Whiteness in the Classroom

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Race and Pedagogy Working Group

Funded by:
INTRODUCTIONS

1. Name
2. Pronouns, if you care to share them
3. University affiliations, if you care to share them
4. What brings you to this workshop?
OBJECTIVES

1. Establish a *working* definition of anti-racism and anti-racist education

2. Develop language to be able to discuss
   a. how white supremacy has impacted one’s life and role as an educator
   b. how it is harmful to BIPOCs*

3. Identify ways in which whiteness manifests in higher education

*Black, Indigenous, and People of Color
GROUP NORMS

1. **Be fully present** - listen intently in order to fully understand different points of view.

2. **What is offered in our community is by invitation, not demand** - share what you feel motivated to share, and know that you do it with our support; invite others to speak before speaking again.

3. **Speak your truth in ways that respect other people’s truth** - our views of reality may differ, but speaking our truth does not mean interpreting, correcting, or debating what others say.

4. **Observe deep confidentiality** - what is shared here stays here; what is learned here leaves here.
Things BIPOCs Will Not Do in This Workshop

1. Will not be responsible for the emotional and cognitive labor of checking white privilege or correcting problematic statements. Everyone will share the responsibility of keeping our groups and peers accountable in this workshop.

2. Will not be asked to answer any direct questions; BIPOCs may choose to answer questions that are directed towards the whole group or workshop, but should not be targeted as the source for knowledge and experience.
OVERVIEW

1. White Supremacy and Anti-Racism
2. Examples in Higher Education
3. Me and White Supremacy
4. Getting Started: The Circle Way
5. Next Steps
WHITE SUPREMACY

White supremacy is a racist belief system characterized by one or more of the following tenets:

1) White people are superior to other races
2) White people should live by themselves in a whites-only society
3) White people should exercise dominance over other races, especially where they may co-exist.

White supremacy is more than simple racism or bigotry.

ADL.org
The Pyramid of White Supremacy

Mass murder
Violence
Calls for violence
Discrimination
Veiled racism
Minimisation
Indifference

Genocide
Lynching, hate crimes, police brutality
KKK, Neo-Nazis, burning crosses
Racial profiling, mass incarceration, racial slurs, fear of POC, anti-immigration policies
Victim blaming, racist jokes, Euro-centric curriculum, tokenism, cultural appropriation, racist icons
White saviour complex, “not all white people”, not believing POC experiences, denial of white privilege, “post-racism”, intentions > impact
“There are two sides to every story”, apolitical beliefs, avoiding confrontation, “politics don’t affect me”

What you don’t know you don’t know

the goal is to move the line so “what you don’t know you don’t know” decreases

credit: Julica Hermann Fuentes
ANTI-RACISM

What does it mean to be anti-racist?
What does it mean to be an anti-racist educator?
WHITE SUPREMACY/ANTI-RACISM IN EDUCATION

Group 1 (Helen): Teacher Education Needs to Acknowledge 'Whiteness' (Hui-ling Malone)

Group 2: Sidelines and Separate Spaces (Deanna M. Blackwell) - p. 478-481

Group 3: Sidelines and Separate Spaces (Deanna M. Blackwell) - p. 484-488

Group 4 (Eilin): Unsettling the Academy (Anne Wagner) - p. 270-272

Group 5 (Elizabeth): “It’s Pretty Much White (Carlin Borsheim-Black) - p. 424-426

How does white supremacy manifest in these educational situations?

What anti-racist practices are, or could be, utilized in these instances?
“I sometimes visualize the ongoing cycle of racism as a moving walkway at the airport. Active racist behavior is equivalent to walking fast on the conveyor belt... Passive racist behavior is equivalent to standing still on the walkway. No overt effort is being made, but the conveyor belt moves the bystanders along to the same destination as those who are actively walking. Some of the bystanders may feel the motion of the conveyor belt, see the active racists ahead of them, and choose to turn around... But unless they are walking actively in the opposite direction at a speed faster than the conveyor belt--unless they are actively anti-racist--they will find themselves carried along with the others.”

(Beverly Tatum, *Why are all the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria? And Other Conversations About Race*, 12)
“The system of white supremacy was not created by anyone who is alive today. But it is maintained and upheld by everyone holding white privilege today—whether or not you agree with it. It is my desire that this workbook will help you to question, challenge and dismantle this system that has harmed and killed so many BIPOC.” (8)
Me & White Supremacy

- Guide people with white privilege* to discover, examine, unpack and dismantle their inner white supremacy and their internalised racism
- Help people with white privilege identify and examine their internalised racism, understand how white supremacy manifests on a personal level
- Facilitate personal and collective change to dismantle the oppressive system of white supremacy

*anyone under the system of white supremacy who benefits from having lighter skin than visibly Brown, Black, or Indigenous folks (15)
1. Keep a journal
2. Go at your pace
3. Don’t generalize
4. Work sequentially
5. Work alone or with a group
WE BEGIN THE WORK

1. Read Week 1 overview + Day 1 text (p.31-38) - 5 min

2. Complete prompts as-is, then again in a pedagogical context (p.39) - 10 min
   a. E.g., in what ways do you hold white privilege in the classroom as an educator? What negative classroom experiences has your white privilege protected you from throughout your life?
   b. Potential modifications for BIPOCs
WE BEGIN THE WORK:
Potential modifications for BIPOCs

1. Thinking about white supremacy as a system (in particular, with regards to education and this university)

2. Modifying prompts as needed

3. Examples of how BIPOC may be implicated in white supremacy:
   a. Names
   b. Proximity to or knowledge of dominant culture
   c. Dialect or manner of speaking
   d. Dress
WE BEGIN THE WORK

1. Read Week 1 overview + Day 1 text (p.31-38) - 5 min

2. Complete prompts as-is, then again in a pedagogical context (p.39) - 10 min
   a. E.g., in what ways do you hold white privilege in the classroom as an educator? What negative classroom experiences has your white privilege protected you from throughout your life?
   b. Potential modifications for BIPOCs

3. Reflect on Day 1 using The Circle Way - 20 min
**NEXT MEETING**

- Come together as often as you wish until next session
- Complete up to Day 15 by Wed., Feb. 26
  - 12p-2p in Wieboldt 310 D/E
  - Lunch provided
- Continue to reflect on prompts as-is, then again in relation to your position in the classroom
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<tr>
<th>GROUP 1 (Tien-Tien)</th>
<th>GROUP 2 (Helen)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emily T.</td>
<td>Danielle W.</td>
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<td>David O.</td>
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<td>Henry B.</td>
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<td>Paula M.</td>
<td>Kirsten C.</td>
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<td>Elizabeth E.</td>
<td>Sawyer F.</td>
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<th>GROUP 3 (Elizabeth S.)</th>
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<td>Sasha C-H</td>
<td>Chloe B.</td>
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<td>Virginia W.</td>
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<td>Mendel K.</td>
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<td>Marielle H.</td>
<td>Benjamin</td>
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<td>Olivia B.</td>
<td>Ashley R.</td>
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"The opposite of racist isn't 'not racist.' It is 'anti-racist.' ... One either allows racial inequities to persevere, as a racist, or confronts racial inequities, as an anti-racist. There is no in-between safe space of 'not racist'" (p. 9).
Figure 1
Anti-Racism Teaching Continuum

Teaching “diversity” and “multiculturalism”

- Delivering information, concepts, vocabulary
- Current Racial Issues courses (intro level)

Learning skills/tools to analyze; seeing racism

- Efforts made in current Racial Issues classes, not fully realized

Application of analysis/change; organizing; dismantling/interrupting racism

- Upper level Racial Issues courses not yet developed

Anti-Racist Pedagogy and Curriculum

St. Clair & Kishimoto (2010)
Sources


Watson, A. (n.d.). “10 things every white teacher should know when talking about race.”