

Learning about Power, Privilege and Oppression

Classism

Classism is prejudice or discrimination based on socioeconomic status. It includes individual attitudes, behaviors, systems of policies, and practices set up to benefit people living in higher socioeconomic environments while discounting those living in lower socioeconomic environments.

Some researchers have suggested that working-class status should be defined subjectively as self-identification with the working-class group. This subjective approach allows people, rather than researchers, to define their own "subjective" and "perceived" social class.

Here are some examples:

- Making assumptions about someone's education, life experiences, work ethic, or other behaviors solely based on class.
- General cultural and institutional invisibility of poor and working-class people, negative attitudes and beliefs regarding poor and working-class people, educational inequities, healthcare inequities, disparities in the judicial system, environmental injustice, social acceptance of unlivable minimum wages, and the deprecation of organizations of working people.
- Comments that devalue those who live in lower socioeconomic status and/or working-class and minimum wage jobs.

Additional reading and resources:

- ["White Trash: The 400 Year Untold Story of Class in America"](#) by Nancy Isenberg
- ["Rich vs Poor: BU Learn More Series to Focus on Social Class in America"](#) by Taylor Mendoza, BU Today
- ["How to Combat Racial Wealth Inequality?"](#) U.S. News and World Report

For more resource and reading, see our [Anti-Oppression Reading and Discussion Resource List](#).