

Malik Lee

Dr. Sutton

BUF 4700

Colorism is a type of discrimination or prejudice based on a person's skin color or tone, usually within the same racial or ethnic group. This refers to the belief that people with lighter skin are better than people with darker skin. This prejudice can manifest in many ways, including social, economic, and political disadvantages against people with darker skin. Colorism can be identified within the media with the use of whitewashing. This happens when an individual who was initially portrayed to have deeper skin tones gets assigned to actors who are lighter or pale in complexion. entertainers who are African American are frequently substituted for lighter-skinned performers in the film business, preventing prospects for authentic depiction. Colorism can be seen on television with the use of, films even children's cartoons, and cosmetic commercials, as mentioned by Nikki Khanna brands such as Elizabeth Arden used phrases promoting colorism like "Turn down the dark, turn up the bright" to display the discrimination towards darker skin tone making lighter skin the most acceptable and most beautiful skin. Pointed out by Catherine Knight Steele from Colorado children's television shows such as The Proud Family created by Disney features a light-skin mother and daughter displaying intelligence while the father character who has darker skin is portrayed as having less intelligence viewed as the joke of the show. In the beauty industry colorism can not only be seen from commercials as mentioned previously but through products as well. The limited range of foundation colors forced brands to feature advertisements displaying only fair skin models allowing those who favor dark tones to feel less desirable or accepted in society but the assistance from other cosmetic brands who noticed the issue created a wider range of products to satisfy everyone regardless of their skin tone. In today's times, the industry is showcasing more diversity and inclusivity through products and marketing along with allowing men to express their interest in the beauty industry. From my perspective I feel society is continuing colorism through the use of social media, it is an

easy way to influence others to spread hate even though this wrong is trying to be corrected. Seeing colorism from advertisements as a child I didn't pay attention to the actual message that was being pushed before reading Nikki Khanna. Assistants from the reading I began to think about the form of colorism in society for instance in television, colorism is one of the many issues society is trying to fix slowly.