"I SEE NO COLOR."

COLORBLIND RACISM

Zine project: Tianyi Bai, Sydney Story, and Madison Wilkinson
Research Goals

◦ **With our zine we wanted to address, explore, and educate our readers on**
  1. The definition and ideologic framework of a colorblind way of thinking
  2. How colorblind ideas function and appear in academic and creative literature, news media, social media, and prominent political speeches

◦ **The complexity and pervasiveness of colorblind ideas**
  1. Pros: by deemphasizing race, there is less stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination
  2. Cons: disregarding for personal history impacts people negatively in their present positionalities

◦ **We end with a call for critical eyes from the public when they read colorblind media**
The images portrayed on the front and back cover pages of our zine are taking from Jahi Chikwendui's project, "Chokehold: The Dangers of Internalized Racism." In an article in the Washington Post, Chikwendui discusses his childhood and the racism he has experienced whilst growing up. The photo series, from which we have taken the two cover images, is meant to be a "Whitest Hands" version of Toni Morrison's "The Bluest Eye", a book in which the main character, a young black girl, believes that her life would right itself if her hair was blond, her skin is white, and her eyes are the bluest. Chikwendiu states that "the images here are intended to be sirens: startling alarms to wake up from internalizing the myth of white supremacy and the reality of racism, which has led us to be blind, deafen, silence, even choke ourselves."
"How should we understand racism today? We have argued that race has no fixed meaning, that is constructed and transformed sociohistorically through the cumulative convergence and conflict of racial projects that reciprocally structure and signify race… nothing in the early phases of racial reaction pointed toward what would become “colorblind” ideology. The initial reaction to civil rights reform was driven by racist rage and full-throated rejectionism…The implementation of civil rights policy was recast as an attack on whites. It was reframed as a redistribution of resources away from whites… the ideology of “reverse racism” was presented to whites as an effort to protect them from “unfair” claims on the part of blacks or other people of color…the rearticulation of racial politics passed through several phases: a “code words” phase and a “reverse racism” phase before finally landing on colorblindness. **Colorblind racial ideology developed in league with neoliberalism from the Reagan years forward…**What was significant was the reframing of racism as a “race-neutral” matter. Racism was now cast as something that could affect anyone; a century of white predication- whites as the subjects of racism, blacks and people of color as the object- was thus peremptorily dismissed.”

Omi & Winant (2015)
"Reverse Racism" is a popular response by white American's after the civil rights movements. It creates a need for a new racial hegemony that is taken up by Reagan: race neutral language. Neoliberalism and colorblind ideology closely tied together, products of this match through various presidencies are racist in nature. Backlash leads to the support of Barack Obama. Barack Obama heavily criticized. Political response in 2016 with Republican President Donald Trump.
The next two pages include posts related to colorblindness on Twitter. We want to illustrate the pervasiveness of this ideology and how people have misused it as a great sign of patriotism and anti-racism while they are actually hurting people of color and not doing what skin color is. Everyone should be evaluated by character and action, not by class, religion, race, sex or political affiliation. Patriots have Pride. Patriots have Love. Stand United & Willing. We not too old for a race war over race? I must be colorblind to what skin color is. Everyone always favor our prospective, that's human nature. That being said, most of my life I was raised in an environment of a multiple of races. No one is colorblind. When color is color and not race, your prospective is different.
"FACE TO FACE:
How our skin color affects the way others see us"

PHOTO COURTESY OF “SKIN TONES” BY JANA CURCIO

"Skin Tones" is an art project that visualized the idea that race and racism go hand-in-hand, back-and-forth in different directions. The faces are presented as fragmented forms and are intended to ask, "what is racism these days?" Curcio’s combination of skin tones and ethnicities relates to the zine’s colorblind theme as the idea of brownness and racial subjectivity is based on outside perceptions of an individual. Through this art piece, we want to present that peoples’ understanding of one skin color is influenced by many historical, political, and cultural reasons, and although those understandings are often biased and should be corrected, it is not right to completely erase the histories behind these.
I'm not racist, I don't see color.

This page contains a collection of news articles and tweets from a variety of sources. Each screenshot draws instances in which an individual or incident was accused of being racist or problematic in some way, to which individuals responded that they don’t see race, and therefore their actions cannot be construed as racist. Contained here are examples from celebrities, prominent newscasters, and random twitter users. Through this collection of images we hope to show that the defense of colorblindness is still very prevalent in society today, and that it is merely an excuse for perpetuating racial discrimination and ignorance surrounding the subject.
As shown on this chart, colorblind ideology is Janus-faced—there are both pros and cons. The zine page contains not only this chart but also a hand-written section from the speech by Martin Luther King, "I have a dream...". The page aims to show the audience that although the colorblind ideology is often used as an excuse in social media by people who produce racist discourse, it started by people who indeed had good intentions and fought for social justice and there are still people who use this ideology as a means to reduce stereotyping and inequality.

Colorblindness in social media

Future Avenues

The passage from Sommier, van Sterkenburg, and Hofhuis (2018) states that colorblindness attitudes and on- and off-line racial bias co-exist and co-construct. We believe that their conclusion is critical to inform our audience as media consumption is unavoidable in current U.S. society. Understanding that media is biased and exclusive constitute critical readings and selective propagation, which is a convenient way to reduce racialized stereotypes and unintentional colorblindness.
Everyday Steps To Combat Negative Colorblind Messages

1. Acknowledge the authors’ biases
2. Recognize your own biases critically
3. Examine how race is represented and read between the lines for what is missing.
Bibliography


THANK YOU!