

Some examples of systemic racism

The Bethlehem Gadfly Jacob Blake August 31, 2020

 *Latest in a series of posts responding to the Jacob Blake shooting* 

Gadfly has lived all his working life in a world of words.

Recently new words relevant to our in-process national reckoning with race have entered his world.

defunding the police

systemic racism

Like many new words and maybe like many of you, Gadfly has not always felt comfortable with these new words.

You've seen Gadfly whine on these pages two or three times about the way Chair Colon missed the opportunity to alleviate some confusion and give "defunding the police" a precise definition at the top of the August 11 Public Safety Committee meeting.

Gadfly's sense is that "systemic racism" lives also in a state of imprecision.

Gadfly had been looking for a succinct list of examples of what people mean when they use the term "systemic racism," and he tips his hat to Greg Zahm for the following link.

7 Ways We Know Systemic Racism Is Real

Ben and Jerry (Ha! Gadfly loves it!) say systemic racism is "less about violence or burning crosses than it is about everyday decisions made by people who may not even think of themselves as racist. As sociologist Eduardo Bonilla-Silva has said, "The main problem nowadays is not the folks with the hoods, but the folks dressed in suits."

See if the short discussions of wealth, employment, education, criminal justice, housing, surveillance, and healthcare will help give you a more concrete idea of what people mean when they say systemic racism and see it as a problem.

The reality of “systemic racism” is certainly controversial, certainly questioned, so Gadfly will try to give you a pro and con reference in his next post to further help our understanding of both positions.