# Examples of Racial Microaggressions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Microaggression</th>
<th>Message</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alien in own land</td>
<td>“Where are you from?” “Where were you born?” “You speak good English.” A person asking an Asian American to teach them words in their native language.</td>
<td>You are not American You are a foreigner</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ascription of Intelligence</td>
<td>“You are a credit to your race.” “You are so articulate.” Asking an Asian person to help with a Math or Science problem.</td>
<td>People of color are generally not as intelligent as Whites. It is unusual for someone of your race to be intelligent. All Asians are intelligent and good in Math / Sciences.</td>
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<td>Color Blindness</td>
<td>“When I look at you, I don’t see color.” “America is a melting pot.” “There is only one race, the human race.”</td>
<td>Denying a person of color’s racial / ethnic experiences. Assimilate / acculturate to the dominant culture. Denying the individual as a racial / cultural being.</td>
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<td>Criminality – assumption of criminal status</td>
<td>A White man or woman clutching their purse or checking their wallet as a Black or Latino approaches or passes. A store owner following a customer of color around the store. A White person waiting to ride the next elevator when a person of color is on it.</td>
<td>You are a criminal. You are going to steal / You are poor / You do not belong / You are dangerous.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Denial of individual racism</td>
<td>“I’m not a racist. I have several Black friends.” “As a woman, I know what you go through as a racial minority.”</td>
<td>I am immune to races because I have friends of color. Your racial oppression is no different than my gender oppression. I can’t be a racist. I’m like you.</td>
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<td>Myth of meritocracy</td>
<td>“I believe the most qualified person should get the job.” “Everyone can succeed in this society, if they work hard enough.”</td>
<td>People of color are given extra unfair benefits because of their race. People of color are lazy and / or incompetent and need to work harder.</td>
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<td>Pathologizing cultural values / communication styles</td>
<td>Asking a Black person: “Why do you have to be so loud / animated? Just calm down.” To an Asian or Latino person: Why are you so quiet? We want to know what you think. Be more verbal.” Speak up more.”</td>
<td>Assimilate to dominant culture. Leave your cultural baggage outside.</td>
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<td><strong>Second-class citizen</strong></td>
<td>Person of color mistaken for a service worker</td>
<td>People of color are servants to Whites. They couldn’t possibly occupy high-status positions. You are likely to cause trouble and / or travel to a dangerous neighborhood. Whites are more valued customers than people of color You don’t belong. You are a lesser being.</td>
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<td>Occurs when a White person is given preferential treatment as a consumer over a person of color</td>
<td>Having a taxi cab pass a person of color and pick up a White passenger Being ignored at a store counter as attention is given to the White customer behind you “You people …”</td>
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<td><strong>Environmental microaggressions</strong></td>
<td>A college or university with buildings that are all names after White heterosexual upper class males Television shows and movies that feature predominantly White people, without representation of people of color Overcrowding of public schools in communities of color Overabundance of liquor stores in communities of color</td>
<td>You don’t belong / You won’t succeed here. There is only so far you can go. You are an outsider / You don’t exist. People of color don’t / shouldn’t value education. People of color are deviant.</td>
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<td>Macro-level microaggressions, which are more apparent on systemic and environmental levels</td>
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<td><strong>How to offend without really trying</strong></td>
<td>“Indian giver.” “That’s so gay.” “She welshed on the bet.” “I jewed him down.” “That’s so White of you.” “You people …” “We got gypped.” Imitating accents or dialects Others?</td>
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Adapted from: