

WHAT

IS

WHITE

PRIVILEGE?

*Please feel free to xerox these definitions
for your own use.*

DEFINITIONS RELATED TO 'WHITE PRIVILEGE'

RACE

Race is 'a specious classification of human beings created by Europeans (whites) which assigns human worth and social status using 'white' as the model of humanity and the height of human achievement for the purpose of establishing and maintaining privilege and power.'

Definition by Ronald Chisom and Michael Harrington of The People's Institute for Survival and Beyond in Undoing Racism: A Philosophy of International Social Change. People's Institute Press. 2nd ed. 1997. pp.30-31. (The People's Institute. 7166 Crowder Blvd. Suite 100. New Orleans, La. 70127. Ph: 504-241-7472. www.thepeoplesinstitute.org. Email: PISAB@thepeoplesinstitute.org.)

WHITE PEOPLE

A legal concept established by colonial slave owners to separate poor Europeans from Africans, giving legal privileges to Europeans, while constructing a system of chattel slavery for Africans. (Definition by cws, inspired by the definition of 'Race' by The Peoples Institute for Survival and Beyond.)

PRIVILEGE

A privilege is a right, advantage, favor or immunity specially granted to one; especially a right *held by a certain individual, group or class, and withheld from certain others or all others.* (Definition from Webster's Dictionary. Italic emphases added.)

WHITE PRIVILEGE

U.S. institutions and culture give *preferential treatment* to people whose ancestors came from Europe over peoples whose ancestors are from the Americas, Africa, Asia and the Arab world; and exempt European Americans -- white people -- from the forms of racial and national oppression inflicted upon peoples from the Americas, Africa, Asia and the Arab world.

This web of institutional and cultural preferential treatment is called "white privilege." *In a white supremacy system, white privilege and racial/national oppression are two sides of the same coin.*

Non-ruling class white people are *both* oppressed and privileged.

They are oppressed most significantly on the basis of class, gender and sexual orientation; and also on the basis of religion, culture, ethnicity, age, physical abilities and political expression.

At the same time, they are *all* privileged *in relation to* peoples of color.

CWS Workshop

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***Non-Ruling Class Whites: a cws analysis**