

Title: Person Perception: A Psychological Analysis on Racism
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Racism has been a deeply ingrained and prevalent feature of many human societies throughout all of history. Its complex and subjective nature makes it an extremely difficult concept to define, understand, and solve. However, observing and studying racism through a psychological lens could provide a personal and in-depth explanation for its origins. The social psychological topic of person perception accounts for the processing of social information and thus, influences an individual's interpretation and behavior towards others. Person perception accounts for the social cognitive process that results in stubborn racist ideas and behaviors that, when left unchallenged, are strengthened and reinforced over time. Additionally, it is important to examine another central concept in social psychology called social categorization, which is the classification of people into certain groups.

Application of Sigmund Freud's theories about realistic anxiety in "Anxiety and Instinctual Life," in *New Introductory Lectures on Psych-Analysis* provide additional understanding to further elaborate the notion of 'racial anxiety.' This psychological framework is applied to Langston Hughes' *The Big Sea* that demonstrate acts of prejudice or discrimination he faces. Freudian psychology provides a compelling explanation for the acts of racism Hughes experienced throughout his life. Studying the three psychological concepts of person perception, social categorization, and racial anxiety gives insight into the development of racism and how it is exemplified specifically through Hughes' *The Big Sea*. It is concluded that the negative aspects of having such rapid and subconscious social processing is that they are typically biased and inaccurate, and result in misinformed and prejudiced perspectives.

Works Cited

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