



Australian
Human Rights
Commission

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Race Discrimination Commissioner

6 Jun 2014

Racism: How should we respond?

Twitter: @timsout

Outline

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- The dimensions of racism
- Harms of racism
- Cyber-racism and bullying
- Leadership and setting a tone
- “Racism. It Stops with Me”

What is racism?

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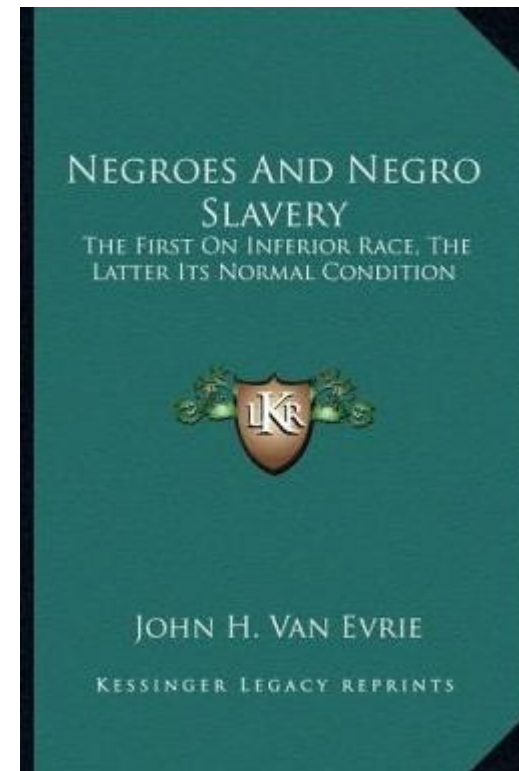
The belief that all members of each race possess characteristics, abilities, or qualities specific to that race, especially so as to distinguish it as inferior or superior to another race or races

– *Oxford English Dictionary*

What is racism?

“God has made the negro an inferior being, not in most cases, but all cases, for there are no accidents or exceptions in His works. There never could be such a thing as a negro equaling the standard Caucasian in natural ability.”

– John Van Evrie, 1861



What is racism?



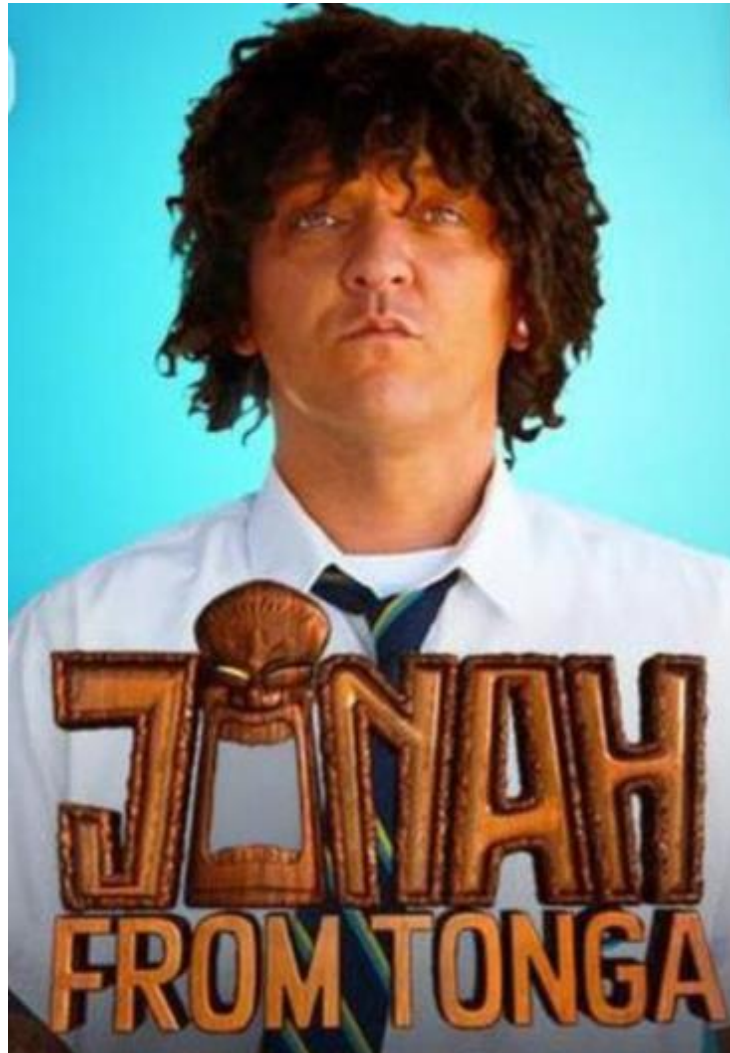
What is racism?



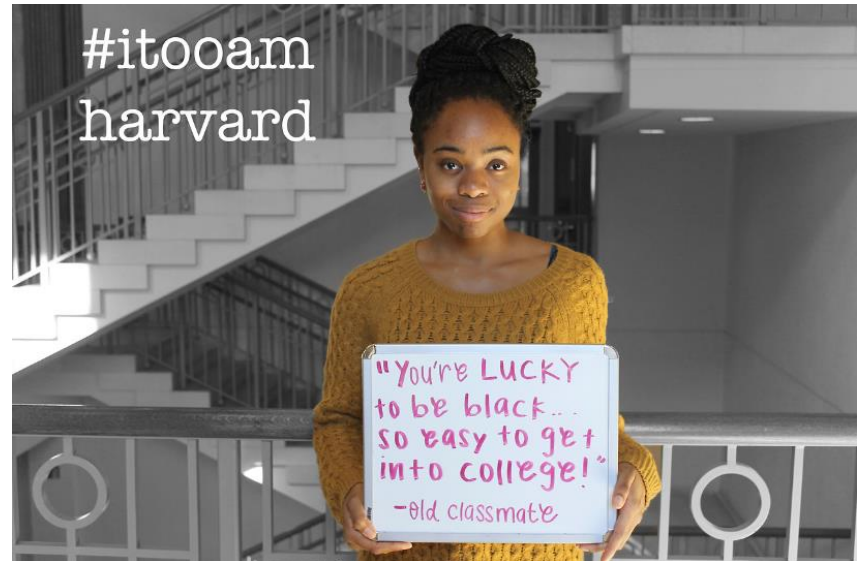
What is racism?



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What is racism?



What is racism?

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- Racial superiority
- Stereotypes, prejudice, discrimination
- Sources of racism

Prevalence of racism (Challenging Racism Project)

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- 20 per cent of Australians have been on the receiving end of racist hate talk
- 11 per cent have been excluded from the workplace/social settings because of their race
- 5 per cent of Australians have experienced physical assault because of their race

2013 Scanlon Foundation Surveys

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- 19 per cent of Australians have experienced racial or religious discrimination during the past 12 months
- Previously 12 per cent in 2012
- Particularly high levels for non-English speaking background Australians

Children and young people

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- 80 per cent of students from non-Anglo backgrounds reported experiencing racial discrimination
- Over two-thirds of these experiences of racism occurred at school

Harms of racism

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- Civic, physical and mental health
- “I experience racism on an all too regular basis ... It is a tremendous psychological blow because it is something that I experienced from age 5 to now and I am often left feeling helpless and vulnerable for days afterwards.”

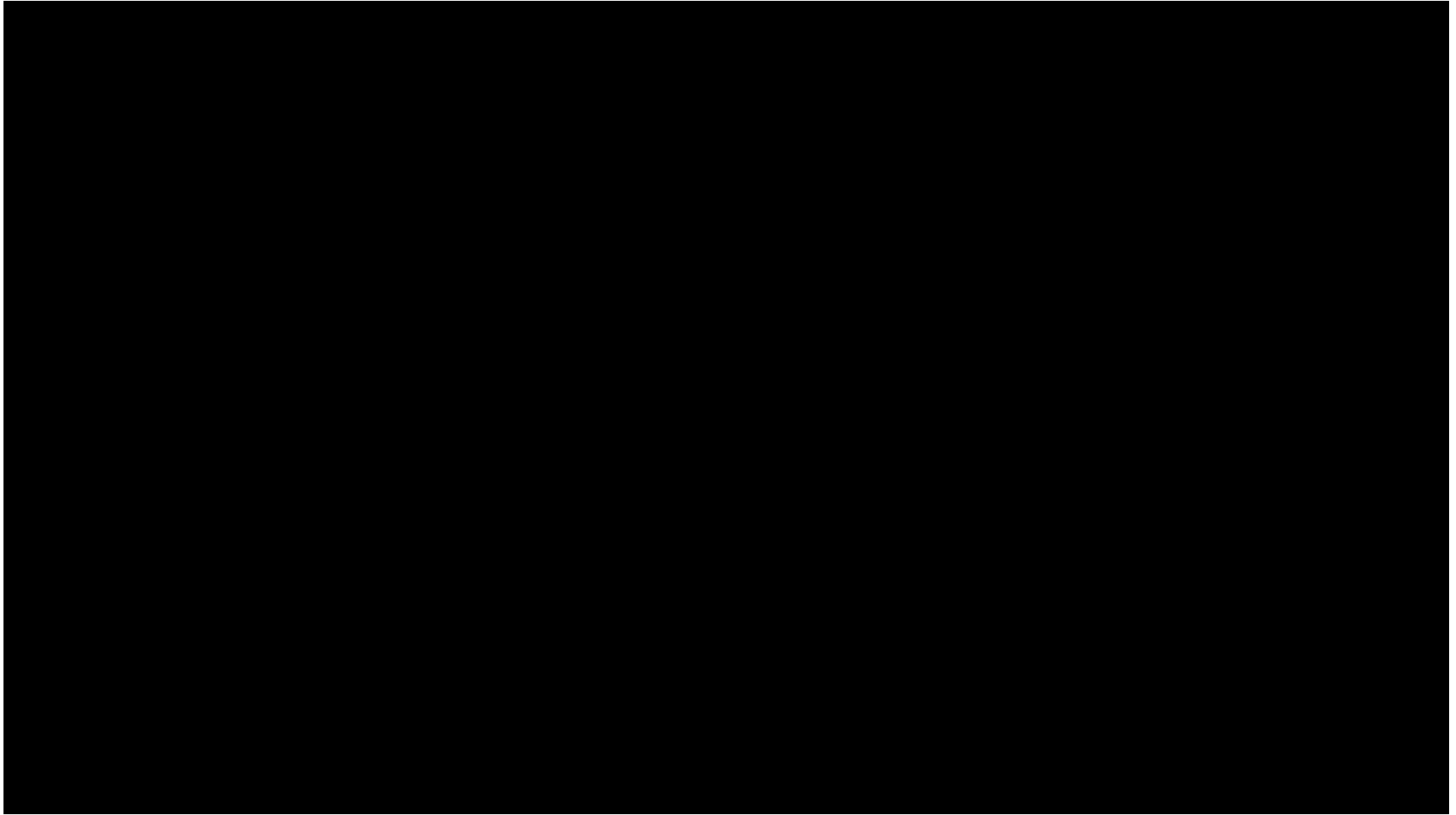
“It makes me feel like I am lower than everyone else, an intruder who is not part of this society.”

Cyber-bullying

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- Just the same as plain bullying?
- Distinctive characteristics – invasive, audience, anonymity
- One in 10 children experience it
- Rise in cyber-racism

Cyber-bullying



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EEZRHrbjtU>



Cyber-bullying and *BackMeUp*

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- *“BackMeUp has made me more confident as to what I can do as a bystander - it is hard to watch something so horrible happen to someone and feel useless, but it is an amazing feeling to actually be able to help someone out.”*
- *“I’m ready to take action if I can see any signs of cyberbullying.”*

Culture and leadership

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- A hostile social climate can open the door to devaluation and disparagement
- Social context matters
- Leadership and signals

Race Discrimination Act

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- Outlaws racial discrimination and promotes equality before the law
- Outlaws racial vilification
 - - Section 18C: acts that offend, insult, humiliate or intimidate on the basis of race
 - - Section 18D: free speech exemptions

National Anti-Racism Strategy

- Curricular materials

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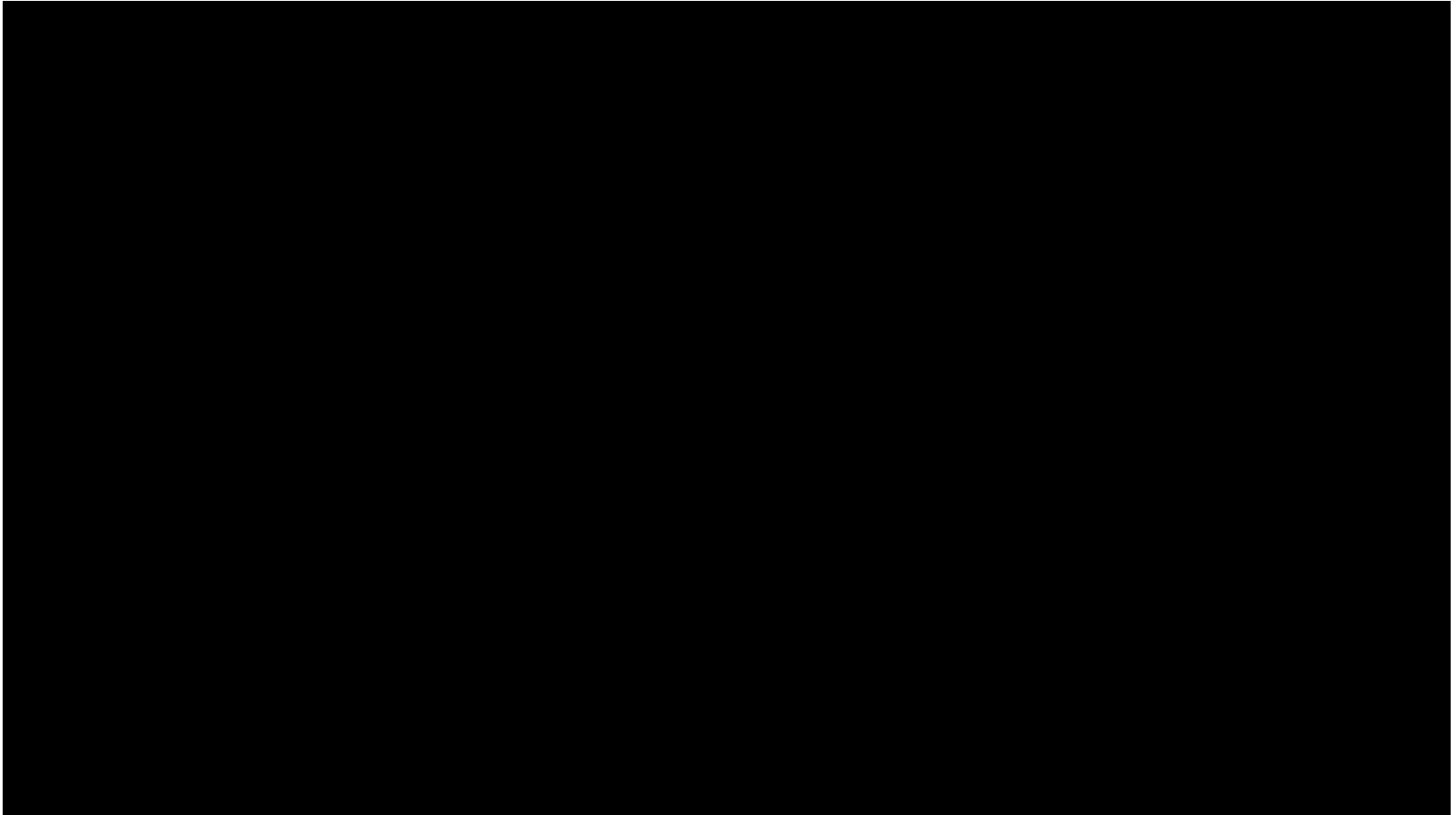
- Year 5/ 6 Health and Physical Education
- Year 6 History
- Year 9/ 10 Health and Physical Education
- Year 10 History
- Empathy and action



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Aims to:

- ensure more Australians recognise that racism is unacceptable in our community
- create tools and resources to take practical action against racism
- empower individuals and organisations to prevent and respond effectively to racism



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_mtw5ZAtbaY

Bystander scenarios

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- Kitty Genovese, who was murdered in a New York City street in the presence of 38 witnesses
- One study: 44 per cent of incidents of race bullying at school bystanders did nothing, with one quarter in fact encouraging the bullying
- What can bystanders do?



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Everyone is entitled to a safe and pleasant journey.

That's why racism is not welcome on Ventura Buses.

If you witness a racist incident, consider:

- Notifying the driver
- Offering support to the victim
- Calling the police if you think a crime is occurring.

**RACISM.
IT STOPS
WITH ME**

For information about how to take action against racism or make a complaint of racial discrimination go to itstopswithme.humanrights.gov.au



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RACISM. IT STOPS WITH ME

IS A CAMPAIGN WHICH INVITES
ALL AUSTRALIANS TO REFLECT
ON WHAT THEY CAN DO TO COUNTER RACISM
WHEREVER IT HAPPENS.

itstopswithme.humanrights.gov.au

Adam Goodes, Sydney Swans
Australian of the Year 2014