

ANTI-RACIST MOVEMENT FALLACIES

REPLIES

Racism is a white problem.

Racism is a concrete problem for blacks.

All whites are racist.

Racism is ingrained in our society. The emphasis should be on our social system, not the individual.

All whites have power over non-whites. Skin colour is no guarantee of power. Power derives from a complex of factors, including class, race and gender. White working class people may have more racist attitudes than middle class people; they are more powerless and are competing for scarce resources.

Racism is a disease, a problem of the white psyche. Racism is a social phenomenon, manifest in material ways.

Racism distorts our concept of reality, setting up an internal conflict (discrepancy between racist self and ideal self). This manifests in pain, guilt and fear. This argument derives from Carl Rogers. Typical of such American humanist psychology, it shifts focus from society to the individual. In our observation, whites with race, gender or class power deal better with reality because they control it. The "oppressed" have less control of reality not because their minds are distorted, but because they are denied access to necessary resources.

To combat racism, individual attitude change is necessary.

Blacks may be a long time waiting for whites to "change attitudes". Racism needs to be addressed politically; attitude change may follow.

The personal is political.

A dangerously ambiguous slogan .. if taken to mean that making personal change is a political act, or that by changing ourselves we will change the world, this is a delusion at odds with a marxist and materialist view of society.

Racism can best be fought by making individuals personally aware of their racism. They will then be motivated to do anti-racist work (monitored by blacks).

This approach only works on those who see racism as a moral issue, a matter of human "rights". It takes advantage of the guilt that some liberal whites feel about the social system they live under and may benefit from. By feeling guilty they needn't judge themselves as callous. In a sense ~~they offer~~ they offer their guilt as compensation for the wrongs of a racist society.

Anti-racist training is best kept at the level of feeling.

Racism is entrenched in our social/political/economic system. It is best understood and opposed in those terms. Adopting an accusatory, high minded, moralistic and personal tone will alienate some, and extract guilt and confession of personal responsibility from susceptible whites (eg liberals, social workers, christians) But this is unlikely to lead to effective action against the racist structures that envelope us all. Emotional manipulation is an inadequate basis for long term, effective political action; this should be grounded in sound understanding and analysis.

Personal confrontation is a good way to challenge racism.

Our goal is not self righteousness or personal liberation, but political change

We must value other cultures ethnic practices.

Just as we select the cultural practices that we personally support, so does the State. We need to be aware of which ethnic practices the State supports and why. State handouts can force "tribalism": the need to define yourselves as an ethnic group for the purpose of receiving funding. This can divide blacks by undermining what black unity already exists. Support for multiculturalism can leave racism untouched, or merely provide more jobs for the middle class/educated.

"Black" designates skin colour, culture or race.

These differentiations are products of racism. Blacks are united not by colour or culture, but by their common oppression. "Black" culture is the culture of resistance and rebellion.