Anti-Racism in Social Work Practice
An Annotated Bibliography 2021
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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PURPOSE OF THE ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

The Transforming the Field Education Landscape (TFEL) project, funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada’s (SSHRC) partnership grant program, aims to better prepare the next generation of social workers in Canada by creating training and mentoring opportunities for students, developing and mobilizing innovative and promising field education practices, and improving the integration of research and practice in field education.

The purpose of this annotated bibliography is to gain a better understanding of anti-racist initiatives within social work practice, gain a better understanding on how to address racism within social work practice and understand anti-oppressive frameworks in social work practice and field education.
METHODS

The methods for this literature search on anti-racism in social work, included looking for scholarly, peer-reviewed sources utilizing the University of Calgary, University of Toronto and University of Windsor online library database. As a result, there are 86 articles found for this annotated bibliography.

Database Search, Keywords and Modifications

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https://doi.org/10.1080/13613324.2014.969225

This article explores the contemporary legitimation of institutional racism resulting from the prevailing depoliticized framework of integration, which became prominent in the 1960s and is now hegemonic in political and academic debate in Europe. Integration has helped shift the focus to the supposed cultural inadequacies of ethnically marked populations, who ought to show a willingness to pursue the modern dream; simultaneously, it has invisibilized institutional racism and made an anti-racist repertoire unavailable. This argument is illustrated through a case of white flight and school segregation in a rural area in Portugal, revealing both the enduring racism against the Roma/Gypsies – suppressed and repressed throughout the last five centuries in Europe – and its depoliticization within the normal working of institutions. It draws on qualitative research with representatives from public bodies and mediating agents (e.g. teachers and social workers), as well as on analysis of the official reports by the Portuguese state and European institutions.


https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2016.1096408

While a focus on institutional anti-racism challenges structural formations of racialized inequality, the inattention to quotidian resistance misses the complex manner in which
racism is negotiated in everyday life. Examining ‘everyday anti-racism’ can better identify the cultural repertoires that frame how individuals deal with racism across different contexts. This paper shares findings from ethnographic research with Filipino migrants living in Sydney. Specifically, it focuses on middle-class Filipino migrants and their use of social mobility to manage routine racism. The experience of middle-class racial minorities presents distinct perspectives as their strategies do not sit comfortably with anti-racism ideals of ‘equality for all’. I advance the concept of everyday anti-racism to argue for a broader anti-racism politics that captures situated approaches to combating racism. Furthermore, I propose that the identity repair in middle-class contexts offer a chance to build antiracism praxis that cuts across traditional solidarities.


This article extends the investigation and understanding of the impact that everyday racism/microaggressions can have on the academic experience of Indigenous students by examining the racial climate of a major Canadian university to learn about the nature of anti-Indigenous racism. The data from seventeen interviews with students at McMaster University provide a deeper understanding of how Indigenous students perceive and experience racism within the university environment – including levels, impacts and coping mechanisms – and highlight the potential for racism to have a continuing impact on equality and access to education for Indigenous peoples. Subtle, modern racism is playing an active role in the daily lives of Indigenous university
students, affecting both their academic and personal success. Despite increasing levels of successful degree completion and the creation of strong support systems, Indigenous students are consistently faced with barriers, including interpersonal discrimination, frustration with the university system and feelings of isolation.


Despite the growing interest in microaggression theory (Sue et al. 2007), little research has been conducted on it through a sociological lens. In fact, the psychological research that does exist has been from the United States (Constantine 2007; Mercer et al. 2011; Ong et al. 2013; Sue et al. 2008) and Canada (Hernandez 2010; Houshmand 2014), focusing primarily on minorities. One area that remains unexplored is white observations of racism. This is especially relevant given that Sue et al. (2007) contend that it is those who are most disempowered rather than those who enjoy the privileges of power who are likely to accurately assess whether a racist act has occurred. With this view in mind, this article utilizes racial microaggression theory to investigate the observations of racism among a cohort of approximately 170 white freshman (i.e., first-year) university students in St. John’s, Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada. As this research is Canadian based, it presents an excellent opportunity to advance racial microaggression theory from an international perspective. The goal of this article then is to categorize white youths’ observations of microaggressions in order to discuss and
analyze their impact on minorities living in a highly homogeneous, white-dominated space.


https://doi.org/10.1002/jcop.22266

The current study examined whether youth perceptions of school racial messages that acknowledged the reality of racism (critical consciousness [CC] messages) or denied racism (color-blind messages) predicted youth anti-racism action through interpersonal and communal/political means. We further tested whether youths’ critical reflection of perceived inequality and anger toward social injustice—psychological aspects of CC development—mediated relations between school messages and youth actions. These questions were explored using structural equation modeling with 372 racially/ethnically diverse adolescents (Mage = 17.00; standard deviation = 1.29; female = 51.0%). Results indicated that youth perceptions of CC messages predicted their involvement in both interpersonal and communal/political anti-racism action. Youths’ anger toward social injustice mediated links between school racial messages and anti-racism action, albeit in unique ways. These findings underscore the power of schools in prompting youth anti-racism action. Implications of the importance of partnerships between schools and youth community organizing groups to stimulate youth anti-racism action were discussed.

*Anti-Racism in Social Work Practice* is an edited volume that addresses the effects of racism in social work programmes. With a primary focus on the specific experiences of black students, the central theme of the book concerns tackling the effects of racism in social work education. Drawing on their experiences as social work educators, the authors use a critical lens to explore the subtle and overt ways discrimination, oppression and privilege is played out in the learning environment. They argue that the commitment to fighting racism has been abandoned and advocates for the critical language of anti-racism.


This paper presents findings from an exploratory study with Master of Social Work (MSW) graduates in Canada to explore the extent to which their classroom and practicum learning addressed social justice and anti-oppressive practice. Thirty-five MSW graduates took part in a semi-structured online survey regarding the quality of social justice knowledge and practice skills in their field instruction and coursework. The survey also examined how graduates employ social justice in their current social work practice. The majority of the study sample reported favorable educational outcomes and embraced social justice goals in their current practice. Discourse analysis of written
comments, however, identified a disconnect between social justice theory, field education, and the overall climate of the social work program. Despite an explicit endorsement of social justice values by the program and the profession, graduates reported limited opportunities to learn anti-oppressive practice or apply social justice theories in their field education. We argue that the ‘hidden curriculum’ in social work education reflects market pressures that privilege task-oriented goals while ‘mainstreaming’ social justice rhetoric. Skills to confront oppression with transformative change are viewed as abstract goals and thus less useful than clinical practice.


Racism is manifest in the outcomes of social systems that persistently show disproportionately negative outcomes for people of color, regardless of social class or other factors. Individual bias, embedded in history and cultural norms, and rooted in institutional structure, are the three interlocking components of racial inequity that need to be understood and addressed.


Racial affinity group meetings, or caucuses, can be effective tools for human service agencies to address cultural responsiveness or shift their organizational paradigm toward antiracism. The development of such caucuses is seldom undertaken, however,
often due to concerns about resources and the difficulty of envisioning the concrete benefits. This article describes the formation, implementation, and functioning of a White antiracism caucus, facilitated by the authors, in a large social service agency. Organizational context, group development, and attempts to address institutional racism are presented. Issues of professional identity development, the reification of White privilege, and internal systems of accountability are described.


https://doi.org/10.1080/02615479.2019.1594754

With efforts to create and sustain racial diversity and inclusive practices at institutions of higher education, a corollary emphasis on proactive implementations to support students of color in these environments is essential. Informed by a commitment to social justice, there are rich opportunities for social work to take leadership in strategizing new ways of approaching and prioritizing the wellness and success of students of color. This paper serves to explore the impact of racism specific to Black students by applying the theoretical lens of Racial Battle Fatigue (RBF) to challenge social work education in confronting racialized experiences within their programs. A modified, context-specific framework is proposed that (1) defines microaggressions in social work education programs, 2) prompts critically informed dialogue to enhance how social work as a profession understands the prevalence and role of microaggressions in social work educational contexts, and (3) explores considerations
for the unique needs and challenges of Black social work students in an effort to inform strategies to most effectively recruit, retain, support and empower.


Canada prides itself on a reputation of being a welcoming and inclusive country, promoting a collective pride in upholding a multicultural mosaic wherein a rich diversity of ethnicities, cultures and religions co-exist. A priority of the Canadian federal government is the attraction and retention of skilled foreign workers into the labour market, and social workers have been targeted for this government initiative. Alluring though this ideal picture may be, the experiences of forty-four migrant social workers who undertook their social work education outside Canada and currently practice social work in Canada suggest significant barriers on the levels of policy, organizational context and socio-cultural dynamics. On the level of policy, participants navigated processes for immigration, recognition of foreign credentials, and licensure with the provincial regulatory body. On the level of organizational context, participants faced a range of challenges in securing social work employment. On the level of socio-cultural dynamics, participants detail the many interactive subtleties experienced as they sought to 'fit in' in order to connect with their new colleagues and communities. Analysis draws on the concepts of institutional and embodied cultural capital as the means though which social status is differentially available for these migrant social workers, based on the
ascribed value of their citizenship characteristics, educational preparation, and practice experience. These forms of capital facilitate mobility by enabling access to opportunities and the tools to acquire status and entry to a particular class, that of the social work practitioner in Canada.


Following a scholarly thread in political theory that looks to American literature to deepen understanding of social problems and potential solutions, this paper explores James Baldwin’s conceptualization of racial innocence and the manifestation of the “culture of Whiteness” in social work practice. The paper begins by introducing the complicated history of the social work profession and its, perhaps inadvertent, collusion with structural racism via the promotion of imperialism. Next, is a discussion of contemporary social workers’ potential socialization into the culture of Whiteness, an expression of White supremacy. Third, Baldwin’s conceptualization of innocence is introduced, followed by deliberation of how this conceptualization bolsters an understanding of harmful helping. With this deepened understanding, the paper ends by considering steps towards disruption and interruption of damaging clinical patterns. Implications for social work practice, clinical supervision, and future research are introduced.

https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2017.03.028

Racism is a “wicked” public health problem that fuels systemic health inequities between population groups in New Zealand, the United States and elsewhere. While literature has examined racism and its effects on health, the work describing how to intervene to address racism in public health is less developed. While the notion of raising awareness of racism through socio-political education is not new, given the way racism has morphed into new narratives in health institutional settings, it has become critical to support allies to make informing efforts to address racism as a fundamental cause of health inequities. In this paper, we make the case for anti-racism praxis as a tool to address inequities in public health, and focus on describing an anti-racism praxis framework to inform the training and support of allies. The limited work on anti-racism rarely articulates the unique challenges or needs of allies or targets of racism, but we seek to help fill that gap. Our anti-racism praxis for allies includes five core elements: reflexive relational praxis, structural power analysis, socio-political education, monitoring and evaluation and systems change approaches. We recognize that racism is a modifiable determinant of health and racial inequities can be eliminated with the necessary political will and a planned system change approach. Anti-racism praxis provides the tools to examine the interconnection and interdependence of cultural and institutional factors as a foundation for examining where and how to intervene to address racism.

In 1987, the Canadian Association of Schools of Social Work adopted policies and accreditation standards that reflect the profession’s commitment to address issues of race, ethnicity, and cultural diversity in its programs and curricula. Task force recommendations to emphasize antiracism in schools of social work were contested and resisted. Since then, various shifts in perspectives have emerged and adopted in social work to varying degrees. Despite efforts to advance antiracism, and more specifically anti-Black racism and anticolonialism in social work education, anti-oppression has been more palatable to mainstream social workers. To advance the profession, these perspectives must be understood and addressed.


The attitudes that social work students hold about race and poverty impact the effectiveness of their practice in the field. This study assessed color-blind racial attitudes and attitudes towards poverty of graduating BSW students (n=41) and MSW students (n=128) from three accredited social work programs. Results indicate a correlation between color-blind racial attitudes and attitudes toward poverty for BSW students, but not MSW students. BSW students had fewer color-blind racial attitudes and more favorable attitudes toward poverty than MSW students. Several predictors of their
attitudes were found: their educational status, personal experience of poverty, political ideology, and type of diversity course taken. Implications include the need to approach diversity education from an anti-oppression approach.


Addressing systems of oppression that disproportionately affect racial and ethnic minoritized groups appears to be of marginal interest in social work's professional literature. This article describes the content analysis of articles on Asian Pacific Islander (API) Americans, African Americans, Latinx or Hispanic Americans, and Native or Indigenous Americans in four major social work journals published between 2005 and 2015. (The analysis serves to update a 1992 article by Anthony McMahon and Paula Allen-Meares that examined literature between 1980 and 1989.) Of the 1,690 articles published in Child Welfare, Research on Social Work Practice, Social Service Review, and Social Work over an 11-year period, only 123 met the criteria for inclusion. Findings suggest that social work researchers are still failing to address institutional racism and are relying heavily on micro-level interventions when working with minoritized groups. Social workers need to increase efforts to dismantle institutional racism.


Anti-racism and anti-oppression frameworks of practice are being increasingly advocated for in efforts to address racism and oppression embedded in mental health
and social services, and to help reduce their impact on mental health and clinical outcomes. This literature review summarizes how these two philosophies of practice are conceptualized and the strategies used within these frameworks as they are applied to service provision toward racialized groups. The strategies identified can be grouped in seven main categories: empowerment, education, alliance building, language, alternative healing strategies, advocacy, social justice/activism, and fostering reflexivity.

Although anti-racism and anti-oppression frameworks have limitations, they may offer useful approaches to service delivery and would benefit from further study.


Abstract Structural racism—implicitly discriminatory practices and policies that have negative consequences for individuals and groups of color—is a powerful force in contemporary American society, including in our public education system. This article explores the potential for school social workers (SSWers) to address structural racism through the use of the national school social work (SSW) practice model as a tool to guide systemic, ecologically oriented intervention within schools and educational policy spaces. In this article, the authors review data on racial disparities in educational attainment, placement, opportunity, and discipline practices that have led to increased attention to structural racism in schools. They then discuss and describe the national SSW practice model and its suitability for the structural interventions in response to structural racism in schools. Finally, they provide recommendations for how SSWers can
respond effectively to this pressing social problem. These recommendations include a list of resources for addressing structural racism.


Racial attitudes can be shaped by personal attributes and social network properties. Literature on White social work students' racial attitudes remain scarce. The purposes of this study are to explore racial attitudes among social work students and identify personal and social network correlates of such attitudes. One hundred and sixty-three White social work students in a major Midwest public university were recruited via social work electronic mailing list to complete an anonymous online survey measuring personal-level characteristics (e.g., demographic information and racial attitudes as measured by the color-blind racial attitude scale) and social network composition (e.g., information regarding network diversity). Descriptive analysis and linear regression models were conducted for the study. Social work students demonstrated moderately low levels of color-blind racial attitudes. Age was positively associated with unawareness of institutional and blatant racism. Identifying as politically liberal was associated with lower unawareness of racial privilege, institutional racism, and blatant racism. Having more social network members to talk to about topics related to race and ethnicity was associated with lower unawareness of blatant racism. Being familiar with a campus antidiscrimination protest was negatively associated with unawareness of racial privilege and blatant racism. Implications for social work educators are discussed.

https://doi.org/10.1080/10437797.2018.1498419

Racism has a long history in the United States. For generations, people of color have been systematically oppressed, whereas White people have benefitted from unearned privilege. Despite major advances in civil rights, the ongoing presence and legacy of racism and White privilege result in pervasive inequities. Social work education prepares graduates to advocate for racial justice. The present study describes the historical knowledge of oppression that students (N=305) possess at the beginning of their MSW education and examines the relationship between this knowledge and the endorsement of a color-blind ideology. Students with more historical knowledge reported fewer color-blind beliefs; millennial generation students reported fewer color-blind beliefs than older students. Implications are discussed for race-conscious and competency-based social work education.


https://doi.org/10.1080/08841233.2016.1147521

Racism Project. Through shared journaling and group discussions, participants explored and interrogated experiences of racism related to doctoral education. A thematic analysis of qualitative data surfaced several themes: experiences with racism as a doctoral student, noticing the presence of White privilege, learning to teach as an anti-racist educator, and anticipating the job market. Through critical reflection, participants
identified ways that schools of social work can better support doctoral students and prepare leaders committed to promoting racial justice.


In this article, the authors introduce a new conceptual tool, intimate technology, to mobilize social work students' commitment to anti-racism. Intimate technology is marked by its emotional intensity and accessibility, and its effect of de-centering knowledge and authority. This teaching strategy integrates the modality of intimate technology via selected YouTube videos and the content of anti-racism and racism, illustrated through a lesson plan based on Hurricane Katrina. A qualitative analysis of students' responses revealed that intimate technology enabled the students to relate to a variety of peoples' responses to, and experiences of, racism, through images, personal stories, and music.


This article examines social workers’ attention to privilege, white privilege, and oppression as ideological practice. It suggests alternative methods for accounting for troubles in social relations derived from ethnomethodology. Findings: Although presented as progressive, the methods used by anti-racist social workers to account for interaction as organized by racism and privilege rely on practices for working up race and privilege isomorphic with those used by racists and white supremacists.
Applications Alternative methods to account for troubles in relations are suggested which draw on an abiding attention to every-day socially organized practices.


Social work faculty’s attitudes contribute to creating inclusive and productive classroom climates when discussing racism, sexism, and heterosexism. Little is known about faculty’s attitudes toward marginalized groups and the intersection of these attitudes with religion. This study describes social work faculty’s attitudes about people of Color, women, and lesbian and gay people, and the relationship among these attitudes, religious affiliation, and religiosity. Results indicate religiosity predicts less accepting attitudes towards lesbian and gay people for Christian faculty; religious affiliation and religiosity did not predict attitudes towards women or people of Color. Intergroup dialogue is recommended for social work faculty learning.


In today’s society, the marginalization and oppression among vulnerable communities emphasizes the need for racial, ethnic, and cultural reconciliation. Slavery, racism, and white privilege have had long-standing and negative effects in the history of the United States that continue to be perpetuated in the lives of minority populations. As a result, the need to emphasize the importance of anti-racist education that focuses on
addressing all levels of practice (micro, mezzo, and macro) and challenges structural ideologies is paramount. The pursuit and maintenance of social justice for all is the foundation of the social work profession. Therefore, students and practitioners must be equipped with the knowledge, training, and skills necessary for understanding how the historical antecedents of racism affect communities they will serve. This paper will explore the concept of racial reconciliation as a framework for addressing racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity within social work programs.


Critical race theory (CRT) has recently been imported into social work knowledge and included in the title or search term of 20 published social work studies, but little is known about how it is impacting social work practices. This study describes the experiences and perceptions of 21 diverse graduate students in a public, urban university with a nationally accredited MSW program using CRT as its theoretical foundation. Students unanimously embraced CRT as a theory for their careers, but found it confusing and extremely challenging to learn, resulting in contentious and unresolved questions about its applications in social work practices. Despite its resonance in their personal lives as well as those of their clients, these students could not describe how their CRT-infused MSW education would help them reduce racism, marginalization, and oppression or increase social, economic, and environmental justice, and many were frustrated by this gap. Recommendations to clarify, refine, and expand
CRT imported in social work practices are offered to enhance its usefulness in accomplishing goals of increasing social justice for social work client populations.


Drawing on 22 qualitative interviews with social workers in Sweden, this article analyzes how social workers conceive immigrant integration and racism and tackle racism within their institutions and the wider Swedish society. The majority of the white social workers framed integration in relation to cultural differences and denied or minimized the role of racism in structuring their services and the ethnic relations in Sweden. In contrast, social workers with immigrant backgrounds were less compromising in discussing racism and assumed it as a problem both for themselves as institutional actors and as immigrants in everyday life and institutional settings. Social institutions in Sweden have been important actors in endorsing equality and accommodating differences. However, it is of paramount importance for social justice-minded social workers to identify and unsettle those structures and discourses that enable racist and discriminatory policies and practices against those groups who are not viewed as “core” members of the Swedish society. The absence of anti-racist social work within Swedish social work is primarily related to the idea of color-blind welfare universalism that is assumed to transcend the particularity of the needs, experiences, and perspectives of different groups in Sweden. While integration is envisioned and framed as a political project of inclusion of non-white immigrants, it tends to become a political device
through which hierarchies of belonging are constructed. Following such conception of integration, cultural/religious differences and equality are framed as conflicting where cultural conformity underpinned by assimilationist discourses becomes a requirement for political, social, and economic equality.


https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2013.791396

This article draws from the experiences of women, located in different countries, whose scholarship expresses a commitment to anti-racism and social justice. What are the challenges they face? How do they negotiate multiple commitments? Anti-racism scholars are border crossers and ethical leaders with a deep sense of care. Their experiences suggest that one does not necessarily have to engage in activism ‘out there’. The very commitment to anti-racism, as a scholar, becomes a form of social justice work. The ability to have a transformative impact both inside and outside of the academe enriches their sense of fulfilment as scholars.


https://doi.org/10.1080/02615479.2017.1423049

Providing effective cultural competency training to social work students is a social work education struggle. This qualitative study, conducted in the United States, addresses this challenge by examining social work educators’ teaching methods for cultural competency by focusing on the self as a part of culture and racism as a part of dominant
culture. The findings reveal that the social work educators emphasize the role of self-awareness and cultural awareness in teaching cultural competency. However, they prefer to use multiculturalism, a 1960s ideology, to teach cultural competency and do not invest in teaching anti-racism. These findings shed light on teaching cultural competency and have practical implications in social work education.


Australia is a multicultural society. However, its history of British colonisation has contributed to enduring overt and covert discrimination, racism and black/white racial divisions. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the recipients of ongoing racial discrimination, they are the most disadvantage groups in Australia and they are significantly overrepresented as social work clients. An anti-racist stance is core to social work practice, and some literature has suggested that cultivating empathy can help reduce racism and provoke activism for social justice. In 2014, a classroom-based inquiry exploring barriers to activism extended previous student-centred research exploring empathy and racism. The findings suggest that some students are hesitant to commit to action for social justice for reasons including a lack of confidence, and a lack of time and information. Facilitating social work students' confidence, increased understanding of everyday acts of activism and skill development including critical empathy may bolster their confidence and their action for social justice.
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Racism is an enduring reality in Australian society for Indigenous Australians, reflecting the experiences of Indigenous peoples in colonized countries worldwide. While social work services delivered by Indigenous Australians might be the preferred option, the graduation rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from Australian social work training is low and non-Indigenous social workers provide most service delivery. As a non-Indigenous social work educator at an Australian university, I recognize that teaching culturally relevant curricula, in order to produce antiracist social work graduates who, recognize racism and privilege, is crucial but challenging. The purpose of this article is to share my ongoing critical reflections, particularly with regard to student dissatisfaction and possible disengagement with difficult content, and my actions for improved teaching and learning, in order to graduate work-ready social workers.


Attracting more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to the social work profession is an important strategy in responding to Indigenous disadvantage. The literature suggests that the inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, knowledge, and skills in social work is impeded by racism and white privilege. This article reports on a research project that aimed to explore the field education experiences of
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander social work students. Interviews were conducted with 11 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and graduates and their narratives were analysed through a collaborative process. Findings reveal experiences of subtle and overt racism as every day features of their placements. The findings highlight the need to address racism, the value of cultural mentors, and the necessity to increase the employment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academic staff in social work education.


Team-teaching, especially with colleagues who are diverse along a number of domains of social identity (e.g., social class, gender, race, tenure rank, academic status, age), represents a rich opportunity to model a social justice, anti-oppressive approach to teaching and learning. In this article, we present pedagogical strategies to consider when team-teaching foundation social work courses with a social justice focus. Constructs related to power dynamics, privilege, social class, microaggressions and social identity are explored. Development of teaching plans, managing challenging team dynamics, and teaching methods are examined. Implications of team-teaching anti-oppression content for social work education are discussed.

Trayvon Martin’s 2013 murder and the acquittal of his killer by a jury reignited long-standing race problems in the USA, particularly concerning the ill treatment of young Black men. Galvanized by Martin’s death, #BlackLivesMatter directed US social work attention to the urgency of this human rights issue. Scholarly publications called for increased knowledge about racial profiling and for professional social work bodies to speak out against anti-Black police racism. A similar movement arose in Canada following the police killings of Jermaine Carby in 2014, Andrew Loku in 2015, and Abdirahman Abdi in 2016. Black Lives Matter–Toronto took on the fight to resist police killings and the devaluation of Black lives. This article provides a critical analysis of the Canadian social work response to police racial profiling, as a human rights issue. Far from the response seen south of the border, little Canadian social work research has been conducted on police racial profiling, and professional social work bodies have remained silent about ending this discriminatory practice. This silence is in stark contrast to attention drawn to other social justice issues and raises questions about the profession’s commitment to racial equality and the pursuit of a just society. The findings can be used to encourage social work research about police racial profiling to improve the profession’s knowledge base, so that it can meaningfully advocate on behalf of racialized groups impacted by police racism in Canada. The challenges and possibilities for the profession going forward are discussed.

Incorporating issues of race and racism can improve clinical engagement and the therapeutic alliance. Assessing, understanding, and responding to experiences related to racial identity and racism related stress can be an important factor in a clinician’s ability to be culturally responsive. A vignette of client treatment presents common dilemmas in clinical treatment. Responses to questions about race from focus groups are presented to frame the experiences of women of color who struggle with poverty and social-emotional issues. A framework of multicultural antiracist practice highlights the skills necessary for clinicians, supervisors, and managers.


Seventeen-year-old unarmed Trayvon Martin was shot and killed by a Florida Stand Your Ground patrol volunteer in 2012 while walking home from a convenience store. His death launched a nationwide conversation on America’s long-sore subject of race, igniting the Black Lives Matter movement. These conversations were also held in schools and programs of public health because the field has long recognized racism as a determinant of health. But although we academics have chronicled the role of racism in shaping health outcomes, we have rarely turned our gaze inward to examine how our
own schools and programs of public health perpetuate racism. Furthermore, we have largely failed to prepare our graduates with an understanding of the roots of racism and how it affects public health work. The University of Washington, a top-ranked school of public health in a politically liberal US city (Seattle, Washington), has had a long history of campus social activism. In 2011, the nationwide Occupy movement was a clear presence on the University of Washington campus, and although the movement served to limber up resistance to income inequality, national movement leaders were regularly challenged on their own racial illiteracy. Historically, training programs for health professionals have identified cultural competence as a curriculum objective. A curriculum competency is a description of an observable knowledge or skill for students to attain. Measuring a student’s competency in anti-racist thinking and practice can be challenging. The authors (along with others at the UWSPH) set out to develop a curriculum competency that would require all UWSPH students to acknowledge racism and its effects, to counter the tendency to minimize racism as a topic, and to compel the school to develop resources to support this education. Through this process, we developed a collective, although not unanimous, analysis of our role and responsibility in educating public health professionals who have the skills to name racism, address its effects, and work collaboratively with communities of color to dismantle the systems that perpetuate it. Acknowledging this responsibility is not the end, but it is an important step in a long process. In this commentary, we describe our experience in developing and adopting a new schoolwide competency, amid political pushback, and
offer lessons learned to encourage other schools and programs of public health to launch their own efforts.


In today’s environment dominated by managerialism and fiscal restraint, actualizing the principle of social justice has become a daunting task for social workers. Supervision has been identified as a promising site for enacting social justice, but evidence is lacking that supervision conversations support socially just practice. A concurrent mixed model nested research design was used to explore the needs of social workers for supervision conversations about social justice and practice. A mixed method web-survey on supervision was completed by 636 social workers from a broad spectrum of social work practice settings and geographical locations in Ontario, Canada. Quantitative data and written responses from open-ended questions are presented as an integrated narrative.

Findings The results demonstrate that social worker participants shared a need for supervisors to promote and provide space for conversations about multiple aspects of social justice and practice. This need for a social justice focus had not been currently or recently experienced by a significant number of participants who worked in a variety of settings. Applications In response to the findings and their inferences, implications for supervision knowledge, practice and policy development are provided that could help social workers better actualize social justice in their day-to-day practice.

The importance of addressing implications of racism has reached a critical point at colleges and universities across the United States, and schools of social work are no exception. This study uses grounded theory methods to thematically analyze data from student participants (N=30) on their thoughts and reactions during a 2 1/2-day Undoing Racism workshop sponsored by the People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond. Qualitative data were collected to answer the research question, how do students experience an intensive Undoing Racism workshop, and what are the implications for integrating antiracism into social work education? Findings imply that workshop-based learning may be more effective than solely using course content to teach antiracism material and also indicate the importance of activity-based learning, as well as an emphasis on developing concrete strategies to combat racism.


The truth and reconciliation movement has received little attention in the social work literature in the United States yet holds great value as a pathway to the realization of the social justice goals of the profession. Truth and reconciliation commissions have been utilized internationally and have more recently emerged in the United States relevant to issues of historical trauma and oppression of indigenous people. The truth and reconciliation model is well-aligned with social work values and aims connected to
human rights, culturally sensitive practice, and an anti-racist stance. Proactive engagement in a truth-telling process that examines the role of social work in past and present injustice is a social work imperative. A commitment to anti-oppressive social work practice requires self-examination and self-awareness from our own social location and positions of relative privilege, as individuals and as a profession. As a teaching tool, an area of empirical inquiry, a framework for action, and a lens for self-examination, truth and reconciliation is of great value to social work and holds much untapped potential in the United States. This article offers information about truth and reconciliation, and its aims, processes, and benefits. Implications for social work education, practice, research, and policy advocacy are discussed, along with a call for social work leadership on the path toward authentic truth-telling and reconciliation within and outside the profession.


This article discusses limitations in the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Code of Ethics conceptualization of “cultural competence.” It uses the case example presented in Anne Fadiman's classic (2012) work, *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down: A Hmong Child, Her American Doctors, and the Collision of Two Cultures*, to explore the conventional markers of cultural competence, as taught in contemporary graduate-level social work education curricula, and their implications for socially just practice. Furthermore, it proposes that an expanded commitment to antiracist practice
is necessary to deliver care and craft policies that, in the spirit of the NASW Code of Ethics, truly respect the "dignity and worth" of the individual.


This paper provides a way to theorize and practice Decoloniality in teaching and learning within higher education. Two social work academics develop a framework for teaching about decoloniality which they hope is useful for other academics from different “helping” professions who also work with First Nations peoples. Rather than a fixed and firm framework it is intended to be used to inform practice and assist students in developing their own framework for practice. The article begins by offering how the authors define decoloniality, then presents a theory for practice/practice to theory framework and explanation of how we use this framework for teaching/learning and practice.


Our unique pre-service and in-service teacher education programmes at Simon Fraser University, in which experiential learning and professional mentorship are combined with academic course work, have undergone emergency modifications in order to enable our students to continue with their programmes while adhering to government
restrictions due to COVID 19. As we respond to the emergent needs within university and school communities, social-emotional wellness, connection, ‘being apart together,’ engagement, and support for vulnerable students and those with exceptionalities, are currently the most important considerations. The pandemic has highlighted the need to dismantle racism and systemic inequities within our educational systems; to prioritise mental health and wellness in schools; to broaden and decolonise mainstream conceptions of teaching and learning as well as access to education; to build caring reciprocal relationships with the natural world; and to recognise teachers as researchers and community leaders. It is these issues that frame our vision of teacher education in the post-pandemic era. Inspired by the scholarship of Michelle Tanaka and Gregory Cajete, we ask ourselves and our students, what kind of educator does the world need today, and what kind of world are we going to leave for the children?


Teaching experience at the University of Suffolk noted anecdotally that Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) students avoid discussing their identity, cultural heritage, norms and values, in lectures, tutor groups and in assignments. To improve the integration of different cultural perspectives into the social work curriculum, we devised a small-scale qualitative research project Spring, 2017, to explore students’ views of teaching,
learning and assessment about cultural norms and differences, seeking the views of both BAME students and white students on the programme in order to compare and contrast their experiences. Focus groups were used to gather the views of BAME and white students about the opportunities and barriers to discussing identity, culture, and anti-racism. The findings raised significant issues, specifically about the barriers for both BAME and white students to considering cultural differences. Student perspectives suggest more sensitive approaches to considering cultural differences; more responsibility for white lecturers to explore white privilege and its impact; and more safe spaces to manage emotional responses to oppression to enable exchange of experience and learning about different cultural norms and values. The article analyses the findings, discussing ways forward to improve the student experience and promote good practice in teaching and learning.


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In a climate of Islamophobic racism, where media racism saturates our TV screens and newspapers, where racism on the streets, on campus, in our community become everyday realities, I ask, what can we – teachers, lecturers and educationalists – do in the work of anti-racism in education? This article examines classroom debates on Islamophobia by exploring the connections between student experiences and the wider social political issues and ideologies that create and reinforce racism. The underlying interest for me is to examine the ways in which classroom interaction; dialogue and
exchanges can undo racist thinking by informed anti-racist critique. This article has three sections; first, I discuss the multicultural and anti-racist discourses within education in the British context. I then go on to explore theoretical developments found in Critical Race Theory (CRT) as a tool for this anti-racism in education. In the second section I examine Islamophobia, the hatred of Muslims, as a measurement of current racism. My interest is to explore the meanings of Islamophobia, and its relevance to students lived realities. Media representation and text on Islamophobia are used as a way of pulling out the student views and lived experiences of such racism. In the final section I raise the question of ‘what’s the point of studying racism?’ Here I discuss a class seminar on the viewing of a YouTube role play of a racist incident against a hijab wearing woman. The point here is to unpack student’s views and reactions to Islamophobia. I conclude that classroom discussions can be a place where anti-racist, anti-sexist and anti-oppressive views emerge to inform the discussion for social justice in education.

https://doi.org/10.34043/swc.v47i1.133

The United States is a divided nation on many fronts; but race seems to be particularly divisive. This is not surprising since race is a construct created to divide the masses to be conquered by the few. This conquest allowed the foundation of the nation’s social, political, and economic structures to be rooted in the institution of a unique form of slavery based on the fabricated characteristic of race. Racism (i.e., racial oppression and white racial privilege) is a dehumanizing force. When one is dehumanized, all are
dehumanized. To restore the promise of life, liberty and justice for all, racial reconciliation efforts must restore humanity by addressing the harm in racial disharmony. In considering the issue of racial reconciliation in the US and focusing on social work responses within a Christian context, this paper: 1) explores foundational concepts pertinent to developing a rigorous and coherent definition of racial reconciliation; 2) develops the steps for the process of racial reconciliation efforts grounded in the conceptual model of anti-racism critical transformative potential (TP), and framed by restorative justice principles; and 3) examines how Christian and/or social work practitioners can participate in racial reconciliation efforts.


This conceptual review interrogates a body of literature concerned with black and minority ethnic (BME) social work students in Britain since 2008. This period has coincided with an increasing focus on diversity in Higher Education, but also lower prominence being given to race in social work. In social work education, there has been increased attention to the needs and experiences of BME students. While most of this literature acknowledges racism, what constitutes racism and how it can be understood usually remain implicit. This review aimed to explore influential concepts in the literature and the ways these affected how racism is understood and identified. A search was carried out for articles in peer-reviewed academic journals between 2008 and 2018. In this article, we discuss four recurring concepts of racism in this literature:
subtle racism, institutional racism, cultural difference and pedagogical solutions. The article analyses the assumptions underpinning these concepts, and the implications for how racism has been understood and investigated in this literature. The subsequent discussion calls for a more reflexive approach and identifies questions that future research could explore, which could lead to improved understandings of racism in social work education.


Social workers in Western countries are increasingly being called on to play a role in the prevention of terrorism. This paper argues that this role casts social workers as agents of the state policing Muslim communities, urges resistance and provides an example of transformative activism informed by a critical anti-racist framework. The idea of taking sides in the political discourse surrounding terrorism has long been pushed by Western leaders, exemplified by George Bush’s September 2001 declaration ‘Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists’ (Bush 2001). But acknowledging the context of rising Islamophobia, Stanley and Guru (2015: 360) raise Moreau’s question ‘Whose side are we on?’ for social workers.


A growing body of literature highlights how teachers and administrators influence Black girls’ academic and social experiences in school. Yet, less of this work explores how
Black undergraduate women understand their earlier school experiences, particularly in relation to whether teachers advocated for their educational success or participated in discriminatory practices that hindered their potential. Using consensual qualitative research (CQR) methods, the present semi-structured interview study explored the narratives of 50 Black undergraduate women (mean age = 20 years) who reflected on their experiences with teachers and school administrators during high school. Five discriminatory themes emerged, including body and tone policing, exceptionalism, tokenization, cultural erasure in the curriculum, and gatekeeping grades and opportunities. Three anti-racist themes emerged, including communicating high expectations and recognizing potential, challenging discrimination in the moment, and instilling racial and cultural pride. Our findings highlight the higher prevalence of discriminatory events compared to anti-racist teacher practices, as well as how the women’s high school experiences occurred at the intersection of race and gender. The Authors discuss the need to incorporate gender and sexism into discussions of anti-racist teacher practices to address Black girls’ experiences of misogynoir. We hope our findings contribute to educational initiatives that transform the learning landscape for Black girls by demonstrating how educators can eliminate pedagogical practices that harm their development.

The continued dominance and perpetuation of white supremacy has created the need for the profession of social work to teach white students how to identity and to understand how a culture of ‘whiteness’ influences their interactions in the classroom and beyond. As the National Association of Social Workers, British Association of Social Workers, The South African Council for Social Service Professions, and the Australian Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics calls on social workers to promote social justice and to end racial discrimination in society, social work educators must learn how to help white students critically reflect in social work classrooms in order to fulfill this professional mandate. Guided by critical race theory, cultural humility, and intergroup contact theory, the Acceptance and Commitment Therapy Matrix provides a useful framework for understanding how to assist white students in this lifelong journey towards a social work career rooted in anti-racist, anti-oppressive, and anti-colonial practice. Specific recommendations are provided on how to create this type of classroom with white students that moves away from colorblindness, microaggressions, disconnection, and mistrust towards a classroom environment focused on neuro decolonization and unfreezing the body, trust, and connection.

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The shifting demographics that come with migration and globalization have changed the settings for social work education in Sweden. To promote sustainability in a diverse society, strategies for inclusion and equality are essential in the development of core competencies in social work. One essential question is how social work education has responded to the demographic changes. The study aims to contribute with knowledge about how ethnicity is conceptualized in Sweden and to describe the impact the subject has on teaching forms and strategies. More specifically, the study investigates university teachers’ expressions of their teaching practices about the concept and addresses the faculty members’ narratives about the teaching situations. The study concludes that the lack of a coherent academic context for teaching ethnicity leads to the development of individual approaches by the teachers and a personalization of the issue of ethnicity in social work education. This creates a limitation on how structural elements come into play in relation to ethnicity, and in turn, leads to a shortage of a critical analysis of the construction of social problems where ethnicity plays a fundamental role. These circumstances precede theoretical perspectives on social problems related to ethnicity, migration, transnational relations, globalization, and racism.

Focusing on the results of one hypothesis in a larger study, this article examines level of social work education and color-blind racial attitudes in White social workers. Participants (n = 179) who were members of the National Association of Social Workers and self-identified as White, responded to an online survey and completed the Color-Blind Racial Attitudes Scale (CoBRAS). Color-blind racial attitudes have been linked to prejudice in other studies. BSW-level practitioners were found to be less aware of racial privilege and blatant racial issues. The article addresses the findings and explores the implications for social work educators and social work practitioners.


Scholars have cited an antiracist identity as an ideal development status for Whites seeking to change systemic racism (Helms, 1995). However, little is known regarding the lived complexities of antiracist work itself. This article examines the experiences of one group of Whites (N = 10) committed to antiracist action. Outcomes indicate challenges that include backlash and struggles to identify more effective antiracist tactics. Coping mechanisms are considered in relation to counseling and counselor training practices.

Racist discourse has significantly shifted away from the use of overt racial language and has predominantly become a coded and subtle discourse. This article highlights how paying attention to the ways in which language is used in its social and cognitive contexts can provide social work with a more robust response to the shifting parameters of racist discourse. It illustrates how using a strand of discourse analysis called discursive psychology can result in an enhanced understanding of the ways in which exclusionary sentiments are couched in contemporary discourses. Drawing on data from a minority of social workers who participated in a wider study that explored the experiences of social workers who were working with asylum seekers in a UK local authority, the article highlights the ways in which exclusionary views can be articulated and legitimated by drawing on culture, instead of race, as a marker of difference. It is suggested that a turn to language can result in significant enhancements to current antiracist frameworks.


This paper reports from a small-scale qualitative research study designed to keep the dialogue open about anti-racist social work and to test assumptions about the role of black and minority ethnic (BME) social workers within it. Multiculturalism is a contested term, which describes a process of increasing diversity and incorporation of that diversity into public discourse and policy. This process is often used to provide political
polemics about the plausibility of multiculturalism and ‘race’ relations. Social work as an
institution is not immune to these issues and can be a site for inequalities based on
‘race’, thus, challenging the success of social work in a multicultural society and creating
particular challenges for BME workers. However, this research with its focus on the
experiences of BME social workers also uncovered how opportunities for BME social
workers to discuss working with and overcoming such challenges could contribute to the
service.

McCauley, K., & Matheson, D. (2018). Social work practice with Canada’s Indigenous people:
https://doi.org/10.1080/09503153.2018.1483493

Social work in Canada has been historically influenced by cultural and language tensions;
for instance, as a nation that has understood itself to have been ‘founded’ as a colony
by the English and French. However, the legacy that contemporary social work
education struggles with most is how to articulate a constructive narrative that
acknowledges the role that the profession has played in contributing to practices that
have damaged Indigenous families and communities. Today, Indigenous social workers
are bringing missing perspectives that help to inform critical reflection upon this legacy
of colonisation. This article adapts an Indigenous model of Foundational Principles for
Practice to consider ways that social workers from different cultural backgrounds may
engage in anti-oppressive practice; working as allies to advance healing, and combat
racism, which still oppresses Indigenous people in Canada. Further, this is history that
has lessons for all of us trying to learn from and value cultural diversity in our communities in a world where many embrace a politics of fear of difference.


Racism cannot be treated as a spatially homogeneous phenomenon. This review reports on the merits of a localized approach to anti-racism, and delivers a frank assessment of the challenges faced when developing local responses to racism in a neoliberal era. Under neoliberalism, local actors are responsibilized, and for anti-racism this means action can potentially be closely aligned to local inflexions of racism. But localized responses to racism under neoliberalism are associated with deracialized and depoliticized policies on interethnic community relations. Neoliberal anti-racism promotes competition among local agencies rather than coalition building, and is associated with spatially uneven and non-strategic action.


‘Speaking’ racism is the explicit use of the term’s racism and anti-racism, rather than more palatable or ‘positive’ alternatives. To address racism, using the language of racism and anti-racism is critical, as it acknowledges the presence of racism and, in doing so, overcomes denial. Dispositions to speaking racism and anti-racism are positioned within the historical context of racism and the discourse of tolerance in Australia. Interviews with individuals working in local anti-racism in two sites were the
primary data source for exploring dispositions to the language of racism and anti-racism.

Reticence to speak racism was prevalent, largely driven by fear of inducing
defensiveness and sensitivity to the highly emotive nature of racism. A similar
ambivalence around the term anti-racism was found, in line with the ‘positive turn’ in
anti-racism policy. Alongside this discomfort, some local anti-racism actors recognized
the role that speaking racism could play in challenging denial.

https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1530-2415.2011.01274.x

This review of literature on anti-racist prosocial action points to the strong and largely
untapped policy potential of bystander anti-racism. Bystander anti-racism is
counted as action taken by “ordinary” people in response to incidents of
interpersonal or systemic racism. The utility of bystander anti-racism is also
demonstrated, with evidence suggesting productive effects for targets and bystanders,
as well as perpetrators. The relative merits of confrontational or diplomatic action are
reviewed, as is the delicate balance between communicating disapproval and
maintaining interpersonal relations. The potential of bystander anti-racism will be
enhanced where there are social norms that are intolerant of racism. The literature has
paid little attention to the influence of context or to affective drivers of bystander anti-
racism. We recommend changes to Ashburn Nardo’s five-stage Confronting Prejudice
Model, to better facilitate anti-racism policy and practice. The additions adapt the
model to organizational settings, and more strongly acknowledge the importance of
social norms and contexts, as well as the specific functions of racism. Through these changes, there is a scope to increase the prominence of bystander anti-racism as a vital element of anti-racism policy.


The authors describe the curricular changes made as part of a 20-year commitment by Smith College School for Social Work (SCSSW), a graduate school with a clinical social work specialization, to become an antiracism institution. Unaware of precedents, faculty, administration, and students needed to develop structures and processes to confront inherent institutional racism at the SCSSW. In addition to multiple administrative actions, every aspect of the curriculum was re-evaluated, leading to changes in courses offered and everything about them, from syllabi to pedagogy, as well as how faculty are trained and supported. The authors found that explicit and implicit curriculum must work together in intentional and synchronous ways. Critical intention across design, implementation, evaluation, accountability, and openness to process is emphasized here. They conclude that an antiracism commitment requires continuous engagement, connection, challenge, learning, and teaching and a curriculum that is fluid, flexible, proactive, and responsive.

Inadequate attention to race, racism, and Whiteness in social work education ineffectively prepares White students to work with historically excluded racial and ethnic groups, and undermines the profession’s fundamental commitment to social justice. This article presents experiences of eight White social work students confronting race, racism and Whiteness during a study abroad program in West Africa. The students’ learning experiences included exposure to historical White dominance and exploitation through visiting former slave trade sites, connecting with modern African culture, and interactions and dialogue with their African American and African peers. This case study uncovers a continuum of students’ reactions and outcomes, including avoidance, defensiveness, White humility, and a pull toward anti-racism advocacy. As a co-creator in this work, the White researcher exposes her experiences relating to the students. Findings suggest that engagement with critical Whiteness pedagogy and skilled management of students’ emotional responses are crucial teaching strategies for social work educators.


Little of social work literature provides evidence of best teaching practices for preparing social work students to work with clients from historically excluded racial and ethnic
groups. A systematic literature review was conducted to assess studies published in the United States during the 10-year period (2007–2016) that examined: (1) social work educators’ pedagogical interventions for teaching about racial and ethnic diversity, (2) components of those interventions, (3) methodological designs to evaluate the interventions, and (4) the students’ learning outcomes. Following the systematic review protocol, the authors identified and assessed twenty-five studies (qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-methods). The studies reflected a variety of teaching interventions, such as diversity courses and projects, instructional technology, and cultural immersion programs. While many reported positive student learning outcomes, as a whole, the studies lacked methodological rigor and sound theoretical grounding. Although social work education attempts to prepare students for multicultural practice, the field lacks an intentional and systematic approach to teaching about racial and ethnic diversity and evaluating learning outcomes in social work students. There is an urgency to expand the empirical evidence on social work diversity education, particularly concerning teaching about race, racism, and Whiteness.


Anti-oppression emerged in the 1990s as a perspective for challenging inequalities and accommodating diversity within the field of social work, including child welfare in Canada. Using the concepts of white supremacy, anti-Black, and anti-Native racism in conjunction with the notion of the exalted national subject (Thobani, 2007), we contend
that any understanding of the overrepresentation of Aboriginal and Black children in the care of child welfare services must be located within the wider narrative of white supremacy that has underpinned the formation of the post-war welfare state. This overrepresentation highlights the need to shift from anti-oppression to critical race feminism and anti-colonialism perspectives in order to address more effectively anti-Black and anti-Native racism and the economy of child welfare.


https://doi.org/10.1080/15228878.2012.749185

This paper explores Klein’s concepts of the depressive position, paranoid position, envy, projective identification and reparation, and their application to understanding overt racism. An extensive case example from the movie Gran Torino and its protagonist Walt Kowalski are the foci of this theoretical speculation. Implications for antiracist practice are discussed.


https://doi.org/10.1080/02615479.2011.602965

This paper is based on the development of a framework that conceptualises forms of power in social work research. Its aim is to encourage readers to critically reflect on potentially oppressive manifestations of power in social work research. The article draws on Lukes’ model of power and Gould’s subsequent framework which contributed to anti-racist teaching in social work education. Gould’s framework is reinterpreted and
applied to a differing context: social work research. The field of social work research is explored through this framework, highlighting potentially oppressive manifestations of power and suggesting anti-oppressive strategies. The model is then applied to social work education and specifically the teaching of research methods. The paper concludes by suggesting curriculum guidelines that promote the teaching of anti-oppressive social work research methods.


A human rights perspective must be embedded in the institutions, organisations or agencies where social work students find themselves. This paper will focus on one particular strategy that could be helpful to the process of solidifying a commitment to human rights for our students. Using a pedagogical tool from a school of social work in the USA originally developed to combat the social injustice of racism, the example transcends the academic institution and offers a solid link in connecting human rights, social justice and social work. Using the construct of critical realism, we argue that, for social work programmes to take steps towards an explicit commitment to human rights, not only must human rights be infused throughout the curriculum, but educators must provide opportunities for making more overt the links between human rights principles, social justice and social work. By addressing behaviours, tendencies and attitudes, students then acquire not only the skills and deeper understanding, but they internalise the motivation and commitment to broaden their human rights frame. In the process of developing a more firm commitment to human rights, we must not be limited to the
walls of the academy, but rather extend beyond to our field agencies, organisations and communities.


Systemic racism in the U.S. has been a mechanism of social control, economic exploitation, and white supremacy. While it is not a new phenomenon, the state of society has worsened for racial minorities, particularly for black Americans. The social work profession (including social work research and education) has also been noted to treat service users of colour differently (especially through surveillance), contributing to systemic issues. Due to the NASW’s fickle position on racism, the National Association of Black Social Workers was created in 1968 to attempt to address racism and poverty. Despite calls to action, many social workers view racism as something to be addressed outside of the profession. Studies were conducted, noting the lack of attention and effort to social change regarding racism. In Britain, efforts were made to deal with racism at the municipal level; these efforts have shown some effectiveness. In the U.S., efforts to address racism have been completed at the individual level rather than the organizational level. The first step in addressing systemic racism is to acknowledge it, identify where it exists, and where it manifests itself. The second step is to take steps to disrupt the status quo by developing inclusive and equitable structures and systems. (Recommendations for social workers are made)

Scholarly discussions contesting post-racialism have noted how the false but common belief – that systematic racism has been defeated in Western societies – works to undermine anti-racism critical potential. Simultaneously, the discussion about the relativization of anti-racism has mainly been located in contexts with strong anti-racist traditions. By exploring anti-racism in the Finnish civil society, the article thematizes thinking around the post-racial modality of racism in a context where racism is often presented as a recent phenomenon. A discourse analysis of non-governmental organization advocacy materials that work to mainstream antiracism identifies three parallel problem-definitions of racism, illustrating a tendency to understand racism as an individual flaw in a non-racist social reality. This shows that trivializing racism and recentring whiteness happen through classed and aged discourses.


The author reports the findings from a yearlong antiracist project involving three White male preservice teachers in a Midwestern rural U.S. state. Drawing on second-wave White teacher identity literature and Emotional Tools of Whiteness, the project focuses on collaborative critical self-reflection to explore the participants’ individual relationships with race and racism. The study reveals some important misconceptions
relating to ambivalence, incommensurability, and vulnerability. The author attends to the participants’ affective responses to the misconceptions and discusses how their affects are indicative of both larger social structures and of the way in which the project was conceptualized initially, focusing on the ideals and outcomes rather than the actual practice of engaging in self-reflection. The author argues for the need to account for complexity of preservice teachers’ experiences as they engage in antiracist work.


Social work practice with mixed-race individuals is a largely overlooked area in Canadian social work education. In 2006, 458,240 Canadians reported belonging to more than one population group and of this group 104,215 reported belonging to multiple visible minority groups (Statistics Canada, 2006). Canadian census trends indicate that mixed unions (marriages/common law relationships between a visible minority and non-visible minority) increased 33.1% between 2001 and 2006 (Milan, Maheux & Chui, 2010; Statistics Canada, 2006). Drawing from British, American and Canadian scholarship and research, this paper discusses new directions for social work practice with people of mixed-race heritage within a critical mixed-race framework of practice. Informed by first person narratives and recent studies, areas of particular importance are self-definition, (in)visibility, Canadian multicultural policy, gender, and family. Strategies for social work practice are outlined including supporting self-identification, validating complex experiences of racism, racialization and passing a social justice informed “analysis of
power” as it operates through racism, critical reflection for practitioners, and further research in this area (Thomas & Green, 2007, p. 91).


In social work education there have been very few attempts to empirically capture and measure how professional training programmes prepare students to work with ‘race’ equality and cultural diversity issues. This paper interrogates the experiences and outcomes of anti-racist social work education and evaluates the pedagogic relevance and practice utility of teaching social work students about ‘race’, racism and anti-racism. The data presented in this paper suggests that it is possible to discover the situated experiences of learning about anti-racism and measure how this teaching can affect and lead to knowledge, skills and attitudinal change. The triangulated mixed methods evidence presented in this paper combines nomothetic and idiographic approaches with quantitative data for a matched pair sample of 36 social work students and uses non-parametric statistical tests to measure at two-time intervals (before and after teaching); knowledge, skills and attitudinal change. The paper explores how anti-racist social work education enables students to move from ‘magical consciousness’, where racism and racial oppression is invisible and thereby left unchallenged and maintained, to more critical and reflexive level of awareness where it is named, challenged and no longer shrouded in a culture of professional denial and silencing.

In this article, I examine the increase of Islamophobia in Canada and possible responses of non-Muslim social workers to this issue. A literature review identified only a few Canadian social work direct practice articles related to Islamophobia. In this paper, I argue that critical reflective, person-centered, and social justice practices, are key principles for non-Muslim social workers to be allies with Muslim communities in Canada. Case scenarios illustrating Islamophobia are examined along with the implications of this analysis in social work with individuals, groups, and in agencies. It is my hope to contribute to the growing conversation about this significant issue.


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Restorative justice practices (RJP) in schools is an increasingly popular approach to responding to discipline showing modest effectiveness. However, there is little research within the school consultation literature that examines the use of RJP. In over a decade, there have been only six studies. These studies are reviewed and directions for future research are discussed. Over the next 30 years, researchers need to pursue restorative
justice science with a social justice vision focusing on restorative consultation, anti-racism, and advocacy.


Social work field education, the mandatory, practice-based component of accredited schools of social work, is in a state of crisis. Welfare state retrenchment has reduced the social and health service sectors' capacity to provide field education placements. Concurrently, increasing student enrollment in and the expansion of social work programmes in the academy have increased the demand for field education. Whilst the service and academic sectors have developed a range of formal and informal relationships to cope with the crisis that often benefit workers in both domains, the implications for students, especially those who are Black and Minority Ethnic (BME), remain largely unknown. This article reports findings from institutional ethnographic research based on textual analyses and interviews with five BME students from a school of social work in Southern Ontario who were engaged in securing field education placement. A central finding of the study was that racial categories and hierarchies are reproduced across placement settings and in the sorting process of students into placement settings itself, adding to the work of BME social work students. The findings implicate the institutional practices and context of field education in the production of a racially stratified labour market in social work field education.

Despite pervasive forms of racism on a global scale, the field of education and international development continues to fail to substantively engage with the production and effects of racial domination across its domains of research, policy and practice. Considerations of racism remain silent, or indeed, are erased, within teaching and research, often in favour of colour-blind and technocratic approaches to ‘development’. This not only ignores the sector’s historical links to systems of racial domination, but also the current ways in which the field is implicated in producing unequal outcomes along racial lines. The authors present a re-reading of the ‘global learning crisis’ – as the dominant discourse of contemporary educational development – to demonstrate how the framing of the ‘crisis’ and the responses it engenders and legitimises operate as a ‘racial project’. The paper offers theoretical and methodological resources with which to interrogate the field’s entanglements in systems of racial domination and challenge its erasures of racism.


This article discusses the anxieties that lead to resistance to antiracist and culturally sensitive reflection and engagement on social work trainings. It briefly discusses a culturally diverse social work training and the anxieties described by the students that
hindered the integration of the teaching of race and culture during the training. The article then contrasts this with another more successful training experience on another social work course at a different university with a similar level of cultural diversity by the use of the group as a psycho-educational method to manage the student’s defences and avoidance of the difficult and painful knowledge required to enhance reflexivity when it comes to issues of race. It discusses how the role and skills of the seminar leader can manage the student’s defences through the use of group dynamic processes and concepts as psychoeducational tools; thereby deepening the observational and reflective skills of the social work students during their training in preparation for their future work within diverse settings and in line with the social work competencies and regulation requirements.

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To date, most of the interdisciplinary scholarly literature pertaining to care work and labor studies of marginalized groups, such as women, visible minorities, and immigrants, has focused on emotional labor as well as concerns about high stress and high turnover. However, few mention racism and racialization. Using a single case study research design of a long term care (“LTC”) home in Toronto, Ontario, Canada, this paper contributes to our understanding of racism and racialization by analyzing participants’ experiences of work. It documents how particular social determinants of health (“SDoH”), such as race and racialization, can manifest themselves in the lives of workers.
Drawing on critical race theory and feminist political economy, this study examines the ways in which the participants discuss their experiences of care work, with closer attention to racism and racialization.


This article discusses how to deal with racism in higher education institutions. The paper looks at six key themes in institutional racism in Canada, Brazil, South Africa, the UK, and the US: (1) Institutional whiteness: How is it produced and reproduced through affect, structures, and processes? How might it be resisted and transformed? (2) Transforming organizational cultures: What are the challenges of such transformation? What are the conflicts and contradictions of transforming HEIs ‘from within’? Are our efforts always destined to be turned into another managerial process? What role does intersectionality play in transforming organizational cultures? (3) The black and minority ethnic (BME) and Indigenous presence and experience in HEIs: how can we best map these in terms of both staff and students? Can we draw in meaningful ways on these experiences to produce change in HEIs’ approaches to curriculum, pedagogy, recruitment, retention, and progression? (4) Developing curriculum interventions: what can be done to enable anti-racism within a context of professional autonomy, disciplinary inertia, and organizational resistance? (5) Widening participation and organizational change: What does widen participation mean in the context of anti-racism? Should anti-racism be a part of the outcomes of higher education curricula? (6) Future directions for racial equality and diversity in a ‘post-race’ era; what are the implications and symptoms of
'post-race’ for HEIs? What impact does ‘post-race’ have on the possibility for the development of anti-racist strategies?


This article provides a prospective model syllabus for graduate level social work courses exploring the interactions between social work and race—both historical and present, both productive and problematic—and makes an argument for this subject matter’s relevance for a course to be implemented in the graduate-level curriculum of social work programs. Instructors can view this syllabus as a template they can customize for their own purposes and contexts, and thus it should not be viewed as fixed, comprehensive, or definitive. Due to the evolutionary nature of research, language, and terms, the syllabus, of course, will need constant revision; but it is conceived as offering a curation of resources, thereby providing a starting point for education on this important topic, at least for this moment in time.


Ethnicity is becoming a recognizable constituent of social work which is shown also in its growing integration in the education programme in social work, as in Slovenia. In order to break the historical silence and the neutral or passive attitude to ethnic differences it is necessary to fight for institutional changes in social work and the transcendence of institutional, cultural and personal racism. The article is concerned mainly with the
Roma ethnic minority, being one of the most and historically marginalized ethnic-minority groups in Slovenia. It presents two main areas relevant to social work: the legal and sociological perspective (how minorities are treated in Slovenia) and the social work perspective (how social work has responded to minority needs and how social work education has adapted).


Faculty members are key stakeholders to support social work students’ learning about race and racism in practice and to promote the professional standards established by the field. This qualitative study examines how 15 clinical social work faculty members teaching advanced practice in the Northeast conceptualize and incorporate their understanding of race and racism in their teaching. An analysis of participants’ responses to a case vignette suggests clinical social work faculty members view race primarily as an individual ethnic or cultural identity and lack conceptual, historical, and sociological knowledge about racism and its links to other forms of oppression. This study suggests that additional faculty development opportunities and institutional support are needed to encourage faculty efforts to address race and racism.

Anti-Indigenous racism is deeply and indelibly etched into the policies and practices which inform institutions and systems across Canada. Educational “spaces” can reproduce oppressive social structures without careful and critical pedagogical consideration. One of the ways to address racism toward and impacting Indigenous people is through anti-Indigenous racism education. We use the San’yas Indigenous Cultural Safety Training program as an example of anti-Indigenous racism training. We examine the relevance and shortcomings of antiracism and critical race theories in the context of anti-Indigenous racism, and explore the manifestations of anti-Indigenous racism in adult education environments. Indigenous cultural safety (ICS) gained increasing attention when cultural and intercultural competency was identified within the Calls to Action in the report by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada as required training across sectors including health, education, justice, public services, business, and child welfare. The intent of ICS training is to ensure safe and equitable services and care, free of discrimination, to Indigenous people. Within the San’yas Indigenous Cultural Safety Training program, it was recognized that if anti-Indigenous racism educators are to effectively address racism and resistance, a set of core competencies of knowledge, self-awareness, and skills must be developed to support their work. We outline how the ICS pedagogical model was developed, and explore the ways in which Indigenous and non-Indigenous educators must confront and address
personal triggers, resistance, emotionality, microaggressions, and everyday racism, and must assert Indigenous perspectives in the classroom. We also review the work that has been undertaken to research and unpack anti-Indigenous educator experiences and effective pedagogical approaches.


How White is social work in Australia? This paper analyses this question, focusing on social work practice and education. In asking the question, the aim is to open space for debate about how the social work profession in Australia should progress practice with Indigenous people and issues. The paper combines Bourdieu’s concept of the habitus with “Whiteness” theory to argue that the profession is socially, economically, culturally, and geographically separated from Indigenous people and that the consequences for how social workers engage with their Indigenous clients have yet to be fully explored. Decentering Whiteness requires recognition of epistemological and ontological assumptions so deeply embedded that they are invisible to those who carry them. This invisibility permits White privilege to exist unacknowledged and unchallenged within societal formations. In shifting the focus away from the “Other” to the “non-Other”, an examination of Whiteness asks social workers to examine their own racial location and the role of White privilege in their lives. It requires us to go beyond intellectual commitments to antiracism and anti-oppression, and to make racial issues personal as well as political.

This paper represents a critical reflection on youth and community work students’ response to a module on race equality and diversity. An awareness of issues in relation to power and oppression are amongst the core elements of youth and community work training. Throughout their study, youth and community work students are engaged in conversations aimed at enabling them to critically examine their own attitudes and beliefs in areas of anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive practices. These classroom conversations and expressions of resistance and resilience are informed by Paulo Freire’s work on critical dialogue. As a specialist unit the module on equality and diversity was aimed at developing students’ critical understanding of race, racism and ethnic difference. Based on written feedback, student-led presentations and conversations of ‘protest’, this paper critically explores the power of whiteness in silencing particular groups of students.


This article draws on research that investigated teaching and learning for anti-racist and cultural competency practice across social work programmes in Wales. It utilises the concept of ‘predominantly white areas’, defined as both a spatial category and as a mode of thinking to show how anti-racist teaching can be marginalised by misplaced
assumptions associated with small minority presence. It draws on the relatively new theoretical trajectory of ‘whiteness’ studies to explore how particular constructions of the local/national context form a critical interplay with anti-racist teaching and learning, in this case ‘the Welsh context’. It argues that anti-racist teaching needs to be accommodative of an understanding of constructions of the local and the national within which the recognition of minorities and the teaching of anti-racism can be appropriately reclaimed.


Transformative societal change rests upon challenging the status quo with the constant work of self-implication. Self-implication in the neocolonial processes at work within state structures is not easily noticed, nor easily discussed, regardless of one’s social location among various dimensions of privilege and oppression. In both higher education and the profession of social work, one of the major barriers to advancing the social change needs of groups who come from a multiplicity of differences is the still prevalent overemphasis on essentialism and identity-based politics, which was originally inspired and promoted by the anti-racism social movement. The anti-racism movement needs to take into consideration the overarching power of neo-colonialism and hegemonic masculinity that influences and affects the overall discourse, structures and social processes in human relations. Differences across the spectrum of one’s identity carry inherent contradictions, tensions and paradoxes, such that no one can claim
innocence regarding whose voice should be heard at a particular moment or within a particular spatial or institutional context.


This paper constructs an argument about the emotionally complicated and compromised learning spaces of teaching about anti-racism in higher education. These are spaces steeped in complex structures of feeling that evoke strong and often discomforting emotions on the part of both teachers and students. In particular, the author theorizes the notion of strategic empathy in the context of students’ emotional resistance toward anti-racist work; he examines how strategic empathy can function as a valuable pedagogical tool that opens up affective spaces which might eventually disrupt the emotional roots of troubled knowledge an admittedly long and difficult task. Undermining the emotional roots of troubled knowledge through strategic empathy ultimately aims at helping students integrate their troubled views into anti-racist and socially just perspectives.
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