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***Uprooting Inequity LLC—UC Merced***

**Seminar #3.**

**The Causes and Impacts of Structural Racism**

**History of Structural Inequity #3. The Causes and Impacts of Structural Racism**

This presentation, which consists mostly of data and research studies, describes the inner workings of the "black box" of structural racism. First, I explain the concept of structural racism and explain how it differs from individual bias. I also demonstrate how it is rooted in the enduring impacts of historical discrimination. Then I illustrate how structural racism manifests in wealth accumulation, housing geography, education, HIV/AIDS infection, employment and education. Finally, I identify the role of individuals (opportunity hoarding).

**NOTES: Seminar #3. The Causes and Impacts of Structural Racism**

**Three qualifiers**

* 1. Distinguishing between Settled Empirical vs. Policy Questions *(Hess & McAvoy’s 2014)* 
     1. **Empirical Questions**: have a single, right-or-wrong answer that can be discovered through scientific study (data/evidence).

Empirical questions are considered **settled** **(vs. open)** when there is broad-based agreement on an answer among credible experts in the field.

Hess and McAvoy teach that it is **inauthentic and problematic to treat a settled empirical question as open.**

* + 1. **Policy Questions**: are **open** **debatable ideological/opinion** questions without a right-or-wrong answer. Intelligent, informed people disagree on the answer.
    2. The existence of contemporary structural racism can be considered a settled, empirical fact, as there is broad-based consensus on it among social scientists and mainstream economic institutions.
    3. The existence of structural racism is evidenced by:
* the presence of racial disparities across sectors
* …that are NOT explained by socioeconomic differences
* …NOR by cultural and behavioral differences
  1. Structural inequities are influential, but not determinant
  2. Structural racism is one of several intersecting structural inequities

1. **What is structural racism? The concept**
   1. Structural racism = Prejudice + Power; an interconnecting web of government policies, economic rules and practices, political-cultural narratives, social norms resulting in systematic disparities in power, status, outcomes (that are not explained by individual merit); predominantly rooted in the persistent legacies of historical state-sanctioned discrimination, whether intentional or not.
2. **How does structural racism differ from individual bias?**
   1. STRUCTURAL INEQUITY: Societal biases that have been Intensified, codified, and weaponized to protect the interests of dominant groups/elites
   2. Structural inequity = prejudice + power:

* HISTORY of legal discriminatory policies with present-day legacies (e.g. segregation & wealth gap)
* Disparities in ECONOMIC outcomes across institutions that are unexplained by economic, cultural or behavioral differences
* Stereotypes interwoven through popular CULTURE and POLITICAL rhetoric
* Under-representation in POWER & influence; lower societal status

1. **How structural racism works in practice:** 
   1. The racial wealth gap
   2. Concentrated neighborhood poverty
   3. Health: HIV/AIDS transmission
   4. Employment: K-12 schools and college admissions
   5. K-12 education and college admissions
   6. HBO’s The Wire
2. **The role of individual bias and opportunity hoarding.** Residential and school segregation are rooted in historical segregation, but are reinforced and reproduced with:
   1. Individual bias
   2. Opportunity hoarding.

Economist Richard Reeves, author of Dream Hoarders, argues that the top 20 percent has created a stark divide with behaviors and policies that limit economic mobility for lower-income groups.