

# DAY 3: Institutional and Systemic Racism

*“All of us - who might have probed space, or cured cancer, or built industries - were, instead, black victims of the white man's American social system.”- Malcolm X*

“Systemic racism”, or “institutional racism”, refers to how ideas of white superiority are captured in everyday thinking at a systems level: taking in the big picture of how society operates, rather than looking at one-on-one interactions.

**Institutional racism:** Discriminatory treatment, unfair policies and practices, inequitable opportunities and impacts within organizations and institutions, all based on race, that routinely produce racially inequitable outcomes for people of color and advantages for White people. Individuals within institutions take on the power of the institution when they reinforce racial inequities. [resources on how institutional racism shows up in organizations]

**Structural racism:** A system in which public policies, institutional practices, cultural representations and other norms work in various, often reinforcing ways to perpetuate racial group inequality. It is racial bias among institutions and across society. It involves the cumulative and compounding effects of societal factors including the history, culture, ideology and interactions of institutions and policies that systematically privilege White people and disadvantage people of color.

Structural racism will be further explored in days devoted to housing and voting.

## Today's Challenge:

### Listen:

- [Listen to this Michigan Radio report on bias in the Washtenaw County judicial system](#), which found that in Washtenaw County “Black people are charged with felonies at rates between two and 29 times higher than white people charged with the same crimes.”
- Listen to this NPR piece to understand how [the forces of systemic racism Shaped George Floyd's Life](#).
- Listen to this episode of the Not Another Politics Podcast to [learn why land-use policies aren't as race-neutral as they seem, and why we need to pay more attention to them](#).



**Discrimination?  
Injustice?  
Racial Inequities?**

**YES.**

**Click here to learn more  
and join the  
21-Day Equity  
Challenge: 2023 Edition**

**Share your reflections** on today's topic on social media using the hashtag [#unitedforequity](#) or [#uwwcequitychallenge](#) and tag [@uwwashtenaw](#).

## Read:

- Read this article framed around Joaquin Phoenix's 2020 BAFTA Awards acceptance speech highlighting [the need to address systemic and institutional racism](#).
- [Read this article to get a better understanding of systemic racism](#). There is also a video provided that explains the topic more in depth through the lens of drug arrests.

## Watch:

- Watch this [video from Robin DiAngelo, author of White Fragility](#) about how racism isn't only individual acts of discrimination, it is a deeply embedded system that impacts all of our lives.
- [Watch 11-year old Marley Dias as she talks about tackling racism which, she says, begins with a conversation](#). Dias looks to educators across the country and asks: "Do you care enough to look closer, to talk to each other. TO your students, to your communities?" And "To change the dialogue?"

## Act:

- [RSVP to one or more discussion groups](#) hosted by [Nonprofit Enterprise at Work](#) and UWWC to reflect, share and take action.
- Journal, reflect and share:
  - As I reflect on my own personal experience of my social interactions and systems that I live in, in what ways do I see the impact of racism? What might help bring greater awareness to different forms of racism?
  - What systems or societal structures can I identify that have personally benefited or disadvantaged me solely on the basis of my race? As I reflect on the struggles and challenges of my life's experience, in what ways has my race made these either easier or more difficult?



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