A Look Through the Cyber Eye: An Analysis of Racism on Social Media Platforms
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Introduction
Racism is nothing other than the belief that all members of each race possess characteristics particular to that specific race, distinguishing those races as inferior or superior to others. Basically, racism is a form of stereotyping. Influencing this particular issue is Social Media. Social Media is worldwide and no longer limited to a particular class; that being said, people lean to social media often to gain new knowledge and information. Let’s look at what happens when this “site” for knowledge is being abused to bring down a race.

Research Question
How does Social Media Contribute to the issue of Racism?

Materials & Methods

Materials
• To begin our research, we were able to seek aid from in class sessions with Professor Pastrana and Professor Madrazo.
• We found general data and understandings from the textbook ‘Sociology In A Changing World’ by William Kornblum.
• Major research was conducted using databases, such as Academic Search Complete (EBSCO), Sociological Abstracts and SocINDEX.
• Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and other social media sites were also examined.

Method

Field Experiment
We chose this method because we needed to see people in their natural setting because who will admit to being racist. The only way to look at racism on social media is from an interactionist view point. Thus we needed to reflect on how social structures are produced in the sequence of human interaction, in this case cyber interaction.

Findings

• “… in many societies, as the ironic song from the musical South Pacific goes, … you’ve got to be taught to be afraid of people whose eyes are differently made or people whose skin is a different shade, you’ve got to be carefully taught” [1]
• It was said, “The public discussion that does occur is often limited to the comment stream, where the ways of discussing race may perpetuate narrow views, reinforce stereotypes, or indicate expressions of racism are acceptable.” [2]
• The emphasis on stereotypes changed and became dominated by images of violence and power. Blacks were now portrayed as violent and uncontrolled beasts that needed to be contained. These changes occurred not because of “black behavior” (as if such a meaningless and nebulous category could even be identified) [3]

Conclusions
Racism is a “trend” on social media; despite our best interests, we may even be contributing to it ourselves. It seems that “ronic” racism is all the rave on social media platforms. People tend to believe words do not offend people even if it’s joking around. We use not only words but pictures, whether it be of another or of ourselves that gives our or another’s race a bad public image.

References

[3] Ibid., 295.
[7] See Handout