

THE SKIN I'M IN, THE KNAPSACK I CARRY: COLE AND MCINTOSH
30 MARKS
DUE IN 1 WEEK

INSTRUCTIONS:

SECTION 1: DUE FRIDAY

Peggy McIntosh's essay "Unpacking The Invisible Knapsack Of Privilege" discloses some of the barriers and privileges that constitute racist systems. Cole's article describes what it means to answer "no" to an overwhelming number of McIntosh's questions.

Highlight sections of Cole's article that show the real-life experience of McIntosh's essay. For each highlighted section, cite the corresponding McIntosh question(s) it relates to and write a short explanation of your choice (the questions from McIntosh's essay are below). **Please highlight at least 2 sections. (20 marks; graded for content)**

SECTION 2: DUE TUESDAY

On Saturday, check back to read over the comments made by your classmates. **Each student must comment on at least 2 different entries.** Here are some ideas on how you might want to leave a comment: you can agree or disagree (say why you agree or disagree); you can ask a question about the entry; or you can add a further comment to the entry. **(10 marks; graded for completion)**

Adapted from Peggy McIntosh's "Unpacking The Invisible Knapsack Of Privilege"

Yes or No?

1. I can arrange if I wish to be in the company of people of my race most of the time.
2. I can turn on the television or look at the front page of the paper and see people of my race widely and positively represented.
3. I can assume that my shape, bearing, or body odour will not be taken as a reflection on my race.
4. I can swear, or dress in second hand clothes, or not answer emails, without having people attribute these choices to the bad morals, the poverty or the illiteracy of my race.
5. I can remain oblivious of the language and customs of persons of color who constitute the world's majority without feeling any penalty for such oblivion.
6. I can easily buy books, magazines, dolls, toys, and children's books featuring people of my race.
7. I can choose blemish cover or bandages in colours that more or less match my skin.
8. I can worry about racism without being seen as self-interested or self-seeking.
9. If I declare there is a racial issue at hand, or there isn't a racial issue at hand, my race will lend me more credibility for either position than a person of color will have.

10. I can go shopping alone most of the time, pretty well assured that I will not be followed or harassed.

11. I can go to the mall without worrying about its physical accessibility.

12. I can go into a store and not worry that my skin colour makes the salesperson nervous.

13. I can go into a supermarket and find the staple foods which fit with my cultural traditions, into a hairdresser's shop and find someone who can cut my hair, into a clothing store and easily find clothing for my body type.
14. I can take a job with an affirmative action employer without having coworkers on the job suspect that I got it because of race or gender.
15. I can schedule an interview for a job without worrying about the physical accessibility of the office.
16. I can be late to a meeting without having the lateness reflect on my race.
17. I can do well in a challenging situation without being called a credit to my race.
18. I can attend a school related workshop or conference and know I will not be the only member of my race.
19. At the workshop or conference, I can be pretty sure that if I ask to talk to "the person in charge," I will be facing a person of my race and gender.
20. During the pandemic, I have secure paid work.
21. My work allows me to respect social distancing.
22. My work acknowledges and offers support for the mental health strain of working from home in a pandemic.
23. When I am renting an apartment, I can count on my skin colour not to work against me.
24. I can be pretty sure that my neighbors in my new neighbourhood will be neutral or pleasant to me.
25. During the pandemic, I have a place of residence.
26. My place of residence easily allows me to respect social distancing and avoid contact with people outside my household.
27. Elderly members of my family have living situations that allow them to easily respect social distancing.
28. When I'm at the bank, I can count on my skin colour not to work against the appearance of financial responsibility.
29. I can be sure that if I need legal help, my race will not work against me.
30. I can trust health care professionals to take my symptoms and pain seriously and not to dismiss me based on my race.
31. If I have pre-existing health conditions that make COVID-19 more deadly for me, I can talk to a doctor about my pre-existing health problems without worrying about how it reflects on my race.

32. When I am told about our national heritage or about civilization, I am shown that people of my colour made it what it is.

33. When I was a child, I was given curricular materials that testified to the existence of my race.

34. When I was a child, my parents could enroll me in school without worrying about how my race would affect teacher and student attitudes.

35. When I was a child, my parents could enroll me in school without worrying about how my (physical/mental/information processing) accessibility challenges would affect teacher and student attitudes.

36. My parents did not have to educate me to be aware of systemic racism for my own daily physical protection.

37. If a traffic cop pulls me over, I can be sure I haven't been singled out because of my race and do not immediately worry for my life.

38. During the pandemic, if I need to leave my home, I can drive my car rather than risk exposure on public transit.

39. If I do not have a car, I can easily take public transportation without thinking about its physical accessibility.

40. During the pandemic, I can leave my home and be sure that I will not be the target of a COVID-related racist hate-crime.