events on the news may make one realize that they are not seen as equal in the eyes of many Whites.

Immersion/Emersion stage (Cross's 5 stages of Black Racial Identity)

Characterized by the simultaneous desire to surround oneself with visible symbols of one's racial identity and an active avoidance with symbols of Whiteness. Anger often emerges among students of color in the process of learning about racism, and is part of the transition through these stages. The result of these stages is a new and affirmed sense of self i. e. racial identity.

Internalization stage (Cross's 5 stages of Black Racial Identity)

During this stage because a new identity has been formed there is less need to assert the "Blacker than thou" attitude often characteristic of the Immersion stage. During this stage, "pro-Black

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attitudes become more expansive, open, and less defensive." Also the individual is willing to establish meaningful relationships with whites who acknowledge and are respectful of his or her self-definition, and is willing to build coalitions with members of other oppressed groups. Internalization-Commitment (Cross's 5 stages of Black Racial Identity) According to Cross, it is not much different than the internalization stage, however, those at this stage have found ways to translate their personal sense of blackness into a plan of action or a general sense of commitment" to the concerns of Blacks as a group, which is sustained over time. Whether at the internalization stage or internalization stage, what does the process of internalization allow? Allows the individual, anchored in a positive sense of racial identity, both to proactively perceive and transcend race. Janet Helms' 6 Stages of White Racial Identity and Development

1. Contact

2. Disintegration

3. Reintegration

4. Pseudo-Independent

5. Immersion-Emersion

6. Autonomy

cookies dissolve regularly piled importantly in autumn.

Contact Stage (Helms' 6 Stages of White Racial Identity and Development) Characterized by a lack of awareness of cultural and institutional racism, and of one's own white privilege. (it's the stage addressed in Peggy McIntosh's essay) This stage often includes naive curiosity about or fear of people of color, based on stereotypes learned from friends, family, or media. Disintegration Stage (Helms' 6 Stages of White

Racial Identity and Development) At this stage the bliss of ignorance or lack of awareness is replaced by the discomfort of guilt, shame, and sometimes anger at the recognition of one's own advantage because being white and the acknowledgement of the role of whites in the maintenance of a racist system. Attempts to reduce discomfort may include denial (convincing oneself that racism does not exist). Withdrawal is another way of reducing discomfort. According to Helms, what may lead an individual from the Disintegration to the Reintegration stage? Societal pressure to accept the status quo Reintegration stage (Helms' 6 Stages of White Racial Identity and Development) At this stage the desire to be accepted by one's own racial group in which the overt or covert belief in white superiority is so prevalent, may lead to a reshaping of the person's belief system to be more congruent with an acceptance of racism. The guilt and anxiety associated with Disintegration may be redirected in the form of fear and anger directed toward people of color (particularly Blacks), who are now blamed as the source of discomfort. Pseudo-Independent Stage (Helms' 6 Stages of White Racial Identity and Development) The individual is abandoning beliefs in white superiority but may still behave in ways that unintentionally perpetuate the system. The individual may experience a sense of alienation from other whites who have not begun to examine their own racism, yet may also experience rejection from Blacks or other people of color who are suspicious of his or her motives. Immersion/Emersion stage (Helms' 6 Stages of White Racial Identity and Development) Similar to how the black student seeks to redefine positively what it means to be of African ancestry in the United States through the immersion in accurate information about one's culture and history, the white individual seeks to replace racially related myths and

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stereotypes with accurate information about what it means and has meant to be white in U. S. society. Learning about whites who have been antiracist allies to people of color is a very important part of this process. Autonomy stage (Helms' 6 Stages of White Racial Identity and Development) Marked by the internalization of a newly defined sense of oneself as white. Alliances with people of color can be more easily forged at this stage of development than previously because the person's antiracist behaviors and attitudes will be more consistently expressed. Why is it important to understand the models of racial identity development? Because when we know these models we might be more understanding of other people's situation.