

Changing the Conversation: I am not a minority

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Presenters

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Learning Objectives

Understand the historical context of the word minority

Apply social context to the use of the words minority, marginalized, and people of color

Individuals leave this space reflecting on their choice of vocabulary

Ground Rules

Why are you here?

Define Minority

Definition

: A number or amount that is less than half of a total

: The group that is the smaller part of a larger group

: A group of people who are different from the larger group in a country, area, etc.,
In some way (such as race or religion)

- Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary

History of the term - Minority

Usage of the term minority rooted from - Europe's "national minorities"

After World War I, Americans started adapting the usage of the term minority to identify groups who are underrepresented.

Donald Young's *American Minority Peoples: A Study in Racial and Cultural Conflicts in the United States* (1932). (Book)

Webster's Third New International Dictionary - Published 1961

Definition of minority - "a group differing from the predominant section of a larger group in one or more characteristics (i.e. ethnic background, language, culture or religion) and as a result often subjected to differential treatment and especially discrimination..."

Contemporary Quotes

“Term prevents us from noticing diversity’s differences and having an open and honest discussion about the benefits of diversity” says Cross Jr from the Diversity Workforce

“As long as we use the term as a synonym for myriad people of color, we are, I believe cosigning these people to lesser status and a smaller role-- in short, to powerlessness” says Hope Ferguson in The Root

‘Using the terms racial “minorities” and “nonwhite” center all of us around whiteness, as though whiteness were the default against which people are determined’ says Daniel King from Splinter

Quotes Continued

I personally do not like the term “minority.” Brown people are essentially the majority throughout the world. Plus the word, honestly, has come to mean nothing. It’s just not a good descriptor. I prefer “people of color” or just the actual names of the nationalities and ethnicities of people. I’ve always hated the word “minority.” It seems to minimize historically marginalized people and erase our various identities. Plus you can’t just dump a bunch of brown people in a bucket when we’re all very different and have different views and opinions and experiences. Also, I just hate the word with a passion. At The Root we try to avoid its usage. Did I mention I hate it? I hate it.

—Danielle Belton, The Root managing editor



Small Group Discussion

What are initial feelings and questions from the video?

Do you agree/disagree with the content of the video? Why/Why not?

Questions?

References

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