



Colorism: A “Shady” Practice of Control and Complexion

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Introduction

Upon observation that we as a society treat people differently according to the shade of their skin, it was obvious to me that racism has begun to shift into something called “**colorism**,” or as defined by Alice Walker, “**prejudicial or preferential treatment of same-race people based solely on their color.**” This lead to an investigation of how colorism affects people of all races, as well as why colorism exists in a society that prides itself in its civility and acceptance.

Methods

This research took into consideration multiple court cases and scientific experiments done in the past. Though there were no experiments or surveys specific to this paper by the primary investigator, ample research and information is available in regards to colorism. If more time and funding was available, research regarding children would be most pertinent, as well as surveys and interviews with adults who have experienced colorism in their daily lives.

Conclusions

The conclusions of this paper were two-fold. The first was how colorism interacts with our society and how it can affect each of our lives, whether we are victims or bystanders. The second conclusion is that though colorism has existed in our society for centuries, there is no distinct cause or start of this social phenomena.

Colorism exists in all communities – Black, White, Asian, European, Latino, Hispanic, and other, smaller communities. Therefore, being a world-wide occurrence, it is difficult to pinpoint where or when colorism first occurred, or why people of all races and colors partake in this societal issue.

However, the conclusions from this paper is that colorism can only be combatted with knowledge, education and awareness. The final question, “what can we do?,” is one that echoes all societal problems. Though this paper does not present a definitive answer to this problem, it is the beginning steps to a more full investigation, as well as acting as a stepping-stone to think about shared problems that exist as part of the human experience for all people.

More than anything, the conclusions of this paper urge the reader or listener to think about their life and their vocabulary choices, as well as how we all view each other as people sharing the experience of being judged based solely on what we appear to be.

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