KEY TERMS

RESJI PART 1: FOUNDATIONS - 2025

These terms are used in RESJI Part 1: Foundations. In talking about race and equity, it is important to have a common vocabulary to avoid misunderstanding or misinterpretation. These words could have different meanings to different people, based on their experiences. Not everyone will agree on these definitions, but we hope this glossary helps you understand our use of these words in this RESJI training. We understand language is always evolving and do our best to speak with intention and care.

Key Terms from RESJI Part 1 – *in order they are used in the presentation:*

**Racial Equity:** a deliberate prioritization of individuals and communities impacted by ongoing systemic injustice.

**Social Justice**: A broad concept that recognizes how power, privilege, and oppression impact our experience of our social identities. Social justice is both a process and a goal. The goal of social justice is full and equal participation of all groups in a society that is mutually shaped to meet their needs.” (Lee Anne Bell).

**Marginalization**: The casting aside of groups that are considered “other” within society. Think of the margins on a piece of paper, which are often not noticed or not seen, or an afterthought.

**Privilege**: Automatic, unearned access or advantages simply because of a having a certain social identity.

**Social Identity:** Can be defined as groups that are based on the physical, social, and mental characteristics of individuals. Some identities may be visible, some may not. Examples include: sexuality/sexual orientation, gender, race/ethnicity, disability, national origin, age, socioeconomic status, religion, language, and immigration status.

**Cisgender** **or Cis:** A person whose gender is the same as the sex assigned to them at birth.

**Transgender or Trans:** A person whose gender is different from the sex they were assigned at birth. Being transgender does not imply any sexual orientation. Transgender people may identify as straight, gay, lesbian, bisexual, etc.

**BIPOC:**  An acronym for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color. This term highlights the divergent and/or shared needs and concerns of these distinct communities, and also shifts away from deficit-based terms like “minority” or “underprivileged.”

**Microaggressions or Subtle Acts of Exclusion** are comments or actions that subtly and often unconsciously or unintentionally expresses a prejudiced attitude toward a member of a marginalized group.

There can be a preference to use Subtle Acts of Exclusion verses Microaggressions. The terms micro and subtle do not mean they have no or little impact. Choosing Subtle Acts of Exclusion is deliberate because there is nothing micro, small, or minute about the impact that these behaviors have on the recipient or target.

**Racism**: Racism is racial prejudice plus power. It is the process by which systems and policies, actions and attitudes create inequitable opportunities and outcomes for people based on race.

**Power:** Can be understood as the ability to decide who will have access to resources; the capacity to direct or influence the behavior of others, oneself, or the course of events. <https://learn.library.wisc.edu/reflecting-on-social-justice-foundational-concepts/lesson-1/>

**Machine of Racism**: a metaphor to explain how interpersonal, institutional, and systemic racism work together to form a system of oppression.

**Interpersonal Racism**: Racial bias that occurs when individuals interact with others and their personal racial beliefs affect their interactions.

**Institutional Racism**: Unfair policies and discriminatory practices of particular institutions (schools, workplaces, etc.) that routinely produce racially inequitable outcomes for people of color and advantages for white people.

**Systemic Racism**: The cumulative and compounding effects of an array of societal factors and interactions of institutions and policies that systematically privilege and disadvantage.

**Redlining:** A group of racist housing and banking policies that explicitly provided privileges to white neighborhoods in cities throughout the country.

**Gentrification**: The process whereby long-time or original neighborhood residents are displaced from their neighborhood by high rents, mortgages and property taxes. People are replaced by new residents who can afford to live there. Gentrification disproportionately harms already marginalized communities such as Black and Brown people, low-income households, elderly, and people with disabilities. According to the CDC, gentrification is a housing, economic, and health issue that affects a community's history and culture and reduces social capital.

**Jim Crow**: A phrase to describe legal segregation, discrimination and marginalization of Black people in the United States occurring from roughly the Reconstruction period after the Civil War, through the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s, and the laws and practices that came with it. Often described as Jim Crow laws, the Jim Crow era, etc. <https://www.history.com/topics/early-20th-century-us/jim-crow-laws>

**Coded language**: When people use a set of words to mean something else. These can be seemingly neutral words to mean something not neutral and actually marginalizing.

**Solidarity**: Can be defined as being truly in a struggle with others, taking on someone else’s issues and struggles as your own, without becoming domineering or taking it over. It is a long-term commitment, a lifelong practice, and can be challenging and risky.