



ASK A LIBRARIAN FEATURED

QUESTION OF THE WEEK

JULY 13, 2020

Question: Are racism and racial inequity the same thing?

Response: Here is the dictionary definition of racism:

Racism: prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism directed against someone of a different race based on the belief that one's own race is superior.

"a program to combat racism"

the belief that all members of each race possess characteristics or abilities specific to that race, especially so as to distinguish it as inferior or superior to another race or races.

"theories of racism"

Whereas racial inequality is described as "persistent inequities in wealth, health and opportunity between blacks and whites despite economic prosperity of recent years."

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/06/03/politics/black-white-us-financial-inequality/index.html>

While the two are interrelated, they are not the same thing. Racism is analytically distinct from racial discrimination and racial inequality. Racial discrimination concerns the unequal treatment of races, whereas racial inequality concerns unequal outcomes (in income, education, health, etc.).

https://projects.iq.harvard.edu/files/deib-explorer/files/sociology_of_racism.pdf