

Institutional Racism: A Primer on Theory and Strategies for Social Change

Shirley Better



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Institutional Racism: A Primer on Theory and Strategies for Social Change Shirley Better Many people associate racism with bigoted individuals and radical groups on the fringes of society. Shirley Better argues that racism is much larger than negative attitudes and that it touches the very core of our lives as Americans. In this enhanced second edition, Better explores the historical origins of institutional racism, details its devastating effects on contemporary society such as the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, and outlines real possibilities for social, political, and economic change in the 21st century. Racism persists because dominant groups are unwilling to acknowledge, let alone give up, the benefits of whiteness. Through numerous examples, Institutional Racism demonstrates how inequality and racial exclusion are embedded within the fabric of American society. Better explores how racism has restricted equal access to educational opportunities, employment, and housing, and she considers the influence of racism in the criminal justice system. Beyond detailing the sometimes subtle institutional causes and pernicious effects of racism, Better offers numerous strategies for individuals and groups as they seek to combat this pervasive social problem. Institutional Racism is a must read for those whose seek to understand the underpinnings of racism and for everyone interested in the practical possibilities of racial pluralism and equality in the United States.

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