

# Race and racism impact on society



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Race has been a concept that has change throughout the history of mankind. Such concept is used in today's society to classify individuals into racial categories. In Omi and Winant's book " Racial Formation in the United States", they present how race and racism plays a crucial role in today's society by explaining the history behind the concepts and how individuals interact with each other in a social environment that is defined by race. Similarly, senator Obama's speech presents race as a concept that defines human interaction and individuals throughout their lives.

Obama's speech supports Omi and Winant's view of race and racism, by making the reader understand that race is essential in today's society, by explaining how society judges individuals based on their ethnicity, by explaining how racism depicts African-Americans nowadays and by explaining how the concept of race cannot be ignored at the present time. First, in Omi and Winant's racial formation theory they make the reader understand how society judges individuals based on their ethnicity.

Omi and Winant state," Our ability to interpret racial meaning depends on preconceived notions of a racialized social structure. Comments such as, 'Funny, you don't look black' betray an underlying image of what black should be" (Omi-Winant 59). Here, Omi and Winant explain how society there is no difference between individuals of the same ethnicity. Many individuals are effected and rejected in society because of the bad reputation that their ethnicity has, as many people judge others without really knowing them.

Many individuals in society do not understand the concept of race and that is why they come to false conclusions and stereotypes of all ethnicities in

general. Just like the black guy that Omi and Winant present in their book, Senator Obama introduced a similar case in point. Obama writes, " This is not to say that race has not been an issue In this campaign. At various stages in the campaign, some Commentators have Deemed me either too black or not black enough" (Obama 2).

Here, senator Obama introduces the concept of race as one of the obstacles he had to overcome during his election campaign. The reader sees how some people define the personality of a humans through their physical characteristics and how others define them by their historical background. In Obama's case, many people thought that Obama was not black due to the fact that his grandmother was white, hence could not be " so black". These notions that some individuals make about others are false.

Furthermore, in Omi and Winant's racial formation theory they make the reader understand how racism plays an important role on how african-americans are depicted in today's society. Omi and Winant state, " In summary, the racism of today is no longer a virtual monolith, as was the racism of yore. Today, racial hegemony is " messy. " The complexity of the present situation is the product of a vast historical legacy of structural inequality and invidious racial representation" (Omi-Winant 75).

Here, Omi and Winant explain to the reader how racism has changed throughout the history, but is still seen nowadays through hegemony, and how some of today's racial categories are characterized at a macro-level as a result of the racism from our past. In today's society we see a high poverty rate in some racial categories such as Latinos, African-Americans and Asian-Americans. The product of these high poverty rates where due to the

constant racism and unjust resource distribution among these racial categories.

In the same way, Obama presents to the reader a similar case where disparities between African-Americans and white people are very notable due to the racism from the past. Obama writes, " But we do need to remind ourselves that so many of the disparities that exist between the African-Americans community and the larger American community today can be traced directly to inequalities passed on from an earlier generation that suffered under the brutal legacy of slavery and Jim Crow" (Obama 5). In today's society we see how individuals create African-American stereotypes based on their physical appearances and wealth.

Obama sympathizes with his fellow people and makes the reader understand that African-Americans high poverty rates and high criminal rates comes as a result of the inequalities passed to them from their ancestors. Where neither black women nor black male were allowed to be completely free due to the Jim Crow Laws, which mandated segregation between white people and black people that led to conditions that tended to be inferior for African-Americans. Finally, in Omi and Winant's racial transformation theory they make the reader understand how race plays an essential role in today's social environments, therefore cannot be ignored.

In Omi and Winant's theory they present Charles Murray's welfare reform statement where he explains his opinion on the concept of race. Murray writes," My proposal for dealing with the racial issue in social welfare is to repeal every bit of legislation and reverse every court decision that in any way requires, recommends or awards differential treatment according to

race” (Omi-Winant 56). In other words, Murray is trying to say that the concept of race should be eliminated from today's society, because race is no reason for individuals to treat others differently for being from another racial category.

We cannot eliminated the concept of race from today's everyday speech, since the same concept continues to shape the present. We live in a world where race is an important factor, because since the moment you are born it gives you an identity that is unique from all others. From that point on when the child is born and later on labeled as black, hispanic, white ect... The child accumulates differences between themselves and others based on their beliefs and physical characteristics. Which is why we see today's social structure as it is.

In the other hand, senator Obama explains in his speech why the concept of race should not be ignored in today's social environment. Obama states, “ But race is an issue that I believe this nation cannot afford to ignore right now” (Obama 5). Here, the reader can see how Obama supports Omi and Winant's opinion on that Murray's statement is inaccurate because the concept of race should never be eliminated from today's lexicon. Obama wants the reader to understand that race is a current issue we got to fix in society in order to live in a better social environment.

He wants individuals to create conscience and accept the fact that not all people are from the same racial categories, since racism is in force today. Obama makes the reader understand that he supports Omi and Winant's claims about the essential role racism and race have at this moment on time, by explaining how race portrays African-Americans at the present time,

by explaining how the concept of race is crucial nowadays and by explaining how race cannot be ignored in today's society. The reader can see how the three authors agree on the same ideas about the role that racism and race have today.