

Kaleikoa Ka'eo
Racism = Power + Prejudice + Privilege

Dr. Haunani-Kay Trask

"For racism is a system of power in which one racially-identified group dominates and exploits another racially-identified group for the advantage of the dominating group."

James Baldwin

"There is no reason for you to try to become like white people and there is no basis whatever for their impertinent assumption that *they* must accept *you*. The terrible thing, old buddy, is that *you* must accept *them*. And I mean that very seriously. You must accept them and accept them with love. For these innocent people have no other hope. They are, in effect, still trapped in a history which they do not understand; and until they understand it, they cannot be released from it. They have had to believe for many years, and for innumerable reasons, that black men are inferior to white men. Many of them, indeed, know better, but, as you will discover, people find it very difficult to act on what they know."

Jane Elliot

You are not born racist. You are born into a racist society. And like anything else, if you can learn it, you can unlearn it. But some people choose not to unlearn it, because they're afraid they'll lose power if they share with other people. We are afraid of sharing power. That's what it's all about ... We learn to be racist, therefore we can learn not to be racist. Racism is not genetical. It has everything to do with power.

Audre Lorde

"For the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house. They may allow us to temporarily beat him at his own game, but they will never enable us to bring about genuine change. Racism and homophobia are real conditions of all our lives in this place and time. I urge each one of us here to reach down into that deep place of knowledge inside herself and touch that terror and loathing of any difference that lives here. See whose face it wears. Then the personal as the political can begin to illuminate all our choices."

Emperor Haile Selassie

"Until the philosophy which holds one race superior and another inferior is finally and permanently discredited and abandoned, everywhere is war. And until there are no longer first-class and second-class citizens of any nation, until the colour of a man's skin is of no more significance than the colour of his eyes. And until the basic human rights are equally guaranteed to all without regard to race, there is war. And until that day, the dream of lasting peace, world citizenship, rule of international morality, will remain but a fleeting illusion to be pursued, but never attained... now everywhere is war."

Bell Hooks

"A vision of cultural homogeneity that seeks to deflect attention away from or even excuse the oppressive, dehumanizing impact of white supremacy on the lives of black people by suggesting black people are racist too indicates that the culture remains ignorant of what racism really is and how it works. It shows that people are in denial. Why is it so difficult for many white folks to understand that racism is oppressive not because white folks have prejudicial feelings about blacks (they could have such feelings and leave us alone) but because it is a system that promotes domination and subjugation?"

1. Reflection? Reaction? Commentary for each quote?
2. What are your personal thoughts, experiences, and ideas on racism?
3. What do you say? Quote