

In what ways does race and ethnicity influences our life experiences

[Sociology](#), [Identity](#)



In what ways does 'Race' and Ethnicity influence our life experience? This essay will discuss the ways in which Race and Ethnicity influence our life experiences. I will refer to the work of Giddens (2007); Walby (2000); Abercrombie (2003). I will conclude that race is something that will never change and that it will always exist. Definition: Race usually means the break up in different colours of people and background in human beings. This means putting a break in racial groups such as, (White), (Black) and (Chinese), therefore race means the biological groupings into which a person is born. People of the same race which have physical characteristics in common such as hair colour, eye colour, skin colour, within a race there may be countless variations. Ethnicity is referred to as a social group of people that share some sort of history, sense of identity, geography and cultural/religious roots of the social group to which a person belongs, the cultural heritage of a person from a particular society shared by others within that society. Anthony Giddens describes race as 'a set of social relationships that allows individuals and groups to be located, and various attributes or competencies assigned, on the basis of biologically grounded features', (Giddens, 4th edition (2005), p246). In here Anthony Giddens argues that race is something that makes up of position/social actions which are structured, it is clear that race is used as an excuse to divide people/nations and label them. It is clear that 'race exists in many forms, and it is basic to the continuation of racism-prejudice and this is based on socially significant physical distinctions'; this means that people would treat you differently because of your skin colour. Someone who is racist believes that an individual is higher or poorer than others. Someone who is a racist thinks of isolation, otherwise the

social and physical separation of classes of people. Therefore racist isolate people from themselves because they think that people are less than they are/better than others. Anthony Giddens also describes ethnicity as, ' Cultural Values and norms which differentiate the members of a given group from others. An ethnic Group is one whose members share a separate awareness of a common cultural identity, separating them from other groups around them. In virtually all societies ethnic differences are associated with variations in power and material wealth. Where ethnic differences are also regarded as racial, such divisions as sometimes especially pronounced', (Giddens, 4th edition (2001), p246). Giddens also says that for some ' people ethnicity is central to individual and group identity. It can provide an important thread of continuity with the past and is often kept alive through the practice of cultural traditions'. This means that people identify themselves through groups. <http://www.cliffsnotes.com/WileyCDA/CliffsReviewTopic/Race-and-Ethnicity-Defined.topicArticleId-26957, articleId-26884.html/09/05/09>