

Chapter 3—Racism After the Civil Rights Movement

Summary Points

New Racism: the ways that racism has adapted over time so that modern norms, policies, and practices result in similar racial outcomes as those in the past, while not appearing to be explicitly racist. 39

No one claims to be racist anymore, but yet racism still exists. How is this possible?

This chapter is aimed at surveying the various ways in which racism has adapted over time.

Color-Blind Racism

If we pretend not to notice race, then there can be no racism. This is the central idea of color blindness.

“we cannot change what we refuse to see.” 42 Such neglect leads to aversive racism.

Aversive Racism

Aversive Racism: Holding deep racial disdain that surfaces in daily discourse but not being able to admit it because the disdain conflicts with our self-image and professed beliefs.

Aversive racism only protects racism, because we cant challenge our racial filters if we cant consider the possibility that we have them. (47)

Cultural Racism

Today we have a cultural norm that insists we hide our racism from people of color and deny it among ourselves, but not that we actually challenge it. In fact, we are socially penalized for challenging racism.

Reflection Questions

Color-Blind Racism

1. When King Jr. said that one day he might be judged by the content of his character and not the color of his skin, what was he attempting to *do*? And why did white people feel the need to hijack it for different purposes? What—if anything—was at stake for white people in this statement?

2. Have white churches co opted Paul's indicative statement in Galatians 3:28 for color-blind-like purposes?

Aversive Racism

3. What are your aversive tendencies? And if you can not think of any, does this show the success of your own whiteness?

4. How “safe” are your spaces?

5. Why does DiAngelo think that those who avow racism are more honest about biases than those who consider themselves open-minded(47)?

Recurring Questions

6. How has your understanding of whiteness progressed?
7. How do you sense God is calling you to respond?
8. What are your lingering fragile responses and why?
9. Are you sure you understand the Cross?

Color blindness is, politically speaking, the possibility of whiteness. To not see race is to not see others; a sure privilege. To not see race is to not see racism. Race determines experience. To be color blind not only refuses the experience of others, it insulates white people from thinking over their own experience as being white. Simply put, black people are not “just like us.” Their experience is indicative of a system that favors not people of color.

Homework

Journal a memory you have where someone of authority taught you about how to respond to a specific race implicitly or explicitly. (This can be a joke an adult shared with you as a child which determined how you interacted with that group.) Then reflect how that has impacted your interactions as an adult.