

We're all a different color of Crayons. Which are you?

Careful, it will dictate your life.

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“On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this assignment.”

Introduction and Definition of Key Terms

The United States likes to think that they are an “equal and just” nation. Is it really? Not even close. People treat one another differently for invalid reasons, many dealing with the physical characteristics of a person. Race is one of these. Since anyone can remember, a person’s race dictates how that person is treated and as the pattern goes, dark skin is not considered “good” skin. Race is a socially constructed term that is used to justify social inequalities. Racism is the belief that one race is superior to another (295). Racism is carried out through discrimination, the denial of opportunities and equal rights to individuals or groups due to arbitrary reasons (296), prejudice, a negative attitude toward a group of people (295), and stereotypes, unreliable generalizations about all members of a group (292).

Application of Key Terms

Your race dictates your life. Somewhere along the road the world decided that by having a darker skin color, you get a less than deserved status in life. You have dark skin, you are inferior to those who have a better chance at getting skin cancer. The only thing that makes a person’s skin color darker than another’s is the amount of melanin that person has. White people got lucky, they just happened to be born with the “superior and winning” skin color. Elliot created an environment where instead of the race dictating the social status, the eye color did. Instead of racism, it is “eyeism.” People with blue eyes are treated as inferior to those with brown eyes. She wants the people who have been privileged their whole lives to feel how it feels to be treated differently due to something they cannot control, because that’s the exact situation with a person’s skin color. Ridiculous? Yes. Do people care? No. Does that stop them? No. How do we change that? Put them in the shoes of the victim.

Blue eyes are bad eyes. Blue eyes are the worst eyes. Blue eyes don’t deserve eyes. Blue eyes aren’t brown eyes. No blue eyes, you can’t use that bathroom. That’s for brown eyes

only. Ever since racism has been around, discrimination has been a part of it. People of darker skin colors haven't received the same opportunities of those with white skin. Separate drinking fountains and bathroom are examples of discrimination in the past and today people of color still don't receive the same chance as a white person does when getting that job interview, when buying that house, and when being considered for that school. When Elliot put those signs on the bathroom doors, it may have been old-fashioned but in order to achieve her point, she had no other choice. As she stated, the jobs, income, and lives of the people wouldn't be threatened because this would be done in two hours. The participants felt the discrimination even though it was subtle compared to that of the real discrimination people of color feel.

Elliot asked a few people if they had conditions that would become worse if they sat on the floor. One man refused to answer because he thought she didn't care, and she didn't unless he was going to file a lawsuit against her. She treated the blue eyed people in a prejudiced manner. She barked at them, insulted them, and was rude to them, exactly as people do with people of color. The brown-eyed people observing were only allowed to look at the blue-eyed people if they did it with a sneer or look of disgust.

Some people, especially in the past, but even still so today, feel that melanin affects more than just the pigmentation of one's skin. People feel it affects the intelligence of a person along with other personality traits, when in reality it has no effect. So, Elliot's idea? Do the same but to people with blue eyes because obviously since the eye color is lighter, the sun's rays can get in and cause damage to the brain. Obviously. Elliot stereotyped all of the blue eyed people in this manner and stated that all of these people spend the majority of their time in their "child ego state." These are unreliable, but when it came to people saying these things about colored people, did it matter? Not at all. Granted this film was made in 1995, but stereotyping occurs

still today. I have a friend that will get pulled over for reasons a white person would not get pulled over for, because she is black.

Reaction to the Film

After watching the Essential Blue-Eyed, I felt very indifferent. It was very interesting and I was intrigued by how the blue eyed people reacted. If I ever had a chance to be apart of one of these workshops, I would partake in it in a heartbeat. I want to know how people of color feel everyday because I didn't realize that racism was still around with such intensity. I would recommend this film to anyone and everyone. This film is a great way to gain awareness of the effects of racism and how cruel it is. The most memorable part of the film was what happened when she did the experiment with the third graders. I could not believe how being treated as less than others tore up the children. It completely shattered their self-esteems and they only had to put up with it for a short period of time. I can't imagine how that would feel to endure it for a lifetime. I would break. I found it interesting that during the debriefing when people stated adjectives about how they felt, there was a distinct correlation within each of the two groups: brown eyes and blue eyes.

Conclusion

Melanin does nothing but help the well being of the human body. It protects it from harmful UV rays. Yet, in society, it does nothing but demote you in life. Society created something very unjust and ridiculous and it has spread like a wildfire. We need a change in this society in regards to "race." The way to start that change is to create more of these workshops and have people endure what it feels like to be on the other side of the fence.

Works Cited

Witt, Jon. "Elements of Social Structure." SOC. Boston: McGraw-Hill Learning Solutions, 2009.

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