



Colour Connotations

European colonialists held negative views of Africa, referring to it as the “dark continent”. This could have been because of the skin color of the people, the dark, unexplored jungle areas, or the customs that seemed barbaric, or the lack of Christianity.

Mainstream white America has a long history of giving blackness evil, unhealthy, hostile and morbid representations. Consider some of these words: black market; blacklist; black eye; black magic; black death; black sheep; blackmail; black mark.

These negative ways of symbolizing blackness are in daily use. Any person, including non-white people, using these symbols, is consciously or unconsciously referring to the color black in a way that suggests inferiority. This negative reinforcement should be of concern to people, particularly when the symbol white has been historically free of negative representations.

Consider some new black symbols, with positive connotations.

Adapted from: <http://www.stlamerican.com/news/editorials/why-is-black-always-a-bad-word>
<http://www.bookrags.com/biography/chinua-achebe>
<http://www.gradesaver.com/author/chinua-achebe>
<http://www.kirjasto.sci.fi/achebe.htm>
<http://www.sparknotes.com/lit/things/themes.html>