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Annotation 2

Benevolent Racism: Upholding Racial Inequality in the Name of Black Empowerment by, Luigi Esposito and Victor Romano provides a perspective we may not be familiar with when it comes to D&I. The authors' article examines post-civil rights racism by introducing us to a phrase that has been coined as "Benevolent Racism". This type of racism acknowledges white privilege and the need to empower Black people, however, *"it does so in a way that further legitimizes and reinforces racist attitudes, policies, and practices in the name of "benevolent" aims"*. *"...minority empowerment becomes synonymous with accommodation into the prevailing order.* The article offers us three examples of benevolent racism, "Rejecting Affirmative Action in the Name of Black Empowerment", "Racial Profiling as a Tool to Save Black Lives" and "Opposing Gun Controls as a Way to Empower/ Protect Black people". The discussion presented infers that if you get rid of affirmative action, Blacks will become more *"competitive and self-reliant"* and make proper choices. Further, the benevolent crowd believes that the Stop and Frisk tactics of the NYPD only helped decrease crime in the Black community and that Black people are being deprived of their ability to defend themselves when gun control laws are enacted. The authors debunk these theories by providing historical context regarding structural racism and its impact on Black people. Quite a bit of time is also spent on demonstrating the concept of helping Black people fit into White constructs, which some white people may not realize is racist and paternalistic.

The discussion regarding affirmative action is particularly relevant to my research on Black equity and inclusion in the workplace because it calls attention to a form of racism that many Human Resources departments may be participating in but unaware of the ill effects on Black people. The authors state, with regard to the benevolent mindset, that *"the fact that some Black students might not be admitted into certain universities, or might not be hired into certain workplaces without such policies, is justified under the assumption that ending affirmative action policies will ultimately make Blacks and other racial and ethnic minorities in the United States more competitive and self-reliant."* Many companies will tout their D&I initiatives but will never promote affirmative action policies. Esposito and Romano's article led me to another, "Benevolent discrimination: Explaining how Human Resources Professionals can be Blind to the Harm of Diversity Initiatives" by Laurence Romani, Lotte Holck and Annette Risberg, where they examine this phenomenon of benevolent discrimination between the Swedish and foreign non-European employees who work there. Similar themes of paternalistic behavior (by HR departments) are investigated such as making people feel that in exchange for acceptance into a company, they must de-racialize themselves. In other words, the "diversity" part is acknowledged by HR but not the "inclusion" part. Again, this is an example of what companies may be doing wrong.

Reference:

Esposito, Luigi, and Victor Romano. "Benevolent Racism: Upholding Racial Inequality in the Name of Black Empowerment." *The Western Journal of Black Studies*, vol. 38, no. 2, 2014, pp. 69-83