

# SYSTEMIC RACISM

*Understanding it's roots in mental health and impact on our society.*





# MODULE OUTLINE

## SYSTEMIC RACISM

What is Systemic Oppression?

What is Systemic Racism?

Anti-racism, racial justice, racial equity

The Construction of Racism

Overt and Covert Racism

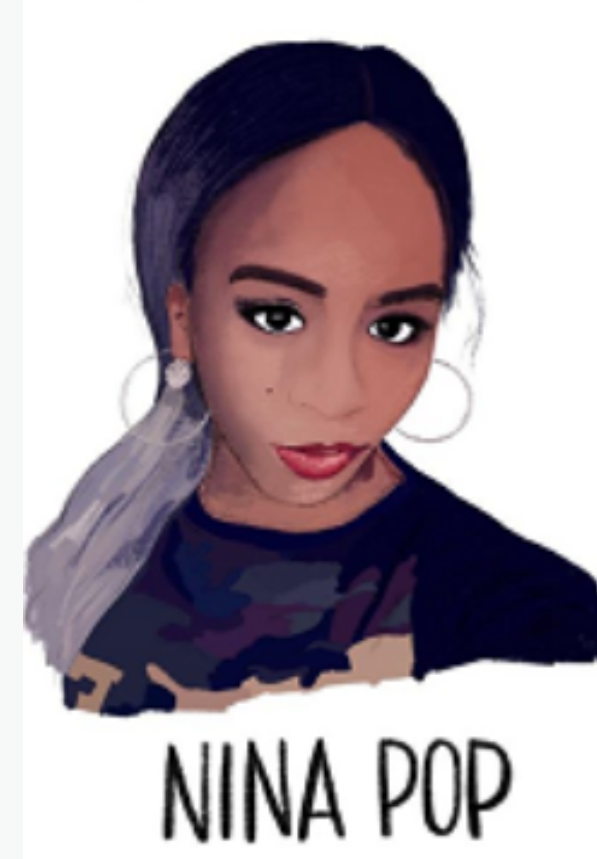
The Roots of Racism In the Mental Health System

Racism In the Mental Health System Today

Imprisonment Rates In the United States

Anti-Oppression Components

We Are All Impacted By White Supremacy



**“IN A RACIST SOCIETY IT IS NOT ENOUGH TO BE  
NON-RACIST, WE MUST BE ANTI-RACIST.”  
— ANGELA DAVIS**





**ALL  
OPPRESSION  
IS CONNECTED!**

# WHAT IS SYSTEMIC OPPRESSION?

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Systemic Oppression is the systematic mistreatment of people within a social identity group, supported and enforced by the society and its institutions, solely based on the person's membership in the social identity group.



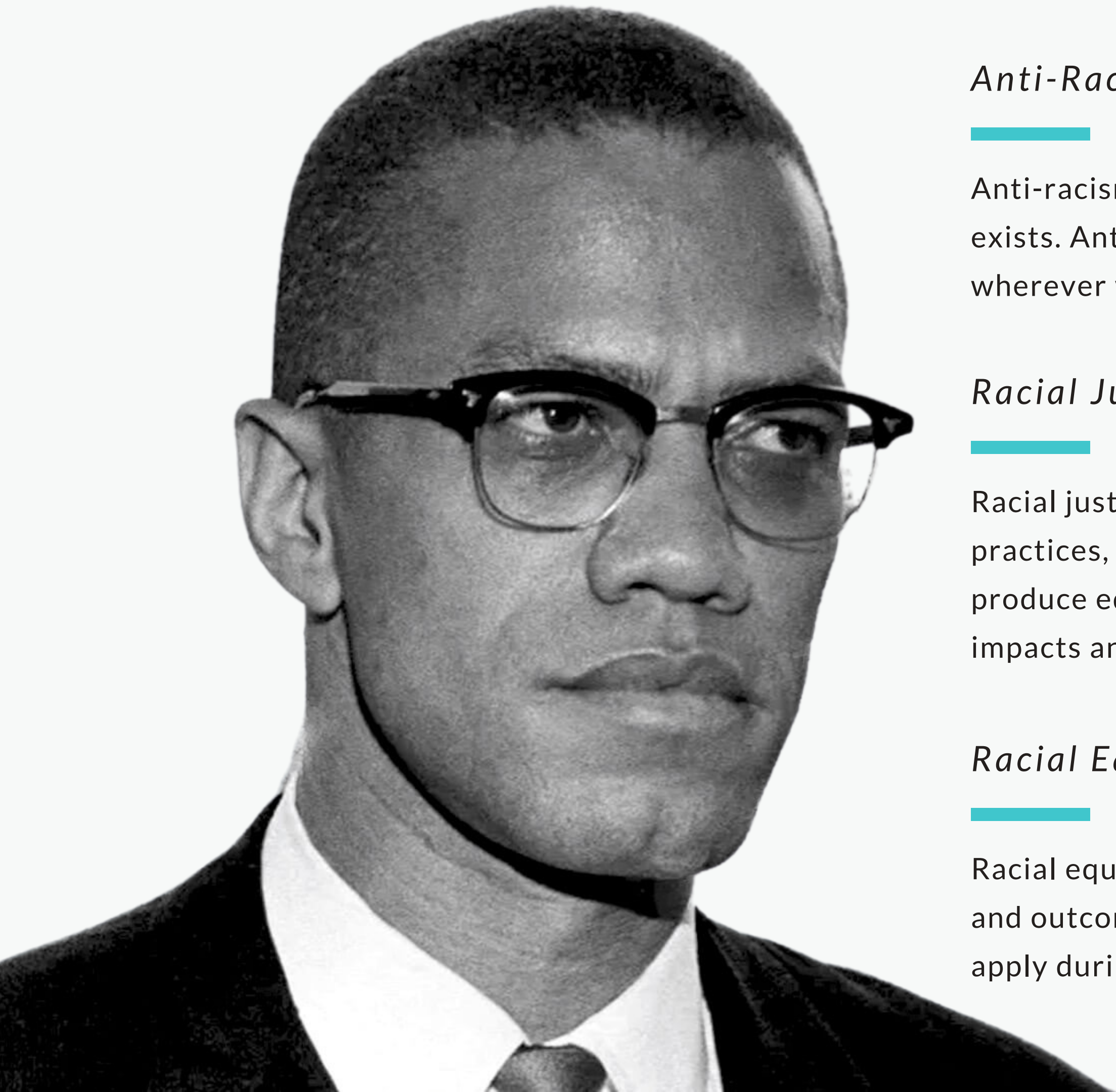
# WHAT IS SYSTEMIC RACISM?

"THE TRUTH IS ON THE SIDE OF THE OPPRESSED"- MALCOM X

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an ideology of racial group superiority that justifies or prescribes a system of racial domination or exploitation, racism is perpetuated by the beliefs and behaviors of individuals and by the institutions in which they are embedded.





## *Anti-Racism*

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Anti-racism is the process of interrupting racism as it exists. Anti-racism is an ideology of fighting racism wherever we find it.

## *Racial Justice*

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Racial justice is a proactive reinforcement of policies, practices, attitudes and actions that produce equitable power, access, opportunities, treatment, impacts and outcomes for all.

## *Racial Equity*

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Racial equity is a measure of fair treatment, opportunities and outcomes across races. Racial Equity is an intention to apply during racial justice work.



# The Construction of Racism

## ■ RELIGION AS A JUSTIFICATION FOR RACISM

During the reformation (16th Century [1500s] & 17th Century [1600s]), Christians were questioning whether or not Black and Indigenous people had souls and/or if they were human.

## ■ PSEUDO-SCIENCE AS A JUSTIFICATION FOR RACISM

Eugenics an effort to breed better human beings by encouraging the reproduction of people with “good” genes and discouraging those with “bad” genes.

# OVERT RACISM

Generally socially unacceptable

Hate crimes •  
Lynching •  
Anti-immigrant violence •  
Blackface/Brownface •  
Painting swastikas • Burning crosses • Racial slurs • The Ku Klux Klan • Public harassment of POCs speaking other than English

# COVERT RACISM

Socially acceptable/practiced

White silence • Racial profiling • Denying institutional racism • Police brutality against People of Color (POC)/‘Law and order’ • Tone policing • “There’s only one human race” • Invalidating or disbelieving POC experiences with racism • Touting respectability politics • Fear of People of Color • Denying white privilege • ‘Bootstrap theory’ • Microaggressions • Rewriting history • Eurocentric school curricula • ‘All Lives Matter’ • Using POC culture as Halloween costumes • “You don’t have an accent!” • “But they have Black colleges!” • Prioritizing white people as experts on everything • Denial of racism • Tokenism • Cultural appropriation • Treating children of color as adults • ‘You’re so articulate’ • White self-segregating neighborhoods, churches, schools • “Where are you REALLY from?” • Weaponizing whiteness • Coded racist language and actions • “My intention was not racist!” • Racist sports mascots • Mass incarceration • Colorism • School-to-prison pipeline • English-only • Fetishizing POC • Meritocracy myths • “We need qualified people” • Eurocentric beauty standards • ‘White savior’ complex • Claiming ‘reverse racism’ • Colorblindness • ‘Playing the race card’ • Excusing/ ‘white-splaining’ racism • Mission trips



# INTERSECTIONALITY

Critique

Plaintiff, a black female, brought suit in District Court for the Central District of Missouri for involuntary dismissal, claiming that: (1) district court did not

Circuit Judge, held on basis of

Demarginalizing





# INDIGENOUS NATIONS FORGOTTEN

## US SYSTEMIC RACISM'S IMPACT ON INDIGENOUS NATIONS

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Indigenous Nations are not given the same healthcare access or funding. Indigenous people are disproportionately dying at a higher rate due to the current presidential administration. There is an epidemic of missing and murdered indigenous women. Indigenous way of life and representation is fading and the United States government is reinforcing it.



# ICE DETENTION

DURING FISCAL YEAR 2018, 396,448 PEOPLE  
WERE BOOKED INTO ICE CUSTODY

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Mexican nationals by themselves made up about 43 percent of the detainee population, and individuals from the Northern Triangle region of El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras made up about 46 percent of the detainee population.

## 1 IN 3

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*1 in 3 (32%) of persons held in  
federal prisons is Hispanic*



# THE ROOTS OF RACISM IN THE MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM

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Benjamin Rush, often referred to as the “father of American psychiatry” and a signer of the Declaration of Independence, described “Negroes as suffering from an affliction called Negritude.” This “disorder” was thought to be a mild form of leprosy in which the only cure was to become white. Ironically Rush was a leading mental health reformer and co-founder of the first anti-slavery society in America..

Source: National Institute of Mental Health





# THE ROOTS OF RACISM IN THE MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM

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In 1851, prominent American physician Samuel Cartwright defined “drapetomania” as a treatable mental illness that caused black slaves to flee captivity. He stated that the disorder was a consequence of slave masters who “made themselves too familiar with the slaves, treating them as equals.” Cartwright used the Bible as support for his position, stating that slaves needed to be kept in a submissive state and treated like children to both prevent and cure them from running away.

Source: National Institute of Mental Health



# RACISM IN THE MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM

5 X

African American & Black People in the  
United States are 5x more likely to be  
diagnosed with Schizophrenia than White  
Americans



34%



*Of the individuals incarcerated in  
the US Prison System are Black  
people*

21%



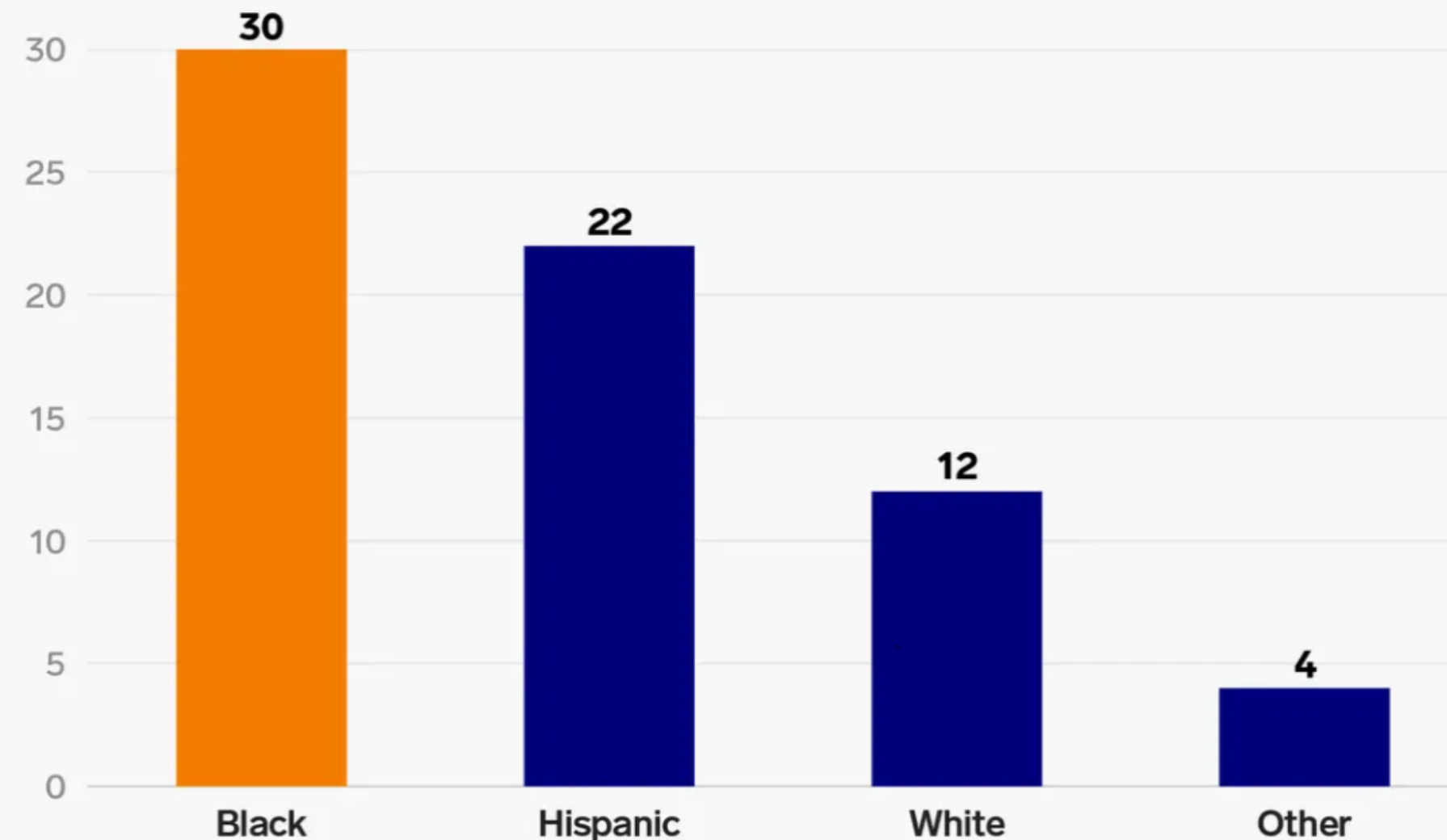
*Of the individuals incarcerated in  
the US Prison System are  
Hispanic people*

Source: US Department of Justice

# US SYSTEMIC RACISM DATA

## Fatal police shootings per million, by race

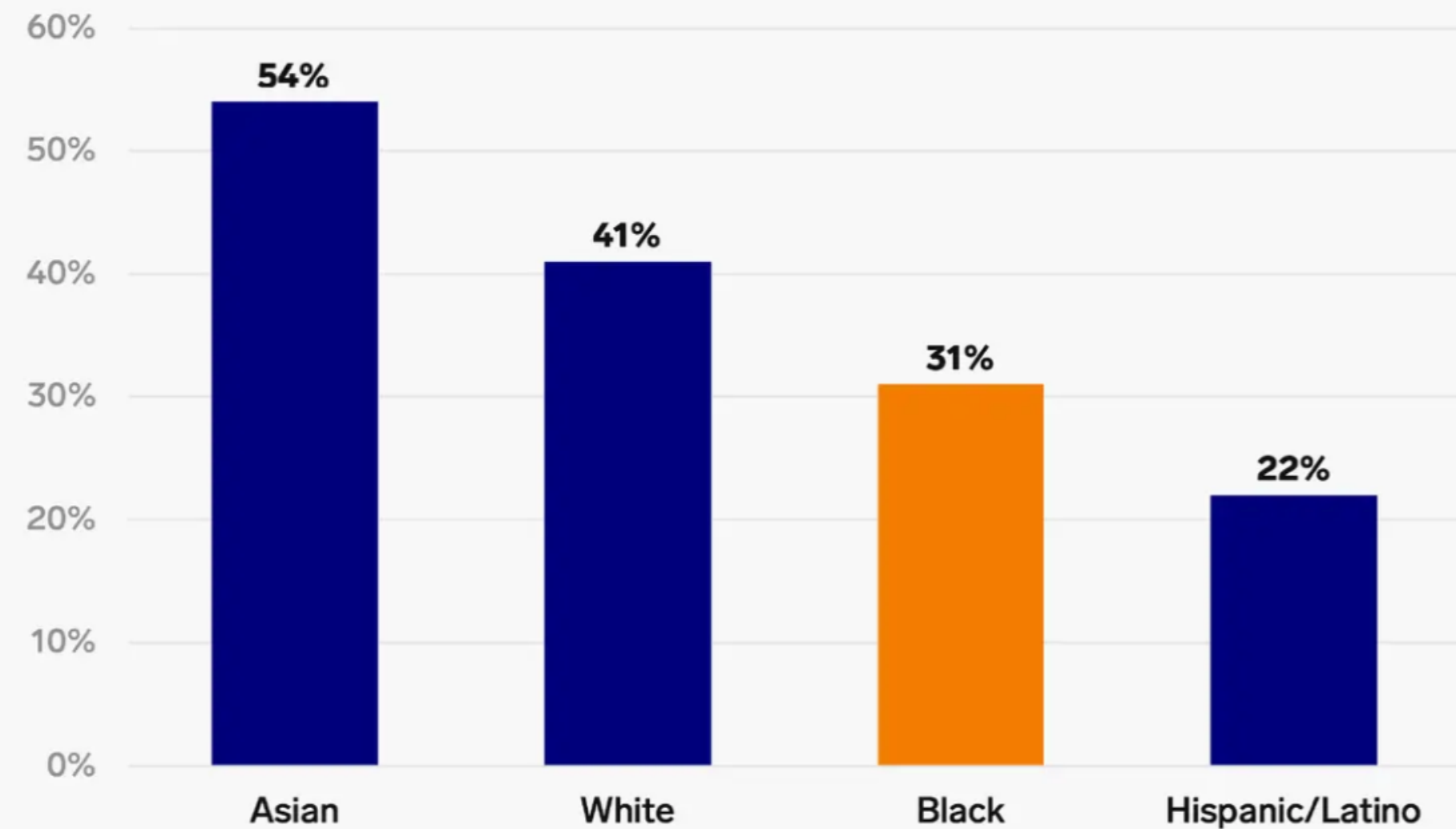
Deaths per million from January 1, 2015 – May 28, 2020



Source: US Census Bureau

## Professional and managerial employment

Share of workers in racial group in management/professional occupations



Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics



Historical & contemporary  
systems of oppression.  
Cultural responsiveness  
Critical consciousness

## Education

## Dismantling

Individual, systemic &  
institutional decolonization  
and de-capitalization.  
Eradicate bias  
Active resistance  
Power & control hierarchies

Emergence  
Self-authorize  
Equitable  
distribution  
of power.

## Liberated Innovation

# Anti- Oppression Components

## Healing

Personal  
Relational  
Collective  
Harm reduction  
Joy, pleasure &  
rest

Justice in action  
Reparations  
Affirmative Inclusivity  
Impacted leadership  
Equitable co-healing  
Wholeness

## Restoration

## Community

Centering  
Building  
Engagement

**It will take all of us to fight systemic racism  
and dismantle white supremacy.**

