

# Social Justice Glossary

**Ageism:** Prejudice or discrimination on the grounds of a person's age.

**Anti-Black Racism:** Anti-Black Racism is prejudice, attitudes, beliefs, stereotyping or discrimination that is directed at people of African descent and is rooted in their unique history and experience of enslavement and colonization. Anti-Black racism is deeply embedded in Canadian institutions, policies and practices, to the point that it becomes a part of our systems.

**Anti-Indigenous Racism:** Anti-Indigenous racism is the on-going race-based discrimination; negative stereotyping, and injustice experienced by Indigenous Peoples within Canada. It includes ideas and practices that establish, maintain and perpetuate power imbalances, systemic barriers, and inequitable outcomes that stem from the legacy of colonial policies and practices in Canada. Systemic anti-Indigenous racism is evident in discriminatory federal policies such as the Indian Act and the residential school system. It also manifests in the overrepresentation of Indigenous peoples in provincial criminal justice and child welfare systems, as well as inequitable outcomes in education, well being, and health. Individual lived-experiences of anti-Indigenous racism can be seen in the rise in acts of hostility and violence directed at Indigenous people.

**Bias:** Prejudice in favour of or against one thing, person, or group compared with another, usually in a way considered to be unfair.

**Classism:** Prejudice against or in favour of people belonging to a particular social class.

**Colonialism:** The policy or practice of acquiring full or partial political control over another country, occupying it with settlers, and exploiting it economically.

**Decolonization:** The process of deconstructing colonial ideologies of the superiority and privilege of Western thought and approaches. On the one hand, decolonization involves dismantling structures that perpetuate the status quo and addressing unbalanced power dynamics.

**Discrimination:** The unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people or things, especially on the grounds of race, age, or sex.

**Diversity:** Diversity means having a range of people with various racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, and cultural backgrounds and various lifestyles, experience, and interests. Diversity is a group of people who are different in the same place.



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**Equality:** Equality is about ensuring that every individual has an equal opportunity to make the most of their lives and talents. Equality recognises that historically certain groups of people with protected characteristics such as race, disability, sex and sexual orientation have experienced discrimination.

**Equity:** Equity is often conflated with the term “Equality” (meaning sameness). In fact, true equity implies that an individual may need to experience or receive something different (not equal) in order to maintain fairness and access. Equity is the fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people, while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups. Improving equity involves increasing justice and fairness within the procedures and processes of institutions or systems, as well as in their distribution of resources. Tackling equity issues requires an understanding of the root causes of outcome disparities within our society.

**Ethnicity:** The fact or state of belonging to a social group that has a common national or cultural tradition.

**Ethnocentrism:** Evaluation of other cultures according to preconceptions originating in the standards and customs of one's own culture. Ethnocentrism means that one may see his/her own culture as the correct way of living.

**Heterosexism:** Discrimination or prejudice against gay people on the assumption that heterosexuality is the normal sexual orientation.

**Homophobia:** The irrational aversion to, fear or hatred of gay, lesbian or bisexual people and communities, or of behaviours stereotyped as “homosexual.”

**Intersectionality:** The interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.

**Islamophobia:** Includes racism, stereotypes, prejudice, fear or acts of hostility directed towards individual Muslims or followers of Islam in general. In addition to individual acts of intolerance and racial profiling, Islamophobia can lead to viewing and treating Muslims as a greater security threat on an institutional, systemic and societal level.

**Micro Aggressions:** A statement, action, or incident regarded as an instance of indirect, subtle, or unintentional discrimination against members of a marginalized group such as a racial or ethnic minority.

**Oppression:** Prolonged cruel or unjust treatment or control.



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**Orientalism:** The representation of Asia, especially the Middle East, in a stereotyped way that is regarded as embodying a colonialist attitude.

**Patriarchy:** A system of society or government in which men hold the power and women are largely excluded from it.

**Power:** The ability to do something or act in a particular way, especially as a faculty or quality. It includes the capacity or ability to direct or influence the behaviour of others or the course of events.

**Prejudice:** Preconceived opinion that is not based on reason or actual experience.

**Privilege:** A special right, advantage, or immunity granted or available only to a particular person or group.

**Race:** Any one of the groups that humans are often divided into based on physical traits regarded as common among people of shared ancestry.

**Racism:** Prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism directed against a person or people on the basis of their membership in a particular racial or ethnic group, typically one that is a minority or marginalized.

**Racialization:** The social process by which certain groups of people are singled out for unique treatment on the basis of real or imagined physical characteristics. It refers to the assigning of racial connotations to the activities of minority people.

**Sexism:** The prejudice, stereotyping, or discrimination, typically against women, on the basis of sex.

**Transphobia:** The aversion to, fear or hatred or intolerance of trans people and communities. Like other prejudices, it is based on stereotypes and misconceptions that are used to justify discrimination, harassment and violence toward trans people.

**White Privilege:** The inherent advantages possessed by a white person on the basis of their race in a society characterized by racial inequality and injustice.

**White Supremacy:** The belief that white people are superior to those of other races and thus should dominate them.

**Xenophobia:** Dislike of or prejudice against people from other countries.

