

# 7 Ways Non-Black People of Color Perpetuate Anti-Blackness

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It's well-known that the common enemy among communities of color is white supremacy. Due to the wide-reaching impacts of institutionalized white supremacy, many communities of color fail to examine their own problematic behavior towards each other, especially towards the Black community.

With that in mind, it's important to better understand how anti-Blackness functions even within non-Black communities of color. Here are seven ways that happens, as well as suggestions for engaging in careful self-reflection to build racial solidarity.

## 1. Anti-Black dating preferences

Only dating within your race or ethnicity is a choice that is valid and personal for many people of color. However, refusing to date Black folks in particular is not based on "preference"—it's based on hatred. No one has seen every single Black person on this planet, so to eliminate a group of people because their features are not "preferred" is, and will always be, racist.

On the opposite end of that spectrum is the fetishization of black people. This applies to all groups, but people of color are capable of doing this to Black people: objectifying our features and hypersexualizing our bodies in order to fulfill a perverted desire.

**It is valid to love our features, our skin, our hair, our bodies; but it needs to be understood that within this body, there is a multi-dimensional person with feelings and ideas who needs to be respected.**

It's important the admiration for the Black body happens outside, as well as inside, the bedroom.

## 2. Being culturally appropriative

People of color often forget that we can be guilty of appropriating each other's cultures. We think there is automatically a cultural exchange taking place since the "appropriated" and "appropriator" both have rich cultures to share.

Although this may be true in certain circumstances, the cultural exchange turns into a grey area when cultures overlap, like with Afro-Latinx or Afro-Asian communities. In order to steer clear of appropriating a culture that is not your own, even though you may *think* you have access to it, first, examine yourself. Think about how your place in community affects you and others.

*For example, my cousin may be afro-latinx, but am I? Do I benefit from colorism in my community? Do I have any special privileges in comparison to my family or community, or other communities?*

Questions like these are important when it comes to relations between separate groups of POC.

## 3. Showing resentment towards the Black Lives Matter movement and pro-Black progress

"Why don't *our* lives matter?"

They do. No one who is Black and is for the progress of marginalized people ever said other lives don't matter.

Within our community, we've called attention to what our issues are, what we're going through, and the fact that our community is dying. Other communities of color should do the same: highlighting their issues, getting organized, and voicing their demands. And if they've done this already, keep fighting.

Showing resentment to one group who is suffering is counterproductive and places the blame for oppression on that group rather than participating in allywhip and building coalitions.

#### 4. Falling victim to colorism against darker folks

To clarify, I am not referring to those who are oppressed by colorism within their communities. I am talking to those in non-Black communities of color who project their colorist ideals onto others who have darker complexions, because they resemble some characteristics of Blackness and/or invoke imagery of poverty. (Working-class people in many cultures were said to have darker skin because they worked manual labor outside, while “high-class” folks stayed indoors, trying to obtain porcelain skin.)

Purposefully dating lighter-skinned folks, saying derogatory comments about darker-skinned POC, or really doing anything that assumes lighter-skinned folks are more valuable projects an anti-Black attitude.

#### 5. Trying to strip away Black people’s complex identities.

“You’re not \_\_\_\_\_; you’re \_\_\_\_\_.”

There are so many ways to be Black. You can be Black and speak Spanish, Japanese, French, or Jamaican Patois. You can come from Puerto Rico, Trinidad, or Iran. We Black folks exist in so many different ways and have had so many experiences, and all these experiences are Black.

Those who try to fit us into a box and say we’re either A or B are stripping us of important identities. This stripping of identities constitutes acts of anti-Black violence. Non-Black POC need to let other POC (Afro-somethings especially) live their multi-dimensional and multicultural lives without critiquing their Blackness or their other ethnicities.

As a non-Black POC, you also have no say on what goes on in Black spaces, so staying in your lane would be best for everyone.

#### 6. Engaging in microaggressions and stereotyping

It’s not only white people who perpetrate microaggressions—people of color can be guilty as well.

Microaggressions directed towards Black folks look like saying, “You’re pretty for a *negra*,” calling someone “chocolate,” touching someone’s hair or body parts without permission (which is assault, really), and many other acts. They may not be done with malintent, but when the person on the receiving end is bothered or offended, your “benevolent” intention is not relevant.

It’s important to be aware of your words and actions.

## 7. Saying the N-word

Yup, we’re gonna hold you accountable like we would with white people.

If your partner, friend, stepparent, old neighbor’s dog’s sister’s owner’s brother-in-law is Black but you are not Black, you cannot say it.

If you are darker than your friend who is of African descent but you are not Black, you cannot say it.

**If you are using it with an “A” at the end, but you are not Black, you cannot say it.**

I understand regionally, culturally, and community-wise, these points are loose or strict, but that is up to THAT particular community. If you are unsure of which community you’re a part of, your best bet is to just not say it at all. After all, why would you want to use an oppressive word that has put down an entire group of people just so you can use it in a joke or sing-along to a rap song?

There are literally thousands of words you can use in your daily life. Maybe you should think about why this word is your first choice. And while you think of this, think about your placement in this society and how it benefits you in ways that it doesn’t benefit the ones the N-word truly affects.

Honestly, not every Black person uses the N-word in the first place, but we have the choice to use it or not. Non-Black POC do not. It is not as offensive to the same degree as when white people use the word, because there is a power structure dynamic in place, but when a non-Black person of color (NBPOC) uses it

freely, they are saying they agree with this power structure that oppresses Black folks, or that Black folks' place in this structure is funny to them.

**Although the Black community can be up for critique, since we're not perfect, anti-Black rhetoric will not be tolerated or productive in the liberation of marginalized people.**

Non-Black communities of color need to realize that their actions can be just as harmful as actions committed through blatantly white supremacist motives. As such, they will be held responsible for such actions. Joining together as allies, along with respecting each other's spaces, is more important now than ever. We cannot do that if we do not create and enforce boundaries within our communities.