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Sociology 105

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### Essay Brief Five: Matrix of Domination

The matrix of domination is a concept observed in sociology that models oppression seen within the world through several levels of social classifications. This oppression seen in society is a direct result of the human mindset on race, gender, and class. In “Matrix of Domination” by Patricia Hill Collins, the idea that oppression in society creates privileged groups of individuals is similarly seen through Michael Omi and Howard Winants observation of race as a social concept in, “Racial Formations.”

In “Racial Formations” by Omi and Winant, these authors analyze the role race plays in the world today, as well as the history of race. While race has been observed as a biological factor, it has been rebutted that race is rather a social factor of the world humans reside in. While describing race as a social factor, it is explained that the classifications and explanations of race are conveyed based upon their social correlations and the historical foundations that they are rooted in. The historical context and meaning of race then creates racial categories in society, each with their own perceived ranking. For example, in Omi and Winants writing they discuss how the white human race in the United States is viewed as a pure racial category. This pure connotation then gives people of that race a privilege in society.

This privilege seen in society due to race significantly relates to the concept of privilege observed from oppression in “Matrix of Domination” by Patricia Hill Collins. Collins opens up this section of her analysis by discussing how models of oppression are deeply planted in human

human tendency to define a person as either white or black, which then leads to the thought that various races must be ranked. Through this ranking, one race is always given a privilege and one is always criticized unfairly. This privilege that results from oppression in society has numerous effects on multiple aspects of humanity, such as within the workplace and through the treatment of individuals.

The notion of privilege in society is an idea that unifies the concepts of race and the matrix of domination. Both race and the oppression within the world from race, gender, and class lead to the formation of groups with various perceptions. These perceptions that individuals make about certain groups causes one group to benefit and one to suffer, leading to an advantage within our nation.