Is Ferguson Normal?
Presented by Diversity Advocacy, A unit of the Dean of Students Office

Outcomes & Resources

Goals

- Allow students the opportunity to talk about what happened in Ferguson and give them the freedom to react authentically and constructively.
- Provide support and resources to those impacted by the tragedy in Ferguson.
- Educate participants on concepts such as racial battle fatigue, stereotype threat and super predator myth, which often have ties to such events as Ferguson.
- Identify coping strategies for participants impacted by events such as Ferguson.

Illinois State University Resources

Dean of Students Office
Diversity Advocacy
Student Counseling Services
University Housing Services
Office of Equal Opportunity, Equity and Access
Dean on Duty
Community Rights and Responsibilities
Student Government Association – Diversity Chair

Definitions and Articles

Racial Battle Fatigue - coined by William Smith in the Encyclopedia of Race, Ethnicity and Society (2008) - is a theory attributed to the psychological attrition that People of Color experience from the daily battle of deflecting racialized insults, stereotypes, and discrimination. RBF is the cumulative effect of being "on guard" and having to finesse responses to insults, both subtle and covert.

Racial Battle Fatigue for Latino/a Students
**Stereotype Threat** - a situational predicament in which people are or feel themselves to be at risk of confirming negative stereotypes about their social group.

**Implicit Bias** - Also known as implicit social cognition, implicit bias refers to the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner. These biases, which encompass both favorable and unfavorable assessments, are activated involuntarily and without an individual’s awareness or intentional control. Residing deep in the subconscious, these biases are different from known biases that individuals may choose to conceal for the purposes of social and/or political correctness. Rather, implicit biases are not accessible through introspection.

The implicit associations we harbor in our subconscious cause us to have feelings and attitudes about other people based on characteristics such as race, ethnicity, age, and appearance. These associations develop over the course of a lifetime beginning at a very early age through exposure to direct and indirect messages. In addition to early life experiences, the media and news programming are often-cited origins of implicit associations.

For more information visit the [Kirwan Institute for the study of Race and Ethnicity](http://kirwan institute.uiowa.edu).

**Super Predator Myth** – A professor of politics and public affairs on the political science faculty at Princeton University, John Dilulio, created and popularized the super-predator concept. He coined the term superpredator (1995b) to call public attention to what he characterized as a “new breed” of offenders, “kids that have absolutely no respect for human life and no sense of the future. . . . These are stone-cold predators!” (p. 23). Elsewhere, Dilulio and co-authors have described these young people as “fatherless, Godless, and jobless” and as “radically impulsive, brutally remorseless youngsters, including ever more teenage boys, who murder, assault, rob, burglarize, deal deadly drugs, join gun-toting gangs, and create serious [linked] disorders” (Bennett, Dilulio, & Walters, 1996, p. 27).

**Super Predator Myth 20 Years Later**

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