1.19 Seeing Racism as Systematized

Objectives
Explore the concept of racism as systematized rather than random or individual.
Discuss ways to challenge racism, including making it visible.

Materials needed

Time needed
Ten to twenty minutes

Instructor directions
Supply your students with a copy of Peggy McIntosh’s article. Have them read it before class and come prepared to discuss in small groups.

Have them discuss how they have been affected by the conditions McIntosh lists in the article and examine the statement that racism is not “individual acts of meanness,” but “invisible systems conferring dominance on [a] group.”

Variation
Ask your students to examine sexism in light of McIntosh’s concept of “invisible systems.”
1.19 Seeing Racism as Systematized Handout

Directions
Describe how you have been affected by two or three of the conditions McIntosh lists in the article.

Examine the statement that racism is not “individual acts of meanness,” but “invisible systems conferring dominance on [a] group.”

Answer the following questions:

How is racism perpetuated by the idea that it consists of random or unusual acts?

How can we begin to challenge racism once we begin to perceive it as systematized?

How can that perception help us make racism visible?

How can “visibility” contribute to change?
Variation
Examine sexism in light of McIntosh's concept of “invisible systems.”