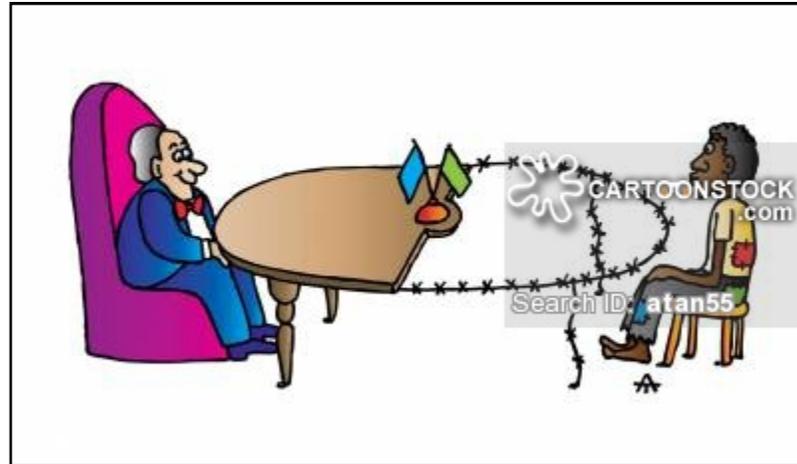


Nicholas Housel

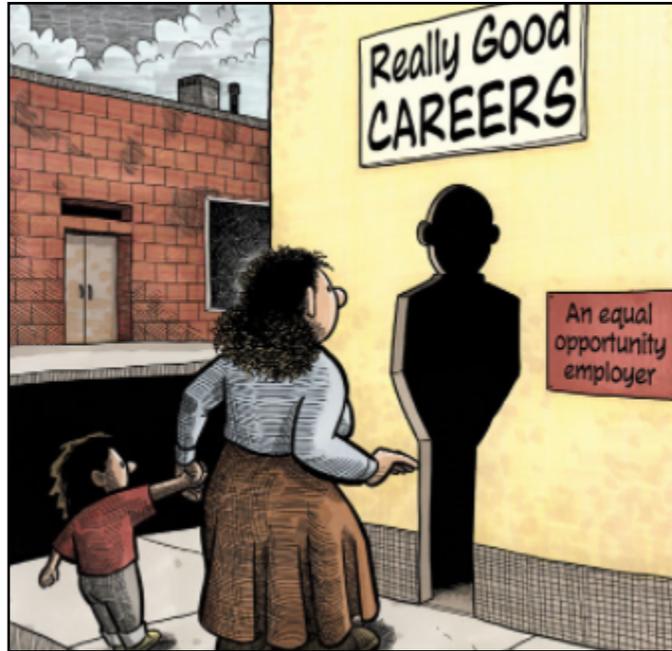
Discrimination in the American Workplace

From examining modern political cartoons, discrimination in the workplace can be portrayed in a way, that anyone can perceive the true injustices that minorities have endured. When interpreting political cartoons, people make their own unique observations from previous life experiences and preconceptions. The modern workplace is dominated by white males who control the recruitment process in the business industry. This leads to racial prejudices making it harder for minorities to get jobs, as they prefer to keep the jobs for their of kin. Since the freedom of slaves after the Emancipation Proclamation, people of color have endured several hardships as they have tried to get equal rights in the workplace. The Emancipation Proclamation was one of America's first steps towards prohibiting discrimination in America. The Emancipation Proclamation granted freedom to the slaves in the Confederate States if the States did not return to the Union by January 1, 1863. Another major step towards ending discrimination in America was the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which outlawed any discrimination of color, sex, race, religion, or nationality. However, even though America has gotten closer to ending discrimination, people of color still face unjust biases, especially in the workplace. This is caused by societies racism, that discriminatorily prevents blacks from getting jobs. In present day America, equality and human rights are preached by many Americans, but discrimination still exists, especially in the workplace. Racial discrimination in the workplace drastically impacts America. These negative impacts of discrimination in the workplace impact our modern society and victimizes blacks, as they suffer from harsh biases that prevent them from being hired.



Source: Alexi Talimonov, “Race Discrimination” 2011.

One of the more modern and recent images of racial discrimination in the workplace is Alexi Talimonov’s 2011 political cartoon, “Race Discrimination,” which displays a black man and a white man sitting together at a vastly different table. This political cartoon accurately portrays the gap between white and black business men. As this image features a white businessman sitting on the luxurious side of the table, and a black man sitting on a barbed wire side of the table. This displays how blacks are trapped in the workplace with little luxuries, and how whites are more respected in the workplace with greater luxuries. This portrays a unique perspective on how black people lack equal treatment in the workplace. In modern America businesses, like the one above in the image, treat white employees with higher respect than black employees. Hence the reason, this image portrays that blacks are restricted and lack equal treatment in the workplace because of discrimination. Therefore, The goal of this image is to show how blacks feel oppressed in the workplace as they are treated worse than their white counterparts.



Source: Barry Deutsch, “Really Good Careers,” 2012.

Likewise, the cartoon “Really Good Careers” displays a black women being prevented from obtaining a good career, in this white male dominated society. Women, specifically black women feel similar oppression to the one in this cartoon, as they struggle from racial biases when they try to apply for a job. This political cartoon is very ironic as there is a sign that says, “An equal opportunity employer.” This is ironic, as only males can fit in through the hole. Proving, that in order to be successful in our society, with a good career, you have to be a male, specifically a white male. This accurately describes our modern society as women face biases when being hired for jobs. It’s even worse for colored women as not only do they get denied jobs for their sex, but also for their race. In general, black men and women both struggle when applying for jobs, as they are associated with racial biases. Likewise, in the cartoon black women are the victims of these “Equally Opportunistic Employers” as they struggle to get hired because of racial biases. In a Bureau of Labor statistic from MSNBC, the unemployment rate for blacks is

two times higher than that of whites. This unbalanced unemployment ratio negatively reflects our society by proving that racial discrimination happens in the workplace and is caused by racist employers.



Source: Goddard Clive, “You don't have to be racist” 1999.

At first sight, the “You don't have to be racist” political cartoon seems to depict an average metropolitan police force. However, when you read the sign on the right more closely, it bashes at the police stations for hiring racists and not caring if the public noticed. The sign is clearly referencing to police brutality against blacks. This cartoon displays how it is normal in our society for racist people to be hired for such important jobs like being a police officer. Racism in the police force or any workplace negatively impacts our society. The sign shows how employers don't care if they hire racists even though having a racist police officer can put innocents in danger. The goal of this cartoon, is to show how racism is a contagious disease that has impacted our nations society, by allowing racial discrimination in the workplace. This shows how racism in the workplace not only affects the company as a whole, but it can also endanger outside civilians as they can suffer from the employees racial biases when they try to get hired. If

you have a racist employer at a police station, then blacks will rarely get hired as they would never overcome the racial prejudices. In businesses all across America racial biases unjustly prevent blacks from being hired.



Source: Auneeb Siddiqi, “Preferential Treatment” 2009.

The artist Auneeb Siddiqi, displays the idea of special treatment in workplace with his cartoon, “Preferential Treatment.” This political cartoon illustrates a common misconception among white business men, that blacks receive preferential treatment in the workplace because they are minorities. This is in fact utterly false, as if anything, blacks lack any kind of special treatment in the workplace. This image depicts how white men are, in fact, the real people who receive preferential treatment in the workplace because of their skin, as they are respected more than blacks. Also, in the background of the image other white business men are seen with shocked expressions on their faces, as they too, for the first time realize that they do receive more preferential treatment than blacks. Racial discrimination in the workplace is hardly even noticed by white men as they are never the victims. Hence the reason, they don't even realize the

preferential treatment they have compared to that of blacks.



Source: Joseph Rank, “Color Blind Company” 2001.

Joseph Ranks “Color Blind Company” is one of the most powerful racial discrimination cartoons, that perfectly sums up the racial discrimination black people face in the workplace. This cartoon depicts a black man struggling to get a job at a company because of his race. In this image, the employer tells the black man, “We’re a color blind company here, Johnson. To us you are black and invisible.” This racist comment perfectly sums up modern racism in the workplace, by displaying what companies really believe, of black people. In saying that blacks are “black and invisible”, the artist is illustrating how employers view blacks as if they are not even there. Thus, employer's believe that blacks are useless and will not serve a purpose in the company. This racial discrimination occurs in almost every business around the world. In addition, since

the company is colorblind, not only will they be racist towards blacks, but they also view blacks as if they are invisible or not even there. Unfortunately, this reflects our society as several business employers believe that blacks are inferior in workplace compared to that of a white workplace. Also, in this image the artist depicts the lavish lifestyle white businessmen have, in the extreme details of the employer's office. This specifically reflects how a white business man feels superior to a black employee. Hence, black people struggle more in the workplace as racism causes the idea that blacks are not as useful as whites.

In present day America, social injustices like racial discrimination in the workplace affect our society as a whole. By victimizing blacks as inferior business workers, our modern society has come to believe them as useless. Racial biases in the workplace unfortunately prevent blacks from getting jobs. Similarly, during the Era of Reconstruction after the civil war, Southern states passed the Black Codes. Southern racism and hatred to the newly freed slaves allowed these laws to be passed in the South. The Black codes restricted newly freed slaves from being truly free and oppressed them into labor bonds and low wage pay. The Black Codes prevented newly freed slaves from getting jobs, comparably, to how racism in the modern workplace prevents blacks from getting hired. Political cartoons can be used in our modern day America to portray the impacts and outcomes of discrimination in the workplace. Racial biases revolving around black work ethics, make blacks victims as they prevent them from acquiring jobs. These artist who depict the racist biases of discrimination in the workplace, enlighten people to realize the negative outcomes of racism in the workplace.