

Miles and Winant on:

RACIALIZATION AND MODERN MANIFESTATIONS OF RACISM

- ▶ Both Miles and Winant explain **race** as a construct used to categorize or differentiate particular bodies from one another by prescribing particular attributes and characterizations onto them.
- ▶ The process by which these particular attributes or characterizations are placed onto particular bodies is called **racialization**.
- ▶ Race is defined as **non-essential**, meaning it is produced and shape-shifting rather than fixed or natural.
- ▶ Race functions in many different ways within many different contexts. Miles explains that in the European context, **racism** functions to define whiteness as positive and Blackness as negative; the European production of the "inferior other" results in the production of the "superior self".

We must be careful when talking about racism so as not to (re)produce or validate harmful concepts such as the natural existence of "races". While race is in fact a non-essential construct, positive and negative racializations do function to privilege or marginalize particular bodies. While so-called North America both refuses to be associated with racism and attempts to posit racism in the past, white privilege is still real and the marginalization of Black people, Indigenous peoples, and people of colour continues. Winant highlights some of these ongoing consequences of racism including:



CAPITALISM

Winant explores the manifestation of racism under capitalism, namely the exploitation of those living in the global South in order to support the way of life & capital expansion of the global North.



CLIMATE CHANGE

Winant explains that climate change disproportionately impacts those living in the global South. Environmental racism includes forced migration, proximity to climate disasters, the dumping of toxic waste in the water-sources of Indigenous nations, and more.



COLONIALISM

Winant highlights the role of racism in ongoing colonialism. He explains that colonialism in certain contexts looks different than it did historically, but it has merely shape-shifted and continues to negatively impact Indigenous peoples all over the world (including on Turtle Island or what is colonially referred to as North America).

Sources:

- Miles, R. (1989, ebook 2004). On signification. In R. Miles (Ed.), *Racism* (1st ed., pp. 87-113). London: Routledge.
- Winant, H. (2000). Race and race theory. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 26(1), 169-185
- Winant, H. (2015). The dark matter: Race and racism in the 21st century. *Critical Sociology*, 41(2), 313-324.