

WOK(E)ISM GLOSSARY

ALLYSHIP: Supporting and advocating for marginalized communities by using one's privilege to challenge systemic injustices.

BAME = Black Asian and Minority Ethnic

BoPo = Body Positivity : A movement that celebrates the human body in all of its forms and rejects the idea that everyone should strive to conform to society's narrow ideals.

BLM = Black Lives Matter: A movement that rose after a disproportionate number of black people were killed by American police officers. The aim of Black Lives Matter is anti-racism: a rejection of overt, covert and systemic discrimination against black people. Importantly, the phrase does not mean that only black lives matter. It means that black lives deserve the same protection as everyone else's.

BROPRIATE: This is when a man takes a woman's idea and soaks up all the glory from it.

CALL OUT: To draw critical attention to someone's unacceptable actions or behaviour.

CANCEL CULTURE: A way of behaving in a society or group, especially on social media, in which it is common to completely reject and stop supporting someone because they have said or done something that offends you.

CENSORSHIP: The action of preventing part or the whole of a book, film, work of art, document, or other kind of communication from being seen or made available to the public, because it is considered to be offensive or harmful, or because it contains information that someone wishes to keep secret, often for political reasons.

CISGENDER: If your gender identity matches the body you were born with.

CLICKTIVISM: Basically, the bare minimum that anyone can do to help a cause. It's a name on a petition that isn't backed up with anything more substantive. It's a mindless "like" click on Twitter. Clicktivism is less about actually helping the oppressed and more about signalling to the rest of the world that you don't want to be associated with the oppressors.

COLORISM: Discrimination or prejudice based on skin color, often within the same racial or ethnic group.

CONSCIOUS CAPITALISM: The idea that the power you wield as a consumer can be used for either good or bad.

CRITICAL RACE THEORY: An academic framework examining the intersections of race, power, and systemic racism in society.

CULTURAL ACTIVISM: Promoting social and political change through artistic expression, cultural practices, and community engagement.

CULTURAL APPROPRIATION : Adopting elements of another culture without understanding or respecting its historical and social context.

DEAD NAME: This is the practice of calling a transgender person by their birth name, which they usually change upon transitioning. By using their old name, you are disregarding their gender identity and implying that their identity at birth (thus, sex) is their real identity.

ENTITLEMENT: The belief that one is inherently deserving of privileges or special treatment.

EQUITY: This word is commonly understood to mean fairness or justice, but it is now used by activists to mean something much more specific: equality of outcomes between different racial groups. When you hear activists demand “equity,” what they’re actually saying is that the basic American value of equality of opportunity — that the rules should apply equally to everyone, regardless of race — is racist, because equality of opportunity doesn’t always produce equality of results. The solution is “equity,” or attempting to achieve equality of results through discrimination. An example of “equity” is the adoption by elite universities of quotas that deny admission to highly-qualified Asian students in order to reduce the proportion of Asians in the student body, regardless of academic merit.

FAST FASHION: The new breed of clothing retailers that turn out incredibly cheap clothes at an equally-incredible fast rate.

FLEXITARIANISM: A halfway house between eating meat every day and being vegetarian, in that you still eat meat, just not all of the time.

FREE SPEECH: The right to express your opinions publicly.

GASLIGHT: It happens when someone in a position of power makes a baldfaced lie and barrages you into thinking it’s true, even when it so obviously isn’t, somehow creating an alternative reality in which they’re right.

GENDER BINARY: The idea that gender exists as a binary of either male or female. It’s a restrictive view that excludes people whose gender identity do not conform to strict categories of male or female.

GREENWASHING: This is when a company goes out of its way to convince you that it's more environmentally friendly than it really is.

HETERONORMATIVITY: This is the idea that heterosexuality is the norm, and that people naturally fall under heterosexual male/female roles.

IDENTITY POLITICS: Recognition of how individual and group identities influence power dynamics and social issues.

INCLUSIVITY: The fact of including all types of people, things or ideas and treating them all fairly and equally.

INDIGENOUS PEOPLE: A sensitive term to refer to the distinct ethnic groups who are the original settlers of a specific land or region.

INTERNALIZED MISOGINNY: Remember when #MeToo took off, and a few women were, like, "Isn't it a woman's place to be groped at the office?" These people might have been exhibiting internalised sexism: a type of Stockholm syndrome, in which they've grown so accustomed to being treated badly that they no longer view it as problematic.

INTERSECTINALITY: The recognition of how various forms of oppression (for example, race, gender, class) intersect and compound each other. For example, poor women with disabilities face even more oppression than their able-bodied peers of the same economic class, and treating their struggle in the same way disenfranchises them.

LOW WASTE: It is lifestyle movement focused on minimizing the amount of trash you produce in order to help the environment. It's responsible waste management with environment activism in mind. It's also known as zero waste.

MANSPLAINING: It is when a man, brimming with self-confidence, describes a basic concept to a woman who already understands it, because she is a woman with a simple woman's brain.

MARGINALIZATION: It happens when the ruling class or group treats minorities as insignificant or inferior, often by disenfranchising them of their rights.

MICRO-AGGRESSION: Subtle, often unintentional, acts or comments that demean or marginalize individuals based on their identity.

NON BINARY: This means that your gender identity does not conform to the gender binary. It's an umbrella term, and under it are people who believe that they're more than one gender, have a fluid gender, or have no experience of gender at all and think that they don't even belong to the gender spectrum.

PERFORMATIVE ACTIVISM: This is the act of making a show of your activism. While there's nothing wrong with being performative in itself, it becomes wrong when your activism is limited to that.

QUEERBAITING: The practice of shows and movies teasing same-sex relationships without following through with it.

RACE-BASED SILENCING : Telling a white person they don't have the right to speak because they're an oppressor.

SAFE SPACE: A supportive environment that fosters open dialogue, respect, and emotional safety for marginalized individuals.

SLUT SHAMING: The practice of shaming a woman for engaging in sexual intercourse. This harkens back to the patriarchal notion that women are more valuable if they remain virgins. This is society's way of repressing a woman for using her sexual agency.

SOCIAL CONSTRUCT: A concept or idea created and maintained by society that shapes perceptions and norms.

SOCIAL JUSTICE: The pursuit of fairness and equity in society, addressing systemic injustices and advocating for marginalized groups.

SYSTEMIC OPPRESSION: This refers to the ways a dominant culture is able to institutionalize the marginalization and discrimination of minority groups or cultures by embedding these unjust values into the political, social, and educational systems.

TOKENISM: Superficial inclusion of individuals from marginalized groups to give the appearance of diversity.

TOXIC MASCULINITY: Just as internalised misogyny causes many women to believe that they have to behave a certain way – even when it is to their detriment – toxic masculinity makes men feel obliged to present a tough, stoic exterior to the world, regardless of the emotional anguish they're going through. It is when masculinity is forced upon men, and is treated as the standard to which all men should aspire.

VIRTUE-SIGNALING: Brands use pro-LGBT, pro-BLM imagery to appear inclusive. But this marginalizes half of their potential user base.

WHITE-FRAGILITY: Defensive reactions and resistance from white individuals when confronted with discussions about race or racism.

WHITEWASHING: This is the practice of making nonwhite fictional characters or historical figures white, thus “whitewashing” them. In some cases, they do so by getting white actors to play as them while still acknowledging the character itself as nonwhite. This often leads to very racist portrayals of the character by way of blackface (in which actors put on makeup to give themselves black skin and exaggerated African features) or yellowface (in which actors use makeup and prosthetics to give themselves stereotypical Asian features). Some cases go the other way around completely erase the nonwhite identity of the character altogether.

WOKEWASHING: When a company adopts (or pretends to adopt) progressive values in order to promote their brand or product.

WHITE FEMINISM: Feminism that refuses to be intersectional and only caters to empower women with privilege. It is not a blanket term for feminists who happen to be white. Instead, it’s a way to call out people who promote feminism but stay mum on issues that affect women who have less privilege.

Sources:

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