

The Role of Obstetrical Racism in Perinatal Healthcare

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Watch the
video

- <https://www.flatlandkc.org/news-issues/birthing-battle-labor-pains/?fbclid=IwAR2CWHec4enZkvIKDzhbmAdomPu01hs8o91foRs-gi-8WZoPkps3YM-Klpo>

Definition of Racism

Racism = Race Prejudice +
Misuse and abuse of Power
that advantages white
people and disadvantages
Black people

Definition of Implicit Bias

Implicit bias refers to the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner.

- Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity, 2014

White Privilege

White privilege (or white skin privilege) is a set of societal privileges, existing in predominantly white societies, which benefit white people beyond what is commonly experienced by non-white people in the same social, political, or economic circumstances.

Levels of Racism

Level of Racism	Manifestations	Jurisdictions
Structural or Systemic	Laws, regulation, media	Healthcare system, education system, criminal justice system, etc.
Organizational or Institutional	Policy, practices, and protocols	Hospitals, schools, courthouse, etc.
Interpersonal	Interpersonal interactions	Person to person or group to group
Internalized	Self talk	Personal beliefs and behavior

Birth Rights Report

- Verbal abuse
- Stigma and discrimination
- Failure to meet professional standards of care
- Poor rapport between clients and providers
- Health system conditions and constraints

- ◆ Birth Rights Bar Association and National Advocates for Pregnant Women Report:

<https://birthrightsbar.org/resources/Documents/4-9-20-birth-rights-guide.pdf?fbclid=IwAR1QWHU8PBtHuZrpr2DMUmx-eyAv4V13JIKMzTDIJgLwiU5OFJ0s-rodYx8>

Obstetrical Racism- Dr. Dana-Ain Davis

- Diagnostic Lapses
- Neglect, Dismissiveness, and Disrespect
- Intentionally Causing Pain
- Coercion
- Ceremonies of Degradation
- Medical Abuse
- Racial Reconnaissance

Davis, D. & Scott, K. Webinar on Obstetrical Racism

https://humsci.ucsf.edu/lecture-videos/translating-obstetric-racism-into-a-patient-reported-experience-measure/?fbclid=IwAR3eUHZNmUY4T6GJdrDjuO_IcYhkh4G-yRoPIb4J7m_CoRzYmL7qx3vcxbo

Cultural Humility

Cultural humility incorporates a lifelong commitment to self-evaluation and critique, to redressing the power imbalances in the provider-patient dynamic, and to developing mutually beneficial and non-paternalistic partnerships with communities on behalf of individuals and defined populations.

-Melanie Tervalon and Jane Murray-Garcia

Microinvalidations

Communications that subtly exclude negate or nullify the thoughts, feelings or experiential reality of a person of color. Example: Telling a woman of color, she is welcome to attend a community support group that takes no account of her cultural beliefs about parenting or breastfeeding.

Derald Wing Sue. Racial Microaggressions in Everyday Life: Race, Gender and Sexual Orientation (John Wiley & Sons, 2010)

Microinsults

Verbal, nonverbal, and environmental communications that subtly convey rudeness and insensitivity that demean a person's racial heritage or identity. Example: Making an assumption that an African-American women will not want to breastfeed her baby.

Derald Wing Sue. *Racial Microaggressions in Everyday Life: Race, Gender and Sexual Orientation* (John Wiley & Sons, 2010)

Microassaults

Conscious and intentional discriminatory actions: Example: Grabbing a mother's breast without asking permission, making negative comments about her physiology.

Derald Wing Sue. *Racial Microaggressions in Everyday Life: Race, Gender and Sexual Orientation* (John Wiley & Sons, 2010)

Other Microaggressions

- Marginalization- relegated to the fringes (being asked last minute to participate in an event you should have helped to plan or taken the lead on)
- Invisibility- not noticed enough to be included (not noticing who is NOT in the room when decisions are being made- especially if decisions impact communities of color)
- Trivialization- issues are dismissed (telling women of color not to be so overly 'sensitive' when she expresses discomfort at being the only woman of color in the room)

Disparities Pimping

- Using the data of communities or populations that demonstrate great disparities, to gain funding or other assets then using those funds or assets to benefit anyone other than the community whose data was used.
- Running programs to end disparities that remain ineffective in changing outcomes
- Talking the talk of ending disparities but not walking the walk

White Savior Guardianship

The internalized belief that white people may possess that they or white institutions can better parent Black children than Black parents can as manifested by:

- Adoption of Black and biracial children into white households/families
- Hotlining Black parents
- Harshly critiquing Black parenting styles
- Need to 'save Black infants and children from their Black parents
- Belief that Black children are 'better off' raised by white parents
- Belief that Black/white biracial children can be raised as white
- That Black or biracial children can be raised in all-white environments without ill effects
- Criminalizing Black parenting
- Severing Black parental rights quicker and for lesser offenses than white parents

Example



AP Associated Press AP - Tue Aug 30, 11:31 AM ET

A young man walks through chest deep flood water after looting a grocery store in New Orleans on Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2005. Flood waters continue to rise in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina did extensive damage when it

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AFP 3:47 AM ET

Two residents wade through chest-deep water after finding bread and soda from a local grocery store after Hurricane Katrina came through the area in New Orleans, Louisiana. (AFP/Getty Images/Chris Graythen)

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Example



Eliminating Disparities

Any solutions put forth to address breastfeeding disparities in the African-American community that fail to address pervasive and insidious systemic racism will be insufficient- more focus should be on systems change to make a lasting difference on the health and human potential of the next generation of African-Americans

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