

LESSON NUMBER: 9-A

TASK: Racism and Sexism

CONDITION: Classroom Environment

STANDARD:

1. Define racism and sexism.
2. Identify factors in development of racism and sexism.
3. Identify relationship of power bases.
4. Identify examples of racist and sexist behaviors.
5. Identify strategies for combating racism and sexism.

TYPE OF INSTRUCTION: Conference

TIME OF INSTRUCTION: 1 Hour

MEDIA: Viewgraph #9-A-1 through Viewgraph #9-A-6 and Practical Exercise #9-A-1

NOTE: The practical exercise for this lesson contains several case studies. They are designed to allow students to discuss aspects of sexism and racism which they may encounter. While the situations are not applicable to each and every unit, it is the concepts we are striving to plant into the students minds. The best results will be derived if the students are in small groups and can discuss the cases among themselves before announcing their conclusions to the entire group.

LEAD IN: Racism and sexism are forms of discrimination which are very similar. The only real difference is that sexism is based on gender while racism is based on color. As we will discuss in this portion of your training, the similarities far outweigh the differences. It has been said that when you scratch the skin of a racist, you will find a sexist just below the surface. In general, people are socialized that it's acceptable to be a little sexist, but it's not to be a little racist. You must understand they are both unacceptable forms of behavior and should be treated with equal importance. Let's discuss these two forms of discrimination and see if we reach any conclusions which would make us agree or disagree with this statement.

PART I. DEFINE RACISM AND SEXISM

SHOW VIEWGRAPH #9-A-1

RACISM AND SEXISM
The transformation of prejudice, based on race or gender through the exercise of power and authority against the group defined as inferior by individuals and institutions or organizations with the intentional or unintentional support of the culture.

1. **RACISM AND SEXISM.** Defining racism and sexism: the transformation of prejudice, based on race or gender through the exercise of power and authority against the group defined as inferior by individuals and institutions or organizations with the intentional or unintentional support of the culture. Personal racism or sexism is an attitude of superiority, coupled with an act to subordinate an individual, because of their race or gender.

PART II. FACTORS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF RACISM AND SEXISM.

SHOW VIEWGRAPH #9-A-2

FACTORS IN DEVELOPMENT OF RACISM AND SEXISM

- Contact
- Social Visibility
- Unequal Power
- Ethnocentrism
- Competition
- Stereotypes
- Sex-Role Socialization

2. The following are factors in the development of racism and sexism:

a. **Contact.** Contact between racial and ethnic groups is nearly as old as human life itself. People have migrated from areas to new areas since the beginning. These migrations were for various reasons. Some occurred to escape persecution for different beliefs. Others escaped because of poverty or wars. Some people were forced to migrate through slavery and as indentured servants. But regardless of the reasons, these migrations resulted in contacts with different cultures which might well have never happened otherwise.

b. **Social visibility.** With contact, comes social visibility. Society likes to categorize things, to include people. The easiest way to categorize people is through

physical traits. Something visual, such as skin color, names, e.g., Jewish, Hispanic, Polish, language, or other features such as folds of the eyes, are all visual traits that make categorizing people simple to do. Cultural habits such as what we eat, how we prepare meals, celebrations, what utensils we use, all can play a factor in social visibility differences. It isn't uncommon for groups to take the position that "different means wrong."

c. **Unequal power.** Whoever has the power can control the limited resources and make policies to their standards. The group in control develops a feeling of superiority.

d. **Ethnocentrism.** Is a belief one's own ethnic group is superior to all other groups. If this group also holds the power - likely the majority - then this belief can become even more damaging to the minority groups.

e. **Competition.** Our society is very competitive. There may only be a limited supply, but an unlimited demand for a resource. When everyone wants a piece of the pie, some are likely to get a bigger piece than others. Generally, it will be the group in power who gets the bigger piece.

f. **Stereotypes.** We learn our stereotypes from parents, schools, peers, and the media. Once individuals come in contact with others, they make first impressions, and may develop stereotypes of that particular group. Stereotypes maintain prejudice.

g. **Sex-role socialization.** This is the process by which males and females learn to display appropriate behavior for their sex. In learning these roles during sex-role socialization, we also acquire attitudes and values associated with these roles. There is also a 'historical factor.' Historians frequently omitted or distorted accomplishments of minorities and women's experiences and accomplishments. This widespread omission of women is not attributable solely to the sex bias of male publishers, historians, and editors. The reasons are more complex. Historians of both sexes have been trained to examine the past through a traditional male perspective. Such a perspective automatically excludes women as they were rarely generals, diplomats, explorers, or presidents. Another reason for the omission of women is the constant use of the male pronoun to represent all of humanity. We, as adults, recognize the male pronoun as a generalization, but unless we stop using it, that is all the children will hear.

h. **Mass media.** As a product of socialization prejudices are portrayed via the mass media. Minorities are often portrayed as criminal and dysfunctional while females are portrayed as dependent on men for life support.

PART III. PERSONAL RACISTS AND SEXISTS BEHAVIORS

SHOW VIEWGRAPH #9-A-3

PERSONAL RACISTS AND SEXISTS BEHAVIORS

- **Paternalism..**
- **Ignoring**
- **Speaking For**
- **Testimonials**
- **Ethnic, racists, sexists jokes**
- **Frequent interruptions**
- **Stereotypical language**
- **Titles and ranks**
- **Denying opportunities**
- **Dubious supervision**

3. Many of the behaviors we observe, and are recipients of, on a daily basis are actually behaviors which constitute racist and sexist behaviors. Let's look at a few of these behaviors and discuss their impact on minorities and women.

a. **Paternalism.** This behavior takes the form of acting 'fatherly' or over-protective of someone. Frequently, this behavior will take place toward a female, and when it does, can be a form of sexism. It may imply that the woman is incapable of doing her job, or surviving without the man taking her under his wing and helping her along.

b. **Ignoring.** This would be discounting what an individual says - not giving it credibility because they may be a minority or a female.

c. **Speaking for.** Not letting a person speak for themselves. When someone asks a direct question of them, interrupting and answering the question yourself. In other words, you know the person can't possibly state what needs to be stated, so you take it upon yourself to answer for them.

d. **Testimonials.** "I am not prejudice, some of my best friends are black" (or women or any other minority group).

e. **Ethnic, racists, or sexists jokes.** This area is pretty self-explanatory and does not require elaboration or clarification. They only continue to reinforce stereotypes.

f. **Frequent interruptions.** This indicates that you don't take what someone is saying is being important. You have a 'better grasp' or understanding of the points they may be making and feel compelled to make sure you make it clear what 'needs' to be said.

g. **Stereotypical language.** Speaking in terms that use statements which indicate or reinforce the stereotypes about the group you are talking about. A statement like: "all women are just too emotional to handle the stress filled command environment."

h. **Titles and ranks.** Calling minorities and women by their first names while addressing majority members (males) by their titles or rank. This diminishes the importance and position of those being called by their first names.

i. **Denying opportunities.** This can be blatant or indirect. Simply put, providing more beneficial jobs, positions, or assignments to majority members than to minority members.

j. **Dubious supervision.** This is the manner of focusing on problems or crimes committed by a particular group or gender and exploiting these problems through punishment, while ignoring the fact that the majority may be committing crimes too.

PART IV. FACTORS THAT SUPPORT RACISM AND SEXISM

SHOW VIEWGRAPH #9-A-4



4. The following are factors that support racism and sexism:

a. **Reference groups.** Groups or association with like attitudes and like values. Examples might include: Ku Klux Klan, and fraternal organizations. These reference groups enable people to associate with people that have the same attitudes as they do.

b. **Conformity to norms.** Some individuals find it easier to conform to the standard norm of the group than it is to challenge the attitude. Conformity is rewarded - nonconformity is punished - conformity becomes the norm.

c. **Self-fulfilling prophecy.** We can influence the behavior of another person by expressing our expectations of that person. If we assume that because a person is a minority, they will not achieve the same level of competence as a majority member, frequently, that is exactly what appears to happen. While there are many factors that may factor into this phenomenon, the whole concept is called the self-fulfilling prophecy'.

d. **Pro-sexism/racism.** Accommodating sexist behavior by reinforcing it, rather than questioning, checking, or opposing it. This used to be much more common in the Army than it is today. An example would be for a female to not wanting to perform a task, because she "might break a fingernail," or a person telling racist jokes about their own group.

PART V. SOCIAL PROBLEMS CREATED BY RACISM AND SEXISM.

SHOW VIEWGRAPH #9-A-5

SOCIAL PROBLEMS CREATED BY RACISM AND SEXISM
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ineffective use of abilities• Adverse impact on national income• Deviant behavior acted out• Innergroup tensions in community• Adverse impact on U.S. in world affairs

5. The following are examples of social problems created by racism and sexism:

a. **Ineffective use of abilities.** Think of how many more minority or female Doctor's, Scientists, Astronauts, Business People there could be without racism or sexism.

b. **Adverse impact on national income.** Denying people to make money reduces the amount of taxes paid. Increasing purchasing power creates a need for more consumer goods which equates to more jobs.

c. **Deviant behavior is acted out.**

d. **Innergroup tensions in the community, which may lead to violence.**

e. **Adverse impact on the United States' position in world affairs.** How is America going to criticize or sanction another country for Human Rights Violations, when the same thing is going on in our country?

PART VI. STRATEGIES FOR COMBATING RACISM AND SEXISM

SHOW VIEWGRAPH #9-A-6

STRATEGIES FOR COMBATING RACISM AND SEXISM

- Awareness
- Education
- Legislation
- Participation
- Self-Analyze
- Acknowledge and understand differences
- Commander's responsibility

6. While nothing is likely to completely eradicate racism and sexism, there are things we can do to minimize their affect on our units.

a. **Awareness.** To make a difference in these areas, we must be aware the potential for both exist. We must also make a conscious effort to look for problems or problem areas in which either or both could happen.

b. **Education.** Education will empower people to recognize behaviors related to racism and sexism. Individuals can then reflect, and check their own behaviors and attitudes.

c. **Legislation.** This not only refers to the 'laws of the land' relevant to racism and sexism, but also to the standards and policies implemented within your unit mandating acceptable standards of behavior. As leaders, we must make it known what we will and will not accept in behavior patterns from the unit members.

d. **Participation.** This refers to taking part in activities in which you would mix with members of different races and genders. There are people who isolate themselves from others who are different. To do this reduces the opportunity to learn that the stereotypes held toward different groups often have no basis for truth.

e. **Self-analyze.** Often, one of the hardest things a person must do is to be honest with themselves. If we harbor prejudices and fears about other groups, it is best to be able to acknowledge that to ourselves. Only then can we figure out what steps we need to take to overcome these attitudes and beliefs we hold.

f. **Acknowledging and understanding differences.** We are each different. This holds true among our own race and gender, we well as between races and genders. If we can simply accept we are different, and one characteristic isn't necessarily wrong or better, then we'll be well on the road to having a better understanding of those who are different than ourselves.

g. **Commander's responsibility.** The commander is responsible for his or her EO program. He or she needs to know if there are incidents of racism or sexism in order to

initiate appropriate actions. Working closely with EORs and EOAs, and ensuring that unit assessments are conducted regularly will assist the commander in knowing what the climate is in the unit.

NOTE: Divide the students into groups of four people. Using Practical Exercise #9-A-1 have each group decide answers to each case study.

CLOSING: During this block of instruction we have learned that racism and sexism have many similarities. Both can cause the mission and the unit to suffer. We have looked at ways to identify these two forms of discrimination and we have looked at ways to combat racism and sexism. Summarize lesson objectives.

**PRACTICAL EXERCISE #9-A-1
RACISM AND SEXISM EXERCISE
CASE STUDIES**

CASE 1

Recently, two female soldiers were assigned to your unit. Both soldiers are wheeled vehicle mechanics. When they arrived, the unit was short two clerks. The unit had two men, each holding a secondary MOS of clerk-typist, filling in until the arrival of the new clerk-typists. The men were not happy about this situation. While inprocessing the women, you find out that both can type 60 words per minute. Although neither soldier holds a primary or secondary clerk-typist MOS, you decide to send the two men back to the motor pool and give the typist jobs to the women. You feel that the women would be happier in an office environment and that their typing skills justify your decision.

Question: This is an example of which of the following: (a) Proper utilization without discrimination; (b) Improper utilization without discrimination; (c) Discrimination, but proper utilization; or (d) Discrimination and improper utilization.

CASE 2

A male senior officer assigned to a large staff at a CONUS command attended a senior staff meeting. The other attendees, with the exception of the two most junior members of the staff, were male. While waiting for the CO to appear and begin the meeting, the senior officer regaled the group with "dumb blonde" jokes. The two women officers were uncomfortable with the display, but said nothing. The other male officers laughed and seemed to enjoy the jokes.

Questions: Has the senior officer made the same impression with all of his coworkers? Has he treated, or has he implied, that he sees them all as equally deserving of respect? Has the senior officer contributed to, or detracted from, the cohesiveness and esprit of this unit?

CASE 3

A black male staff sergeant was in the hallway outside his work area when he heard a remark that made him furious. A female sergeant who worked in an adjoining area was sounding off about blacks. As he listened, he heard the woman making fun of the term "African-American." The sergeant also remarked that the unit had just failed a major inspection because the new Executive Officer was black. The male staff sergeant lost his temper when he heard the woman use the term "nigger." As he entered the area the staff sergeant grabbed the sergeant by the shoulders and said, "You bitch! You're lucky to be in the unit. Whores like you don't belong in the Army!" The woman broke away and ran immediately to her supervisor to report her experience as "sexual harassment."

Questions: What is the responsibility of the commanding officer in this situation? What should the resolution of this case be?

CASE-4

A female air traffic controller alleged that an Army pilot referred to her by an inappropriate term of endearment during a conversation over UHF. The commanding officer of the pilot's unit reviewed the UHF tape and found that the pilot had indeed referred to the air traffic controller as "Honey."

Questions: Was this pilot being professional? Does using an informal means of address recognize the professional achievement of the subordinate? Would the pilot feel his authority diminished if his commands were acknowledged, "Sure, doll?"

CASE 5

You are a staff officer. Several white soldiers have complained about Puerto Rican soldiers displaying the Puerto Rican national flag in the windows of their privately owned vehicles (POVs). Their perception is that the Puerto Rican soldiers are sending a message that says they love Puerto Rico more than they love the United States of America. The soldiers request a policy be established to ban the displaying of heritage flags on the military installation.

Questions: What action(s) should be taken? How would you handle the objection of African-American soldiers to the display of the Confederate battle flag?

**PRACTICAL EXERCISE #9-A-1
RACISM AND SEXISM EXERCISE
INSTRUCTOR'S GUIDE**

Objective:

To provide students an opportunity to apply methods and strategies of identify and resolve racism and sexism problems.

Guidance:

This practical exercise works best in small groups. Allow sufficient time for students to read and discuss among the small group. Have a representative from each small group act as spokesperson to read the conclusion to the entire class.

CASE STUDIES

CASE 1

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CASE 2

A male senior officer assigned to a large staff at a CONUS command attended a senior staff meeting. The other attendees, with the exception of the two most junior members of the staff, were male. While waiting for the CO to appear and begin the meeting, the senior officer regaled the group with "dumb blonde" jokes. The two women officers were uncomfortable with the display, but said nothing. The other male officers laughed and seemed to enjoy the jokes.

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You are a staff officer. Several white soldiers have complained about Puerto Rican soldiers displaying the Puerto Rican national flag in the windows of their privately owned vehicles (POVs). Their perception is that the Puerto Rican soldiers are sending a message that says they love Puerto Rico more than they love the United States of America. The soldiers request a policy be established to ban the displaying of heritage flags on the military installation.

Questions: What action(s) should be taken? How would you handle the objection of African-American soldiers to the display of the Confederate battle flag?

ANSWER KEY

CASE 1

Question: This is an example of which of the following: (a) Proper utilization without discrimination; (b) Improper utilization without discrimination; (c) Discrimination, but proper utilization; or (d) Discrimination and improper utilization.

Answer: (d.) This is a clear case of discrimination based on gender and stereotyping of sexual roles; it is also improper utilization of personnel based on assignment and MOS qualification.

CASE 2

Questions: Has the senior officer made the same impression with all of his coworkers? Has he treated, or has he implied, that he sees them all as equally deserving of respect? Has the senior officer contributed to, or detracted from, the cohesiveness and esprit of this unit?

Discussion Points: The senior officer has displayed a common form of insensitivity. In trying to show that he is "one of the gang," he has shown only that he is "one of the boys." He has alienated a portion of the staff by his implied approval of a disparaging stereotype about women. Ingrained attitudes and behaviors are reinforced by this type of conduct. Would the jokes have been any more appropriate if no women were present. If that were the case, how would the men present interpret how the senior officer felt about women, in general, or about his commitment to the Army's sexual harassment policy? The answer is of course, that the jokes would have no more appropriate if only men had been present. The jokes are totally inappropriate in a military work environment, regardless of who is present. Another point to address is how both the female and the male officers should have told the senior officer that his jokes were inappropriate. It is a responsibility we all share to identify behavior that is inappropriate or offensive.

CASE 3

Questions: What is the responsibility of the commanding officer in this situation? What should the resolution of this case be?

Discussion Points: The commanding officer needs to get to the bottom of this through a thorough investigation. Once the facts become known, the commander will be able to address the underlying issues. This case study is a good example of why racism and sexual harassment cannot be tolerated in our Army. It tears our organization apart by pitting us against ourselves. It destroys our unit cohesion. The female sergeant clearly violated the Army's equal opportunity policy with her racist remarks. The male staff sergeant, although understandably angry, reacted inappropriately with derogatory sexual remarks which could meet the definition of sexual harassment. The UCMJ has several articles that address this sort of conduct, from Provoking Speech to Assault Consummated by a Battery. What is probably needed here, however, are not UCMJ actions, but a serious commitment by the unit and those concerned to come to grips with

what the Army expects of all the members of this organization, and that is to learn to treat all our people with equal respect and dignity.

CASE-4

Questions: Was this pilot being professional? Does using an informal means of address recognize the professional achievement of the subordinate? Would the pilot feel his authority diminished if his commands were acknowledged, "Sure, doll?"

Discussion Points: Professionalism is a two-way street. Every officer and enlisted soldier has the right to be addressed according to his or her rank and authority. Just as an officer would be justifiably offended by informal address, sloppy means of address to enlisted personnel degrades their hard earned professional status. This is not a sexual harassment issue, this is a professionalism issue.

CASE 5

Questions: What action(s) should be taken? How would you handle the objection of African-American soldiers to the display of the Confederate battle flag?

Answer: Conduct an EO class on cultural awareness and its affects on unit cohesion. In the meantime, if the commander determines that any flag, poster or symbol is adversely affecting the good order, discipline or morale, he or she may order that item to be taken down. The commander does not have to order a blanket ban on all such displays.

Materials Required:

Practical Exercise #9-A-1

Time Required:

15 to 30 minutes



RACISM AND SEXISM

THE TRANSFORMATION OF PREJUDICE, BASED ON RACE OR GENDER THROUGH THE EXERCISE OF POWER AND AUTHORITY AGAINST THE GROUP DEFINED AS INFERIOR BY INDIVIDUALS AND INSTITUTIONS OR ORGANIZATIONS WITH THE INTENTIONAL OR UNINTENTIONAL SUPPORT OF THE CULTURE



FACTORS IN DEVELOPMENT OF RACISM AND SEXISM

- **CONTACT**
- **SOCIAL VISIBILITY**
- **UNEQUAL POWER**
- **ETHNOCENTRISM**
- **COMPETITION**
- **STEREOTYPES**
- **SEX-ROLE SOCIALIZATION**



PERSONAL RACIST AND SEXIST BEHAVIORS

- **PATERNALISM**
- **IGNORING**
- **SPEAKING FOR**
- **TESTIMONIALS**
- **ETHNIC, RACISTS, SEXISTS JOKES**
- **FREQUENT INTERRUPTIONS**
- **STEREOTYPICAL LANGUAGE**
- **TITLES AND RANKS**
- **DENYING OPPORTUNITIES**
- **DUBIOUS SUPERVISION**



FACTORS THAT SUPPORT RACISM AND SEXISM

- **REFERENCE GROUPS**
- **CONFORMITY TO NORMS**
- **SELF-FULFILLING PROPHECY**
- **PRO-SEXISM / RACISM**



SOCIAL PROBLEMS CREATED BY RACISM AND SEXISM

- **INEFFECTIVE USE OF ABILITIES**
- **ADVERSE IMPACT ON NATIONAL INCOME**
- **DEVIANT BEHAVIOR ACTED OUT**
- **INNERGROUP TENSIONS IN COMMUNITY**
- **ADVERSE IMPACT ON U.S. IN WORLD AFFAIRS**



STRATEGIES FOR COMBATING RACISM AND SEXISM

- **AWARENESS**
- **EDUCATION**
- **LEGISLATION**
- **PARTICIPATION**
- **SELF-ANALYZE**
- **ACKNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTAND
DIFFERENCES**
- **COMMANDER'S RESPONSIBILITY**