

Examples of Racial Microaggressions

Theme	Microaggression	Message
<p><i>Alien in own land</i></p> <p>When Asian Americans and Latino Americans are assumed to be foreign-born.</p>	<p>“Where are you from?”</p> <p>“Where were you born?”</p> <p>“You speak good English.”</p> <p>A person asking an Asian American to teach them words in their native language.</p>	<p>You are not American.</p> <p>You are a foreigner.</p>
<p><i>Ascription of Intelligence</i></p> <p>Assigning intelligence to a person of color on the basis of their race.</p>	<p>“You are a credit to your race.”</p> <p>“You are so articulate.”</p> <p>Asking an Asian person to help with a Math or Science problem.</p>	<p>People of color are generally not as intelligent as Whites.</p> <p>It is unusual for someone of your race to be intelligent.</p> <p>All Asians are intelligent and good in Math / Sciences.</p>
<p><i>Criminality – assumption of criminal status</i></p> <p>A person of color is presumed to be dangerous, criminal, or deviant on the basis of their race.</p>	<p>A White man or woman clutching their purse or checking their wallet as a Black or Latino approaches or passes.</p> <p>A store owner following a customer of color around the store.</p> <p>A White person waits to ride the next elevator when a person of color is on it.</p>	<p>You are a criminal.</p> <p>You are going to steal / You are poor / You do not belong / You are dangerous.</p>
<p><i>Denial of individual racism</i></p> <p>A statement made when Whites deny their racial biases.</p>	<p>“I’m not a racist. I have several Black friends.”</p> <p>“As a woman, I know what you go through as a racial minority.”</p>	<p>I am immune to races because I have friends of color.</p> <p>Your racial oppression is no different than my gender oppression. I can’t be a racist. I’m like you.</p>
<p><i>Myth of meritocracy</i></p> <p>Statements which assert that race does not play a role in life successes</p>	<p>“I believe the most qualified person should get the job.”</p> <p>“Everyone can succeed in this society, if they work hard enough.”</p>	<p>People of color are given extra unfair benefits because of their race.</p> <p>People of color are lazy and / or incompetent and need to work harder.</p>
<p><i>Pathologizing cultural values / communication styles</i></p> <p>The notion that the values and communication styles of the</p>	<p>Asking a Black person: “Why do you have to be so loud / animated? Just calm down.”</p> <p>To an Asian or Latino person: Why are you so quiet? We want to know what</p>	<p>Assimilate to dominate culture.</p> <p>Leave your cultural baggage outside.</p>

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dominant / White culture are ideal.	<p>you think. Be more verbal." Speak up more."</p> <p>Dismissing an individual who brings up race / culture in work / school setting.</p>	
<p><i>Second-class citizen</i></p> <p>Occurs when a White person is given preferential treatment as a consumer over a person of color</p>	<p>Person of color mistaken for a service worker.</p> <p>Having a taxi cab pass a person of color and pick up a White passenger.</p> <p>Being ignored at a store counter as attention is given to the White customer being you.</p> <p>"You people..."</p>	<p>People of color are servants to Whites. They couldn't possibly occupy high-status position.</p> <p>You are likely to cause trouble and / or travel to a dangerous neighborhood.</p> <p>Whites are more valued customers than people of color.</p> <p>You don't belong. You are a lesser being.</p>
<p><i>Environmental microaggressions</i></p> <p>Macro-level microaggressions, which are more apparent on systemic or environmental levels</p>	<p>A college or university with buildings that are all names after White heterosexual upper class males.</p> <p>Television shows and movies that feature predominantly White people, without representation of people of color.</p> <p>Overcrowding of public schools in communities of color.</p> <p>Overabundance of liquor stores in communities of color.</p>	<p>You don't belong / You won't succeed here. There is only so far you can go.</p> <p>You are an outsider / You don't exist.</p> <p>People of color don't / shouldn't value education.</p> <p>People of color are deviant.</p>
<p><i>How to offend without really trying</i></p>	<p>"Indian giver."</p> <p>"That's so gay."</p> <p>"She welshed on the bet."</p> <p>"I jewed him down."</p> <p>"That's so White of you."</p> <p>"You people..."</p> <p>"You got gypped."</p> <p>Imitating accents or dialects</p> <p>Others?</p>	

Adapted from: Wing, Capodilupo, Torino, Bucceri, Holder, Nadal, Esquilin (2007). Racial Microaggressions in Everyday Life: Implications for Clinical Practice. *American Psychologist*. 62, 4, 271-286.