

BIPOC Vs POC

The term POC, or People of Color, goes as far back as 1796 and started as a way to talk about non-white communities collectively — a way to push back against labels that were outdated, harmful, or just didn't reflect who people really were. It helped folks name shared experiences with racism without having to list every group individually. But over time, people realized that "POC" sometimes smoothed over important differences, especially the very specific histories carried by Black and Indigenous communities. That's where BIPOC comes in.

When we use the term BIPOC, we're talking about Black, Indigenous, and People of Color — but not in a stiff, academic way. We are talking about naming our communities with intention.

Instead of tossing everyone into one big "people of color" bucket, BIPOC helps us slow down and acknowledge that different groups carry different histories, different struggles, and different strengths.

The term BIPOC started gaining real traction in the late 2010s and especially around 2020 during the COVID pandemic. People were searching

for language that didn't blur out the specific experiences of Black and Indigenous folks. Because let's be honest: the legacies of slavery, genocide, land theft, and systemic exclusion aren't interchangeable. They're deep, they're painful, and they're foundational to understanding how racism works in this country. So BIPOC emerged as a way to name those truths directly while still recognizing the broader family of people of color.

Today, you'll hear BIPOC used in schools, workplaces, community programs, and conversations about equity. It's become a way to talk about race with more clarity and less shortcutting. Instead of pretending everyone's experience with racism looks the same, the term encourages us to pay attention — to the differences, the overlaps, and the ways our communities show up for each other. It's a reminder that solidarity doesn't require sameness; it requires honesty.

And why does all this matter? It matters because naming things clearly helps us see them clearly. When we call out Black and Indigenous people directly, we bring vis-



by Tim Lattimore

ibility to communities whose stories often get pushed aside or oversimplified. We make space for nuance. We make space for truth. And we push institutions like schools, nonprofits, workplaces, or whoever to design policies and programs that actually fit the people they're meant to serve, instead of relying on one-size-fits-all assumptions.

At the end of the day, BIPOC isn't just an acronym or another way to label us or lump us into a group. It is actually a reminder to speak with care, honor history, and build equity in a way that's intentional, not generic. It's a way of saying: we see you, we name you, and we're committed to doing this work with clarity and respect.



Clockwise from top left: Ice Cream Social; Off The Hook's Garden Party; Ice Cream Social; SAGE Picnic; Off The Hook's Garden Party; Ice Cream Social; Unchained Book Club; SAGE Picnic.

Take care of yourselves and BE KIND to one another.