

# Definitions of Relevant Concepts

(All definitions are from Richard T. Schaefer in Race and Ethnicity in the United States, 2004, unless otherwise noted)

**Ableism** (Answers.com): Discrimination or prejudice against people with disabilities, especially physical disabilities.

**Biological Race** : The mistaken notion of genetically isolated human group.

**Discrimination**: The denial of opportunities and equal rights to individuals and groups because of prejudice and for other arbitrary reasons.

**Diversity**: (operational definition from the University of Maryland, 2005) Diversity is "otherness", or those human qualities that are different from our own and outside the groups to which we belong, yet are present in other individuals and groups. It is important to distinguish between the primary and secondary dimensions of diversity.

Primary definitions are the following: age, ethnicity, gender, physical abilities/qualities, race and sexual orientation.

Secondary dimensions of diversity are those that can be changed and include, but are not limited to: educational background, geographic location, income, marital status, military experience, parental status, religious beliefs, and work experiences.

**Ethnic group**: A group set apart from others because of its natural origin or distinctive cultural patterns.

**Ethnophaulisms**: Ethnic or racial slurs, including derisive nicknames.

**Feminism** (Bell Hooks): A movement to end sexism, sexist exploitation and oppression.

**Homophobia** (Webster's Dictionary): An irrational fear of, aversion to, or discrimination against homosexuality or homosexuals or individuals perceived to be homosexual.

**Institutional Discrimination**: A denial of opportunities and equal rights to individuals or groups resulting from the normal operations of society.

**Prejudice**: A negative attitude towards an entire category of peoples such as a racial or ethnic minority.

**Race:** A social category based primarily on skin color in the United States. Throughout the world this definition becomes more complex.

**Race** (definition from White Power website): A race is defined as a group of individuals sharing common genetic attributes which determine that group's physical appearance and, more controversially, their cognitive abilities.

**Racism** (Audre Lorde): The inherent belief in the superiority of one race over all others and thereby the right to dominance.

**Sexism** (dictionary.com): Discrimination or devaluation based on a person's sex, as in restricted job opportunities; esp., such discrimination directed against women.

**Stereotype:** An exaggerated image of the characteristics of a particular group. Phrase coined by Walter Lippman (1922) to describe "pictures in our head"