Definition of Systemic Racism

Systemic racism involves both the deep structures and the surface structures of racial oppression.

It includes the complex array of anti-black practices, the unjustly gained political-economic power of whites, the continuing economic and other resource inequalities along racial lines, and the emotion-laden racist framing created by whites to maintain and rationalize their privilege and power.

Systemic racism thus encompasses the dominant white racial frame with its white-racist attitudes, ideologies, emotions, images, and narratives, as well as the discriminatory actions and institutions flowing out of and linked to that frame.

This racism is a material, social, and ideological reality and indeed systemic, which means that the racist reality is manifested in all major institutions

If you break a three-dimensional hologram into separate parts and shine a laser through any part, you can project the whole three-dimensional image again from within that part. Like a hologram, each major part of the U.S. society – the economy, politics, education, religion, the family – reflects the fundamental realities of systemic racism.


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