Crossroads Anti-Racism Organizing & Training

Teaching and Training Methodology

Documentation & Evaluation Report

Submitted to the

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. Crossroads Brief History & Structure

Crossroads Anti-Racism Organizing & Training was founded as an effort to develop new directions in understanding and combating the root causes of institutional racism in the United States (see Appendix #1 Historical Development of Institutional Racism). Crossroads recognizes that resistance to racism also requires resistance to all other forms of social inequality and oppression.

Established in 1986, Crossroads is a 501(c)(3) educational organization. The primary focus of Crossroads is working with institutions to provide organizing, training and resources as they strive to break free of the barriers that prevent authentic multicultural diversity, and create anti-racist / anti-oppressive institutions and communities.

One of Crossroads’ primary accomplishments contributing to the field of Race and Ethnic Relations is a distinctive analysis of how racism functions within institutions. Crossroads has developed an effective process of training and communicating this analysis within the context of a particular institution (see Appendix #2 Team formation brochure). Another strong component of Crossroads’ work is building collaboration between these institutions.

In 2000 Crossroads’ Leadership Development Institute (LDI) was established. The LDI provides a context for a learning community of practice in which institutional organizers can evaluate and share their learnings, models, and resources. The LDI also assists with the overall work of Crossroads in building linkages with similar centers of anti-racism training and organizing.

Crossroads continually strives to expand and deepen its analysis of racism to provide cutting edge training. This can be seen in work over the past several years with the people of color Caucus and White Caucus of Crossroads, which has made a tremendous impact on the work of anti-racism organizing as it addresses the vital area of identity caucusing, which we have found is an integral part of working to address institutional racism both with the institutions we work with, as well as within our own structure (see Appendix #3 Racial Identity Caucusing).

Crossroads has facilitated the building of networks among institutions in particular regions across the country, and reaches out to new areas of institutional work in these regions to expand overall racial justice work and collaboration. Crossroads works with local and county governments, public and parochial school systems, colleges and universities, and widely diverse community and faith-based institutions.

The administrative staff of five, Board of nine, and Core Organizer Trainers and trainer apprentices groups are multi-racial (African American, American Indian, Asian American, Latina/o, and White); and each more than 50% people of color and more than 50% female. There are multiple layers of diversity including sexual orientation, faith / spirituality, age, income, and education. Crossroads owns an intentional focus to build a working group that reflects in its organizational structure the same anti-racist / anti-oppressive dimensions that it assists others create.
B. Project History, Overview, and Acknowledgements

For over two decades Crossroads has worked and built relationships with a wide variety of institutions to dismantle individual, institutional and cultural racism in order to strengthen strategic anti-racist institution building capacities. In 2004, The Charles Stewart Mott Foundation awarded a grant to Crossroads to support the Documenting Institutional Anti-Racism Organizing project.

The project focused on collecting, documenting, and disseminating the experiences of institutions with active anti-racism initiatives that have been in place for at least five years. Outcomes provide insight into the challenges and successes organizing teams face in their institutional settings and point to the next steps of teams’ ongoing anti-racism work. Crossroads has attempted to identify both the strengths of anti-racism organizing teams and the challenges they experienced in leading institutions to anti-racist transformation. (See Appendix #4 Frequently Asked Question Re: Crossroads Documentation & Evaluation Process.)

Through this project Crossroads also had the opportunity to develop new resources and tools for anti-racism organizers to assist teams as they organize within their institutions for anti-racist transformation. These include continuing education resources, insight from the field, and ever-evolving practices (Many are included in Section VII. Appendix.)

These learnings and resources will especially be made available to institutions just beginning the process of anti-racist organizing, providing invaluable guidance. Through improved anti-racism training methods they will be better prepared to anticipate, identify, and avoid (or work through) possible challenges that may arise.

The project took place over a three-year period and included three phases:
- Design and testing of a data collection methodology.
- Data collection from participating institutions.
- Data analysis, recommendations, reporting, and dissemination.

This report includes:
- Summary of the findings, challenges, successes, and best practices of Anti-Racist Transformation Teams.
- Challenges of, and necessary changes to, the Crossroads teaching and training methodology.
- Conclusions
- Appendix which includes a variety of the ‘working documents’ developed by the Documentation Panel, plus resources developed by Crossroads.

The project was led by a Documentation Panel which included Crossroads staff, Crossroads Organizer/Trainers, and representatives from a number of participating institutions.

- **James Addington** – Core organizer/trainer Minnesota Collaborative Anti-Racism Initiative (MCARI), Crossroads Board member
- **Robette Ann Dias** – Executive Co-Director of Crossroads and core organizer/trainer
- **Emily M. Drew** – Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, Willamette University, Salem, OR; Crossroads core organizer/trainer
C. **Purpose & Goals of Documentation & Evaluation**

The purpose and goals of this project were to provide insight into the challenges and successes Crossroads faces in its organizing and training of teams in their institutional settings. To accomplish this, the following research questions were developed:

1. What are the outcomes of Crossroads’ training and organizing?
   - For the purposes of this study outcomes are measured in teams’ development, as teams are the primary ‘product’ of Crossroads’ work.

2. How does the Crossroads model account for team outcomes?
   a. According to the current Crossroads organizing and training model, what count as team successes and team failures?
   b. According to the current Crossroads organizing and training model, what are the institutional and cultural sources of these outcomes?

3. How should Crossroads’ model be adjusted in light of team outcomes?
4. What are the organizing strengths and successes in participating institutions that lead to transformation as outlined on ‘Continuum on Becoming an Anti-Racist Multicultural Institution’ (Appendix #5)?

5. What pre-existing institutional conditions proved to be favorable or helpful?

6. What pre-existing institutional conditions proved to be challenges encountered by institutions in their anti-racism organizing?

7. What are the most effective strategies for problem identification, problem-solving, and capacity building?

D. **Process for Data Collection**

There were eight members of the documentation team – four people of color and four white people; and sixteen teams were evaluated. Data gathering sessions typically involved two panel members (with race and gender diversity) for on-site sessions over a day-and-a-half to two-day period. Evaluation methods included team focus groups and semi-structured interviews. Field notes were taken during focus groups and interviews. In addition audiotapes were made; samples of 2/3 of these were transcribed.

Panel members met with a wide cross-section of representatives from participating institutions. These representatives included the institution’s anti-racism organizers, leaders who contribute significant support and play an integral role in the institution’s anti-racism initiative, institutional staff with responsibility for implementation and support of the anti-racism initiative, and any other related individuals identified by team members. Some care was given to including ‘disaffected people’ – those who chose to leave a team for reasons relevant to Crossroads organizing and training.

Panel members elicited data as neutral documenters, offering the most open ended prompts to uncover respondents’ experiences and feelings in their language and conceptual framework. Care was taken to invite free expression by ensuring confidentiality, and by specifically and emphatically requesting the benefit of negative evaluations as well as positive ones.

E. **Institutional Participation**

The panel invited anti-racism teams to participate in this documentation process that fit the following criteria:

- Teams that have been working in their institution for at least the past five years.
- Teams willing to share what they feel and experience in their organizing.
- Teams willing to help Crossroads learn about and fix the glitches, problems, and hang-ups with its training model and process.
- Teams willing to share their learnings and ‘best practices’ with others doing this work.

The panel also encouraged participating institutional transformation teams to consider their own self-interest in this documentation process by highlighting the following:
- Taking the time to do some reflection on their organizing work can be helpful and useful for a team.
- Teams would be actively helping Crossroads enhance and refine the team formation model.
- Participating teams will receive the gathered data and ‘best practice’ materials when completed.
- Participants will be part of a national network of teams reflecting on their organizing work, supporting each other; and sharing resources, information, etc.

Sixteen institutions participated in the interview process of this documentation and evaluation project, which began in June 2005 and concluded in February 2007.

Individuals from all respective institutions who agreed to participate received a consent form (Appendix #6) outlining their rights as contributors to the documentation and evaluation process. This consent form covered issues of anonymity and confidentiality – interviewees agreed to share data without personal, institutional, and geographical identification.

II. SUMMARY FINDINGS / TEAM PROFILES

For purposes of this report, teams and interviewees remain anonymous. The documentation panel recorded the data ‘blindly’ and it is reported as such. Regarding use of the term ‘CEO’ in particular, please note none of the participating institutions are corporations; the idiom is applied for ease of reporting and anonymity and refers to leaders such as presidents, chairs, and ministers. Institutional leadership may also be referred to in general as ‘leadership bodies’ or ‘boards’.

Additionally, some of the participating institutions are structured and function independently, while others are sub-parts of larger institutions (i.e. a denominational judicatory), thus ‘national resource offices’ that are mentioned in some institutional profiles and not in others.

In the team profiles, ‘caucusing’ refers to racial identity caucusing in which people of color and white people caucus separately to address the internalization of racism – internalized racist oppression (IRO) for people of color, and internalized racist superiority (IRS) for white people. (See caucusing document for full explanation attached as Appendix #3.)

The following profiles encompass a combination of items including teams’ self-descriptions, documentation panel observations and sketches, summaries of transcribed data, and specific points of analysis made by documenters. (These annotated profiles served as basic reference points for the documentation panel, and especially for the writers of this report.)

“TEAM A”
- In 1997 black leadership walked out of the annual leadership assembly, organized and came back with terms including addressing systemic racism.
- Connected to Crossroads in 1998.
- Experienced “Greatest improvement in Crossroads” to be “…getting past the ‘one size fits all’ feel of the team training.”
- The team finds Crossroads is accountable to the institution.
• People on the team work closely with leadership in the institution. Part of their strategy is
to get allies dispersed throughout the institution and they succeed.
• They plan to work with Crossroads to train Core Organizer Trainers.

“TEAM B”
• Regarding the institutions experience with the 2-1/2 day workshops: “I think for some it’s
just the technique that they are very suspicious of. That basically doesn’t allow you to
engage contrary. I can understand that. Before it was over, I came to see the wisdom of
the perspective but this is an academic institution.” It was a problem “For academics to
not be allowed to engage and bring their expertise to the table…”
• An outstanding policy document prescribing institutional change was created by this
team. “…changed mandates and changed composition of all the major committees…they
all have racial and cultural justice reconciliation goals and they have mandated
representation as well…” “Oh man, that was a two or three year job!”
• Accountable to the small number of people of color in the institution or the broader
communities of color, people of color on the team said, “Yeah, the community perception
is still…(the institution is) distant from its community.”
• The team considers going out of existence. “Yeah, we may well decide to disband and
say, look, this is something that the…committee and…other officers have the powers…
really have cross-divisional team of people who are all working in the matters of
race…these things have been institutionalized, so why, in this matter, should advocacy
from the margins continue when we got stated people who have roles, advocacy within
the institution to make things happen. So we will see what happens.”
• Caucusing and reporting out is not a team practice, although there are regular meetings of
people of color from throughout the institution.

“TEAM C”
• This institution is the regional governing body for dozens of affiliated local institutions.
• “Our association with [other teams] was primarily motivated by an opportunity to join
together to train.” Early link between this team and other teams in the region was
encouraged by Crossroads after this institutions national offices severed relationship with
Crossroads.
• From the team: “Take a look at your local institution. What does it mean to change? I still
don’t have a clear idea of what that may be. What you are talking about is totally revising
who we are…becoming and anti-racist institution.” “Based on our Crossroads training
was to get them into Crossroads training. No really! That’s what we tried to do and that’s
where the frustration came in because the next training might be months away…”
• Document change is understood to be the major part of identity change for this team.
• Local focus is stronger, but transformation at the regional level is not much in evidence
according to the regional CEO.
• Local focus is seen in “…birthing organizations which could physically attack racism in
local areas…a wonderful byproduct of the team’s work.”
• “We need to partner with other anti-racism work.” Community-wide anti-racism
partnerships may compete with the team’s institutional work and defocus. Turning
towards antiracism counterparts distracts from work in the institution.
• Accountability to anti-racist communities of color isn’t clear. The ‘relationships’ come and go. “Let’s be honest. There isn’t much of a relationship.”
• Continued needs are experienced around how to bring more people of color into the work.
• Attempts were made to establish and maintain accountability relationships to people of color external to the institution. The people of color didn’t have or develop enough investment in the institution to come in and change the institution.
• Team sustainability and expansion is a challenge. This team lacks a workable process to bring folks onto the team.
• Identity transformation seems to be missing – the focus of words, individuals, by-laws, etc – are all focused on action outcomes, with little focus on “who we are??”
• The place of Anti-Racism work in the nexus of Anti-Oppression work is clear.
• Personal deprogramming works for members of this team.
• Caucusing is not a team practice.

“TEAM D”
• This institution is the regional governing body for dozens of affiliated local institutions.
• Institutional support from the CEO is what made the team able to come into being.
• With a new CEO who has very little interest in change, the team has trouble organizing leadership into the work.
• The team is not caucusing.

“TEAM E”
• This institution is the regional governing body for over 100 affiliated local institutions.
• One highly energetic person with a long-time volunteer role at Crossroads is the original institutional connection, continuing for a very long time.
• The original institutional mandate is quite weak.
• There are very few people of color. Leadership is almost exclusively white. “And most of them will say, ‘Well, I don’t have that problem’ because they see only white people.”
• Regarding the team and the Crossroads workshops the team offers, a leader of color observes: “…the language does help, but I think it’s in such bad shape for people of color, I don’t think they know what to do… There’s more of a team. …it’s just so hard, to my people, to follow through.” “With so very few members of color, it seems impossible to do the work.”
• Team is not caucusing, thus not dealing with many of its major issues of internalization.
• This team has little sense of a relationship with Crossroads except as a training organization.
• Organizing skills and organizer training are lacking. One leader of color observes: “I would have liked more follow through.” While observing that in workshops “there was a transformation happening” and participants “changed worlds almost”; nevertheless in the institution “That’s where the weakness was. I don’t think there really was a change. I think we sort of did our own thing.”
• Unmanaged conflict is greatly in evidence throughout the team.
• The CEO of a major local institution that desired to establish a team of its own believes strongly in the training – but thinks that the regional team completely dropped the work, and that the regional governing body’s team isn’t really committed to Anti-Racism work.
“TEAM F”
- Initial interest in race was about inviting people of color to join the institution.
- Many of this institution’s services are delivered in and to multi-cultural settings.
- Members of color come, join, and go.
- Only one Person of Color is a member the institution.
- Other people of color are from the constituency or ‘borrowed’.
- Sense of accountability is very minimal.
- Caucusing is not a team practice.
- Teaching and training (for groups like municipal police) “distracted” their time and energy early on, but then the team recognized that their focus on their institution was lost and they refocused.
- Institutional and team membership is geographically spread out, and this affects the work.

“TEAM G”
- This institution had addressed issues of multi-cultural diversity first. “Let’s become multi-cultural instead of (what we now know as) anti-racist.”
- “It took us a long time to understand that organizing was going to be necessary to bring about change.”
- “I think the beginning of real understanding is that it is more than just if I like you and you like me and we are friends (laughter), but we really have to go and look at the system and why…”
- Later they began to struggle with the fact that the black/white paradigm of race was persistently problematic for them.
- Caucusing happens via phone due to distances, but group report-outs are not practiced.
- Individual accountability is something that is being figured out, but there is little collective accountability to the struggle of the work. “No, I think I mean accountability is how well I only attend to individual caucusing” “…how are we accountable as an institution? I don’t feel the accountability saying, ‘Are you doing your job?’ ‘Are we following up on that?’ I mean there is a whole piece missing!”

“TEAM H”
- This organization’s national anti-racism resource office was trained by Crossroads and developed this team.
- Organizing is not a team practice.
- The team got caught up in teaching. They recall thinking, “If we could just train and train and train, then the institutional transformation would magically happen.”
- Not engaging in any kind of team renewal or team health, this team is discouraged.
- The team began with no people of color and there continue to be very few people of color present in the institution.
- This team is not caucusing.
- Conflict avoidance is a team practice reinforced by institutional values at all levels.

“TEAM I”
- Experience themselves as significantly different from the other institutions Crossroads deals with; this team freely adapts Crossroads’ resources to its own needs.
• Analysis training is mandatory for all staff by written policy, but they don’t find the money in order to make this happen.
• “Crossroads could not give concrete, measurable outcomes to support institutional attempts with funders to gain support for staff training.”
• The Crossroads training is appreciated.
• “Team conference calls with Crossroads organizers would maintain the connectedness’ – team doesn’t have this ‘connectedness’ and feels it needs it.
• Team is not caucusing.
• IRO and IRS are not dealt with on the team and remain persistent unidentified barriers to progress.

“TEAM J”
• “We don’t have a strategic plan.”
• This team was originally formed with the notion of transformation from an all-white to a multi-culturally diverse institution.
• Team is not caucusing and purpose of caucusing is not a question the team addresses – and white people never learned that caucusing should be a priority.
• While in relationship with other teams and groups in its region, this team is completely disconnected from both its national institutional team and Crossroads.
• Virtually an all-white institution.
• Team desires ongoing training.
• Team expansion and renewal are very daunting issues.
• Need greater guidance.
• Emotions – least of all anger – are generally not expressible on the team.
• There is only one Person of Color on the team.

“TEAM K”
• Two experienced anti-racism organizer/trainers were members of the institution and the team it formed in 1999.
• After over 30 years of multicultural membership, this institution – part of a predominantly white national body – is losing membership of color.
• This team felt overwhelmed by the team development trainings and that they could never get the work ‘right’.
• It is focused on education and has gotten leadership into training.
• How to implement strategy or add new members is not clear to the team.
• Aside from occasional consulting, this team and institution are disconnected from regional and national resource networks.
• Accountability is very foggy.
• This team is not caucusing or managing conflict.
• It is unaware of next steps toward transformation and has begun to join local networks in issue organizing in the community.

“TEAM L”
• This team finds the trainings are beneficial and that participants benefit from attending more than once.
• This team finds it an advantage that the institution is small since that means most membership has been exposed to the systemic analysis of racism.
• The team doesn’t really know what to do with people after analysis training.
• People of color need to work on IRO.
• Regional caucusing is not adequately addressing internalization on this team.
• After team training, people didn’t know how to concretely apply the strategic plan.
• Team seems to be lacking some critical thinking skills and application – why is this? Education? Access? Money? Resources?
• Problems with white institutional leadership – while a black CEO is their ‘looking good strategy’.
• Team does not know how to organize white leadership.
• Abandonment by its national counterpart and neglect by Crossroads is the experience of this team.
• Strong white institutional leadership is not included on this team.
• Loss of support from its national network didn’t really affect it.
• Team is not caucusing.
• A successful strategy is the combining of their work with two local institutions that also have teams and the more recent addition of another institution a little further away. The three institutions function as a mutual accountability group, something that all teams need in order to work the analysis.
• This team is learning a great deal from being in relationship with other local teams.

“TEAM M”
• Institution is almost all-white.
• It has an intentional history and identity in social justice.
• Institution members were offended when the issue of internal institutional racism was raised.
• Practical things the team can do to get others interested in the work are not a team practice.
• The team members feel they have new understandings and insights, but don’t know what to do next.
• Documenters sense that people don’t have enough skills.
• This team felt abandoned by Crossroads and its nationally-based anti-racism resource office.
• Training felt very “black and white,” not diverse enough.
• The team basically does not function now – hasn’t met for a long time, and is reflective of the institution losing the little interest it had in the work.
• Team doesn’t understand transformation work.
• Team is not caucusing.
• A successful strategy is the combining of their work with two local institutions that also have teams and the more recent addition of another institution a little further away. The three institutions function as a mutual accountability group, something that all teams need in order to work the analysis.
“TEAM N”
- This team finds that post-training skills were missing or lost. “It was too overwhelming; too much stuff.”
- It expresses need for assistance in continuing to understand and deepen the analysis.
- Training is identified as the whole analysis, rather than as part of understanding and organizing for transformation. “…our one-, three- and five-year plans are all about how many people we are going to get through the 2-1/2 day training.”
- No coaching came from Crossroads. The institution’s nationally based anti-racism resource office was not effective in connecting this team to Crossroads.
- A white member said training is designed for a limited span of learning styles.
- This team finds Crossroads didn’t do enough to help them apply the analysis. “Nobody held us together.”
- The team didn’t understand caucusing for a very long time. “We didn’t understand about why [to] caucus. We didn’t understand IRO/IRS – we didn’t get it. We just knew we were supposed to get together and…” – it was not taught by Crossroads.
- This team no longer really exists. “We lead an agenda, but we do not function as a structured group.”
- Group caucusing is not happening – people of color are getting together, but white caucus is not, and there is no group reporting out.
- The team says it lacks structure. “We have the right structure in our head, and I think it is the right structure, but I think we just haven’t had the time and energy – there aren’t enough of us to carry it out.”
- White people don’t have clarity about how to strategically address white power and privilege. “…really important, but we don’t have an answer. It is something we’ll work out with the white caucus.”
- A successful strategy is the combining of their work with two local institutions that also have teams and the more recent addition of another institution a little further away. These three institutions function as a mutual accountability group, something that all teams need in order to work the analysis.

“TEAM O”
- This is a predominantly white institution with programmatic goals for its black neighborhood.
- It has had a series of charismatic CEOs.
- Anti-Racism training created a feel of insiders ‘club’ who had it and outsiders who didn’t among members of the institution. The team was isolated.
- Excellent relationship building with the new CEO has helped the team gain some access and a renewed mandate.
- Name change was a strategic move to address the team insider ‘club’ dynamics.
- Team did not know what to do after training.
- Current identified areas of need for training: organizing, strategic direction, facilitation.
- Team has connected with directors of three programs to begin reviewing policies and programs and figure out how racism might affect the institution’s services to members and the neighborhood.
• Team doesn’t know exactly what to do about using teaching/educating as a way to get people plugged into the organizing, i.e. equipping leadership via teaching so they themselves can apply the analysis to their own work.
• This team has found other places to go and be nurtured after the mandating CEO left and the nationally based Anti-Racism resource office pulled out.
• This team is doing some excellent organizing.
• This team is really plugged into the local organizing resources and regional caucusing. It is looking to get connected with other similar institutions.

“TEAM P”
• This is an all white institution.
• Some team members [state] there is significant denial among members that the institution has a problem with racism.
• This institution is the regional governing body for dozens of affiliated local institutions.
• Team is not caucusing because it was very difficult when they tried it. A white leader: “Three or four meetings in a row that were like…injurious to our team.” A Person of Color who is a long-time team leader responds: “It was difficult and it was very straining but it started to flush out some real issues that we had…we started putting those on the table; people started becoming uncomfortable, because in the past everything was like ‘OK! Buddy. Buddy.’” Further: “…that was healthy! … Because if we don’t deal with it internally, how are we going to deal with it in society…” Another white leaders concludes, “…my take is (names their institutional/cultural identity) don’t like it.”
• It is struggling to get POC involved in the work.
• This team lost its mandate early on, may not have recognized it and never really did anything about it – even now they don’t have a plan.
• Team doesn’t know how to do next steps.
• Team expansion is a daunting issue for this team.
• Members feel they did not get enough skills from Crossroads.
• Team does not know how to organize – “…what is the purpose of one-on-ones?”
• This team has good reflections on organizing in stage two on the Continuum.
• This team has good insights about white institutional culture and rigidity preventing the analysis from taking hold and good reflection about caucusing.

III. ANALYSIS

A. Anti-Racist Transformation in White Institutions

In processing the data gathered from anti-racism transformation teams, the documentation panel recognized emerging patterns regarding white institutions, white institutional culture, and the efficacy of anti-racism organizing in historically and/or currently all-white contexts. These patterns were deduced from comparative data analysis across institutional lines, and revealed the deep challenges faced by institutional organizers. Predominant themes that contribute to the difficulty of the institutional anti-racism work emerged, and are listed below (in no particular order); specific learnings on each theme follow.
1. Creating change in mostly white and/or all-white institutions is extraordinarily taxing.

Institutions with few members of color struggle to establish accountability relationships to anti-racist stakeholders of color because they don’t exist within the institution and often may not even exist in its greater constituency. The few people of color who may find themselves situated in white institutions tend to be pushed to the limits, and often experience ‘burn out’. This fatigue frequently centers around the high number of demands placed on a limited number of people of color involved in the anti-racism organizing, such as training demands, one-on-one organizing needs, and representation at any number of anti-racism and multicultural diversity tables. “Part of our problem has been that we are a small team. And we can only do so much. You know, I get really burnt out sometimes.”

In addition to the struggles mentioned above, a parallel pattern of ineffectiveness emerged around white people. Many interviewees in this process identified that whites are unclear about how to organize other white people in their respective institutions. This organizing hurdle sheds light on the fact that historically white institutions tend to only talk about racism if people of color are present or are in some way at the forefront. When an institution has no or low numbers of people of color, the socialized instinct is often not to talk about white power and privilege because there is no juxtaposing life experience of people of color highlighting the need to do so.

2. White institutional culture and values run counter to anti-racist values; challenges arise when internal organizers attempt truth-telling. [See Appendix #7: Transforming Values (Values that Transform): Anti-Racist Core Values.]
Teams consistently identified difficulty surrounding attempts to create new, more open and transparent institutional behavior. One recurring issue for teams in this regard focuses squarely on the tool of caucusing.

Caucusing and other relationship building strategies (effective when executed properly and consistently) have been infrequently or not applied by nearly all of the teams that participated in this process. The purpose of caucusing is to create the space and relationships for people of color to focus on internalized racist oppression, and for whites to address internalized racist superiority. In order for caucusing to be useful and productive, participants must strive always for honesty, transparency, clarity, vulnerability, collectivity, and emotionality. These behaviors and modes of operating tend to threaten the social order of white institutions, which are more frequently rooted in values of silence, obfuscation, secrecy, un-emotionality, and the maintenance of the status quo. “I’d like to say something about the … caucus… This being honest and holding people accountable is very un-[like our institution’s cultural way of being].”

When presented with this counter-cultural conundrum, many teams opted not to tackle the white institutional behavior socialized in their stakeholders as well as in themselves. At the expense of the teams, caucusing was either dropped after challenging issues of internalized racist or other oppressive behavior were raised or it was not attempted at all. Not only were teams compromised relationally because of this, but opportunities to exhibit behavior different from that of the white institution also evaporated.

3. **People of color tend to experience confusion and ambivalence when encouraged to understand their role(s) in creating institutional change, often focusing on how racism is a “white problem.”**

Many people of color have been socialized to understand racism as a problem solely of white people’s attitudes, behaviors and actions. When asked by white institutions that are attempting anti-racism work if they might like to join the effort, many people of color do not think it is their job to ‘help’ white people. “They [people of color] don’t want to be the ‘token’ – we’ve heard that! They don’t want to be the person of color on the team… We’re scared of driving the last ones away!”

The conversation between people of color often backs away from the reality that they, too, internalize behavior and act in ways that support white racism. As long-time sufferers of institutionalized racism, people of color can be reticent to see how they are used in the racist paradigm. The effectiveness of the anti-racism work depends on people of color having the ability to understand their place in the web, and to struggle with changing that behavior, while not necessarily teaching white people what it means to be anti-racist. (The task of changing white people falls on white people.) This dilemma is particularly problematic if, as stated earlier, there are few people of color in the white institution and white members are unwilling or unable to organize other whites, as this serves to reinforce the belief that only whites ‘need to be fixed’.

4. **White institutional leadership is often wedded to the racist status quo and can become obstacles to concretizing change programmatically and structurally.**
Crossroads’ organizing model for institutional change greatly emphasizes the importance of building relationships between transformation teams and internal leadership. Teams can frequently experience friction with leadership that prefers not to be challenged and invited into new ways of being. This friction can manifest in myriad ways including, but not limited to: isolating the team, limiting or eliminating resources and budgets, information sabotage, discrediting, and silencing. “We’re pretty much a marginalized group in terms of the power structure of the [institution] – sort of pariahs. We tend to be looked at as nothing but trouble makers.”

When teams and institutional leadership are not in or fall out of relationship, this can hijack the power a team has to influence leaders in using an anti-racist lens in their positions and roles. It is not the job of a team to change the structure, policies and programs of an institution; but rather to inspire and organize those who have the power to make such changes. If the leadership of an institution is committed to the ‘normal’ way of life in the organization or refuses to believe that racism is a problem, the team is forced to organize in circuitous ways. These circuitous strategies can sometimes negatively affect the work, causing teams to fall even deeper out of relationship with the very leaders they hope to influence.

5. **Leadership changes and transitions, especially that of leadership supportive of the institution’s anti-racism work, drastically affect the sustainability and success of transformation teams.**

Nearly all teams interviewed experienced their institution’s leadership changing at least once in their six-to-eight years of experience. Often the CEO, Board, Council, or other decision making body was the only source of the original mandate calling the team into existence. Too often, the necessary charge for the team disappeared with the leadership that originated it. After the departure of leadership and official mandates, many teams were unable to strategize about what to do next. “We had a former [leader]… He was a very dynamic [leader] and there as a large influx of people looking for a little different type of [institution] at that time… [this leader] had kind of a vision for a multicultural [institution]… There was some controversy and dissatisfaction with some of the things he was doing and there was some discussion about that. So he decided to leave.”

Many teams identified that their inability to strategize regarding leadership changes also had something to do with organizing skills, primarily the lack of them. Not having the useful sense of tools like one-on-ones, power meetings, and strategy sessions directly affected teams’ capacity to prepare for and deal with leadership changes. Teams felt hopeless and unheard in search processes, much of this due to the lack of relationships that might have otherwise been nurtured through the use of organizing tools referenced above.

6. **Organizing stakeholders who are in stage two of the Continuum on Becoming an Anti-Racist Multi-Cultural Institution (Appendix #5) is thorny; the anti-racism work tends to aim more toward constituents in stage three on the Continuum.**

The trajectory of anti-racism organizing swings primarily toward institutional constituents who hold multicultural diversity as a value, and who also understand it is failing because of unaddressed racism. This group of stakeholders is often referred to as
being in stage 3 of the Continuum, the stage in which symbolic institutional attitudes and actions concerning change are rooted. This stage is marked in particular by public pronouncements regarding multicultural diversity, recruitment of ‘someone of color’, and an institutional identity as ‘non-racist’. However there is little or no contextual change in the culture, policies, and decision-making; and the institution remains relatively unaware of patterns of privilege, paternalism, and control. After training, team members are often most equipped to work with this group of people – those members likely to be easily drawn into the ‘leading edge’ of the institution’s anti-racism work.

However in historically white institutions, teams discover that the majority of their stakeholders tend to reside and function in stage two of the Continuum. This is the stage in which the organization and its membership maintain the passivity and ‘club’ nature of white institutional life, tolerating a certain number of ‘acceptable’ people of color while intentionally maintaining white power and privilege through its formal policies, practices, teachings, and decision-making on all levels of institutional life. These people tend to not to hear the anti-racist message, as many are befuddled about why racism is an issue or are unable to see the value in even having any kind of multicultural agenda, even those that are little more than superficial efforts designed to increase individual awareness. “As we’ve worked in this [institution] for however long, it’s very clear that almost all the white people in the [institution] are in stage two… They function in an all-white [organization], in all-white community, on purpose, intentionally… We’ve begun to think that what this team… needs to do is get these white bodies moved into some kind of context where there is some kind of diversity. Because the ocean they’re swimming in, it’s like, ‘There’s no problem! Everything’s fine! We don’t need this!’”

The use of tools and trainings geared towards prejudice reduction, raising awareness, personal sharing, storytelling, emotional openness, cultural competence, and interpersonal relationship building afford the best opportunities to tap into this particular stakeholder group. But because of the heavy training emphasis on the institutional analysis of racism, teams tend to operate only within that framework, believing instead that programs of awareness and multicultural consciousness-raising are simply ‘dog and pony’ shows.

7. *Institutional culture change is time consuming, and many people want faster, ‘measurable’ results.*

White institutions are inclined to require evidence or ‘proof’ of change, often measured by increased membership of color, striking programmatic changes, and fully transformed deliverables, among others. However anti-racism work is designed to create incremental changes that ultimately lead to the cultural shift necessary for appropriate programmatic adaptation. This approach runs counter to the external focus of most institutions, and often derails white institutions’ focus on transactional changes that make an organization appear transformed when in fact the social norms and culture remain untouched. Bridging this rift between philosophies poses quite a feat for transformation teams.

“We do feel like we’ve not been able to really implement the Crossroads model in our [institution], and it is frustrating, and it is discouraging… They don’t want to sit around for ten years; nobody who has a view of culture wants to sit around [for] ten years with no results… I remember clearly when we first started this that this was a fifty year or a
hundred year project, and I appreciate the wisdom of the person who said if you take on a cause that you can accomplish this week or this month, maybe you’re not listening… But I think the scarcity of wins from the point of view is a major, major problem. And you can tell we don’t feel like we’ve had too many wins.”

B. Successes & Best Practices

Though teams evidenced that transforming white institutions is remarkably difficult, it was also clear that specific practices led to success. In light of the sometimes seemingly insurmountable obstacles to anti-racism organizing, these accomplishments and strategies for effectiveness are especially noteworthy. Victories in organizing produced rich relationships and upbeat morale for both teams and their institutional leadership. The predominant successes and best practices are listed below (in no particular order); specific details on these practices follow.

| 1. Engaging leadership by building relationships, nurturing accountability, and presenting open invitations connected to the self-interest of the leader(s) or leadership body(-ies). |
| 2. Coalition building with intra-institutional organizations/committees, as well as collaborating with other independent external institutions also pursuing anti-racism work. |
| 3. Maintaining the team’s vision in order to steer the institutional anti-racism work in a clear and direct way. |
| 4. Willingness to ‘create the path as it is walked’, and utilizing skills whenever necessary to discern the next step. |
| 5. Collaboration and relationship building between different communities of color. |
| 6. Creating and maintaining connections to grassroots organizing in the surrounding community(-ies). |
| 7. Contextualizing the training to fit the language, culture, and identity of the institution. |
| 8. Caucusing in order to deal with internalized racist oppression and internalized racist superiority, and applying insights to the broader organizing task. |

Though maintaining relationships with institutional leadership was described as a challenge, several teams did tell stories illustrating the power of good and strategic organizing relationships with their leaders. For example one team organized the selection process for a new CEO and enjoys an even stronger mandate as a result. “The [new CEO] is … jumping at the idea [of the team relationship] because he’s not ‘out there’ and the [CEO] wants a coach.”
Another team, after several years of wrangling with leadership, decided to step back and take a more conservative approach to their work. This team identified the present organizing needs and self-interest of their CEO and other leadership, thus opening the door to strategic suggestions and agitation in order to move the entire institution forward. Rather than only pushing their agenda, the team worked to meet leadership where they were at. “[Team leaders and the CEO] have made some progress in terms of just the relationship together, appreciating each other’s strengths. And just recently we’re seeing the anti-racism team meeting with some of the others to integrate, influencing in our institution … And there seems to be a better willingness of [organizational] leaders to have that happen. I know a few have even approached the team and said, ‘Hey, can you help?’”

2. **Coalition building with intra-institutional organizations/committees, as well as collaborating with other independent external institutions also pursuing anti-racism work.**

Three independent teams from the same national organization found great success in building an intentional relationship amongst themselves. This has proven to be especially useful since the national leadership body decided to abandon the anti-racism work. Left without the larger leadership, these teams chose to come together in order to nurture, challenge, and support each other. This relationship has afforded the opportunity to share resources, collaborate, host joint trainings, and strategize regionally.

Other teams also indicated success in building bridges between the anti-racism team and other anti-oppression organizations inside their institution. Coalitions have included, but are not limited to, relationships with advocacy groups for various communities of color, connecting with other social justice committees, and shared event planning with members who are engaged in anti-oppression work. “We were also part of [two local anti-racism groups] and all that… those were our support groups.”

3. **Maintaining the team’s vision in order to steer the institutional anti-racism work in a clear and direct way.**

Teams that remain focused on their goals, objectives, and reason(s) for being are far more suited for the tasks of anti-racism work. Teams function as the lead group influencing others in the institution and inspiring action. “I feel the train is moving here and now; we’re at a place where we’ve called, ‘All aboard’ and people are getting on – slowly but surely – they are getting on. I am looking for much better… community work. I see it happening right here and now… I am so confident that what we’re going to see here in a year’s time, within the four walls of this place, is … many of us that are on fire… [and we’ll say] we gotta deal with this damn racism."

When a team is clear about its purpose for existing – how it wants to inspire and change people and communities – it is poised for the execution of successful strategies to meet that goal. Two teams exemplified this by working always with the next reasonable step, while vigilantly continuing to understand that there is another step after that, and another, and another. And with each successive step, the team measured and accounted for how they were shifting not just institutional leadership, but institutional culture as well.
4. **Willingness to ‘create the path as it is walked’, and utilizing skills whenever necessary to discern the next step.**

After initial training teams often feel they either ought to ‘have all the answers’ or that Crossroads does or should. Because the nature of anti-racism organizing is both highly sophisticated and very organic, a great deal of flexibility and creativity is demanded of those engaged in this movement work. This can be quite a feat for teams, as many people in white institutions are socialized to not reveal that solutions may only be unearthed as the work progresses, and that all steps must be identified clearly and concretely before embarking on any project. “… We stopped ourselves because what if we do it wrong; what if we don’t organize right?”

Teams did, however, exercise their organizing skills in light of the fact that they may not have all the solutions at any given time. This approach to organizing is both liberating and empowering, allowing teams the space to problem solve and assess their work not just on the leading edge of their institutions, but also on the leading edge of institutional anti-racism organizing as a whole. With this elasticity, teams are able to forgive themselves for mistakes while learning immensely from them. “So when we look at this great big immense thing that we’re all on the journey learning together, we’re all at a better place now. I can’t spend time wrapped up in what I didn’t know. I acknowledge it, I know that it was real, but I can’t nurse that thing. I know better now…”

5. **Collaboration and relationship building between different communities of color.**

Because the construction of race and racism in the United States is historically rooted in a dichotomous approach (i.e. black/white), working across racial lines can be quite complicated for different groups of people of color. This institutionalized racial construct pits people of color against one another, making coalition building and mutual support nearly impossible. This issue also continues to damage collective accomplishments, and instead places people of color in positions where they act out internalized racist oppression.

Teams are actively working to counter this socialized binary norm, and are encouraging one another and their institutional stakeholders to connect the dots. One team expressed that though there is a rift between Black and Latino membership in their institution, they encourage and create opportunities for these two groups to be in relationship. Events are strategically scheduled to evoke mutual decision-making and the creation of a unified voice. This strategy ultimately led to shared engagement in the search and selection process of a new CEO. “… Our mission [is] the inclusion of people of color … I think seeing how one oppression has been constructed will open your eyes to other social constraints.”

6. **Creating and maintaining connections to grassroots organizing in the surrounding community(-ies).**

Part of creating institutional change involves connecting institutions to grassroots community work. Transformation of an institution without engagement in community change is incomplete, and can perpetuate continued patterns of unaccountability and disconnectedness. This lack of connection may also leave organizers unable to see the
value of applying the institutional analysis of racism to stakeholders’ everyday experiences outside of the institution.

Several teams invited institutional membership into wider community activism such as city, state and federal legislative action; local non-profit endorsement; supporting neighborhood and community development centers; encouraging participation in race-conscious community arts (theater, dance, spoken word, etc.); and inspiring anti-racist organizing in other institutions. “…[We were] birthing organizations which could attack racism in local areas. A wonderful by-product of the team’s work…And we need[ed] to partner with other anti-racism work.”

7. **Contextualizing the training to fit the language, culture, and identity of the institution.**

Crossroads training model is a template for change that teams must modify in order to increase its usefulness. Teams that tailored the basic anti-racism analysis to the specific needs and culture of their institutions found great success. In doing so, institutional organizers utilized all avenues for reaching their leadership and constituents: language, values, social norms, mission and identity. “…Like any model, we need to really make it our own and adapt it to our own specific needs more.”

One group in particular observed that many of their stakeholders resisted analysis training when it was facilitated by Crossroads. Feedback from these constituents indicated that Crossroads facilitators could not adequately contextualize the training in order to meet their institutional reality. When this institution’s anti-racism team and Core Organizer/Trainers chose to adapt the training and model, stakeholder interest spiked and people became engaged with the team’s work in a renewed way. This team continues to create training innovations and experiences ongoing triumphs.

8. **Caucusing in order to deal with internalized racist oppression and internalized racist superiority, and applying insights to the broader organizing task.**

Caucusing, which was identified by teams as perhaps the most challenging aspect of the institutional anti-racism transformation model, is also highly productive and healthy when done well. It is through caucusing that individuals address internalization issues and identity, and can then be invited into new collective behavior, both as separate racial identity groups (people of color and white) and as a whole cross-racial team. These self and group reflections can then be applied directly to the anti-racism agenda and strategies creating the opportunity to see the connection between individual socialization, group-think, and the exhibition of new actions.

White people socialized in the U.S. race construct often go to great lengths to avoid talking about white power and privilege. Caucusing is a structured way to encourage white people to struggle with identity and social norms. “I think the caucus has shaped our work and at least in the white caucus we have really come to value that time… I know a lot of the incidents that we have processed…[are] a direct result of our caucus…”

People of color can gain a sense of collectivity and empowerment thanks to caucusing. Caucusing is what nurtures the ability in people of color to see that their behaviors have also been shaped by racism, and that this work also demands changes from them. “…With the leaders of color meeting every two weeks – we’ve got a caucus that occurs
every other Wednesday… We had to encourage each other. ‘Wait a minute, you all! This is what we have been empowered to do – we don’t need to ask nobody – it’s our [institution]. The people who are going to lead this work [are] us – let’s own and exercise our authority.’ And I think this came out of caucusing, [and] that came out of understanding the analysis.”

C. Crossroads Organizing & Training Methodology

The documentation panel uncovered many challenges teams experienced with training. These are the items that were identified consistently by most participating institutions, and created themes in need of consideration. Issues with teaching and training methodology are listed below (in no particular order), followed by more detailed information.

1. **Crossroads is not perceived to be in relationship with teams, lending an “out of sight, out of mind” approach to working with transformation teams.**

2. **Crossroads is seen as rigid and formal, operating with lots of rules regarding training and exercising little or no creative problem solving.**

3. **Basic organizing skills (strategic planning, one-on-ones, power meetings, stakeholder assessment, application of the analysis, post-training follow-ups) are either not mentioned or not emphasized enough in team training.**

4. **Although Crossroads’ mantra is, “You can’t teach racism away,” teams felt the 2-1/2 day analysis training was the only tool for engaging stakeholders.**

5. **Teams require greater assistance in expansion and replacement of members due to attrition.**

6. **Accountability to people of color continues to remain unattainable and nebulous.**

7. **Teams do not know how to navigate conflict.**

8. **Caucusing was not underscored or taught well in training, causing many teams to avoid the discipline entirely.**

9. **Crossroads’ trainings and teaching cater to limited learning styles.**

10. **Crossroads’ analysis of racism is Afro-centric, focusing primarily on black/white issues.**

1. **Crossroads is not perceived to be in relationship with many teams, lending an “out of sight, out of mind” approach to working with transformation teams.**

   Teams shared a sense of being out of relationship with Crossroads. Many people expressed that unless they were in a formal training setting with Crossroads staff, they had little or no contact. Interviewees also indicated that because of this lack of relationship, teams often felt abandoned and with nowhere to turn for help. “Some of us have connections with Crossroads in other ways, but I don’t know if our team has had a relationship with Crossroads for a long time. We’ve never called Crossroads for advice.”
This lack of relationship led several teams into isolation, as they had nominal or no support within their own institutions. Unless a team was connected to other local organizing or to a larger institutional body (judicatory, national organization, etc.) that was also pursuing anti-racism transformation, Crossroads would be the only tie to the anti-racism work. This is especially problematic given that most historically white institutions do not have the capacity to teach or support the skills necessary for anti-racism organizing, particularly in the early stages of a team’s existence.

2. **Crossroads is seen as rigid and formal, operating with lots of rules regarding training and exercising little or no creative problem solving.**

Interviewees who had experience in either the 2-1/2 day analysis training or team formation training expressed that they found Crossroads’ training methodology to be rigid and fairly unforgiving. Team members stated their dissatisfaction with the “rules,” saying often that their training felt controlled and limiting. Many felt that being creative in the application of their organizing skills would be frowned upon. “… It was like there is a Crossroads way and you can’t get away from that. You can’t change that and that’s the sense… we had.”

Perhaps most detrimental about Crossroads’ rigidity is that it left teams with virtually no room to be effective problem solvers. “…We also…did not feel any permission…to [adapt the training model]…And you know, that was partly us and who we were, and I think it was also partly the way Crossroads presented, ‘This is the way you do it, and if you’re not doing it that way you’re probably falling into…white privilege or power…””

Instead of thinking creatively, teams got the impression that Crossroads has all the answers, and that people would somehow be ridiculed or “punished” for expanding or applying the model to meet their specific needs.

3. **Basic organizing skills (strategic planning, one-on-ones, power meetings, stakeholder assessment, application of the analysis, post-training follow-ups) are either not mentioned or not emphasized enough in team training.**

When teams are placed in the midst of a prime organizing situation, many do not know how to address the opportunity. This inability has a great deal to do with learning and utilizing organizing tools. Teams often felt they lacked the skills necessary to get the work done, and many did not recall some organizing skills being heavily emphasized. Without a grasp of these skills, teams are set up to fail.

“I think we felt we don’t know how to organize!… And it does seem like that’s what we need help with – to know how to organize. How do you organize the big picture? And what is the big picture? Where are we going?” Crossroads is perceived as not being clear on this, both in concept and translation. This is doubly difficult for teams if, as was stated above, they are not in relationship with Crossroads.

4. **Although Crossroads’ mantra is “you can’t teach racism away,” teams felt 2-1/2 day analysis training was the only tool for engaging stakeholders.**

Related to the lack of emphasis on organizing skills, teams expressed that their only organizing option for engaging stakeholders was to utilize the 2-1/2 day analysis training.
“Based on our Crossroads training, [the goal was] to get [stakeholders] into a Crossroads [2- 1/2 day analysis] training…That’s what we tried to do, and that’s where the frustration came in because the next [training] may have been months away and we needed to have these people go.”

This implied message of ‘training only’ runs counter to the oft-sung Crossroads tune that one cannot teach racism away. Instead of being one useful organizing tool, the 2-1/2 day analysis training became central to (and often the sole reason for) the anti-racism work. Additionally, this teaching-heavy approach that teams learned from Crossroads stunts the ability to gain a sense of autonomy and ownership. Instead, many team members felt forever indebted to Crossroads as most were unable to facilitate the training themselves. For some institutions the anti-racism was perceived as “Crossroads’ work” instead of understood as the institution’s work.

5. **Teams require greater assistance in expansion and replacement of members due to attrition.**

Like leadership changes, all teams identified that team attrition and expansion were problematic issues. For any number of reasons, teams’ original membership consistently dropped by about 50% within 18 to 24 months. At a loss and in need of new team members, organizers found themselves at a standstill. “The team has also struggled a lot with how we bring new team members on board, what kind of orientation and training we have for new team members…it was too overwhelmingly impossible.”

Bound by Crossroads’ rules and procedures for team training and lack of creativity (see above), many teams felt there was no real, workable option for expanding teams. Interviewees stated that the standard three-phase Crossroads team training model was all that was offered as a solution. But many teams did not expand widely enough to make full team training financially feasible. (Most teams at time of expansion sought to fill approximately three to ten positions, far short of the 40 person maximum to fill a training event.) In response to this one choice for expansion, some teams limped along without filling the membership gap while others added members with inadequate training.

6. **Accountability to people of color continues to remain unattainable and nebulous.**

Accountability issues for teams are three-fold: one, the team is unaware of what it means to be accountable to people of color in the institution; two, the team lacks clarity on accountability to communities of color outside of the institution; and three, people of color on the team are not necessarily accountable to other anti-racist people and communities of color. “I don’t know – I don’t even know how to be accountable. I don’t know what the need is; I don’t know what is perceived. I feel like I’m in this kind of vague, ambiguous place.”

Historically white institutions never before had to structure accountability to people of color. Unable to model accountability within or for the institution, the work of teams is greatly compromised, and can trigger a great deal of skepticism about the need for accountability in the organization. Lack of accountability can be dangerous for team life as well, and may lead to a group becoming insular and ‘club’-like. To complicate the issue of accountability further, if people of color on the team are out of relationship with
other anti-racist people of color, the chances of acting out internalized oppression are quite high as there is no group for which individuals carry responsibility or ambassadorship.

7. **Teams do not know how to navigate conflict.**

   Anti-racism work can be conflict ridden, and issues often arise between individuals on teams and between caucuses of color and white caucuses. It is not unusual for discord to divide entire teams and completely derail all anti-racism work in an organization. When teams are incapable of working through their disputes, the tension likely erupts in other displaced ways: triangulation, self-sabotage, manipulation of individuals and the entire group, withholding of information, isolation, silencing, and passive aggression. Conflict is also an issue for teams in regard to organizing stakeholders. Team interviews revealed that when institutional organizers experienced resistance from or variance with constituents and leadership, they often became paralyzed and unable to work through or around the disputes. As stated previously in this report, when teams fall out of relationship with their stakeholders it can be quite detrimental to the anti-racism work. Unresolved disagreements contribute heavily to the organizing standstill teams experience within their institutions and with institutional leadership.

8. **Caucusing was not underscored or taught well in training, causing many teams to avoid the discipline entirely.**

   Teams consistently stated that Crossroads did poorly in emphasizing the importance of caucusing. “…We met for two years without ever having a caucus, without ever even knowing it was a recommended procedure…Now as we began doing work, we began to get into all kinds of trouble…” Additionally, interviewees also stated that teams were not given enough facilitation and management skills. It is evident that the inadequate lessons on caucusing contributed to many teams avoiding the practice. Combined with the propensity for conflict and ever present expressions of internalized racist oppression and superiority, the lack of caucusing only makes an already difficult task that much more challenging.

9. **Crossroads trainings and teaching cater to limited learning styles.**

   Interviewees described Crossroads trainings feeling didactic, and based in a banking model of teaching. Teams reported that there was great desire for multiple teaching methods. “I think that [the training] is done in a way that appeals to one or two learning styles, but not a lot. There is not a lot of interaction, there’s not a lot of using your body… it’s just a lot of sitting there taking information in.” Teams informed the documentation panel that this mode of teaching and learning is especially exhausting, and exacerbates brain fatigue given the depth and breadth of the training content.

10. **Crossroads analysis of racism is Afro-centric, focusing primarily on black/white issues.**

    Interviewees of color who identify as Native American, Latina/o, Asian or Pacific Islander, or Arab American/Middle Eastern indicated that the training focused almost exclusively on the lived experiences of African Americans/Blacks in the United States.
For these people of color the absence of other stories, histories, and realities makes them invisible and aids only in inflaming internalized racial oppression among various groups of people of color. A critique of the Afro-centric analysis of racism also highlights the fact that incomplete history is essentially false history, and distracts people from understanding the race construct as a social norm centered around white power and privilege – not around one people of color group’s experience.

**IV. RECOMMENDATIONS: NEXT STEPS**

After assessing the data gathered from team and individual interviews, the documentation panel identified several areas in Crossroads in need of change or adaptation. This list presents items proposed for adjustment or addition to the training process (in no particular order); more detailed information follows.

1. **Exercise greater flexibility and creativity in both training and organizing of teams.**
2. **More fully teach the basics of organizing, and how to apply grassroots organizing strategies to white institutions.**
3. **Better assist teams in identifying and engaging in meaningful relationships with people of color; this is especially crucial for mostly or all-white institutions.**
4. **Develop teaching and organizing tools for teams working with stakeholders located in stage two of the Continuum on Becoming an Anti-Racist Multi-Cultural Institution.**
5. **Maintain relationships with teams.**
6. **Clarify accountability to people of color: what it means, what to strive for, how to make it possible.**
7. **Teach the importance of caucusing, and provide the skills necessary to practice the discipline.**
8. **Center the analysis of racism around white supremacy instead of only one people of color community’s experience(s).**
9. **Create more trainings to meet teams varied needs.**

1. **Exercise greater flexibility and creativity in both training and organizing of teams.**
   
   Crossroads needs to better meet the needs of teams in training and in their organizing. This need for creative problem solving appears in several ways:
   
   • Better solutions for training expansion team members, taking into account a team’s social and financial situation.
   • Increased flexibility in training so as to allow for a more effective ‘human-based’ learning process while also covering all necessary information.
   • Allowing for some autonomy within teams so as to foster a sense of ownership of the anti-racism work.
   • Support ongoing relationships with teams after team training.
2. More fully teach the basics of organizing, and how to apply grassroots organizing strategies to white institutions.

Teams consistently expressed that they did not know how to organize, with many struggling to recall even a few organizing tools. It is evident to the documentation panel that Crossroads staff, all of whom have some kind of community and grassroots organizing experience, created a model based on the assumption that team members would also carry the same degree of comprehension about organizing. This has been one of the greatest areas in need of change.

Crossroads must focus more strongly on Organizing 101 – teaching people the basics of community organizing to help teams apply those skills in their home institutions. Connecting the organizing dots while simultaneously identifying the nuances of transformational change is a skill that must be nurtured in team members. Institutional organizing is highly sophisticated and unless teams have the foundational pieces of change creation, they will flounder.

3. Better assist teams in identifying and engaging in meaningful relationships with people of color; this is especially crucial for mostly or all white institutions.

The documentation panel gave a great deal of thought to the effectiveness of anti-racism organizing in mostly or all-white institutions. This situation poses quite a problem, as white institutions and organizers need to be in responsible and accountable relationships with people of color – yet people of color are marginalized, isolated, scarce, or non-existent in many historically white institutions. Although Crossroads believes that an all-white institution can be anti-racist despite the fact that there may be no people of color within its walls, teams in mostly white organizations struggled with how to actualize meaningful relationships with people of color who, though they may not be staff in or ‘insiders’ of the institution, have enough investment in the institution to support the anti-racism work.

Crossroads must better assist these white institutions in building relationships with constituents of color well in advance of team formation. Though perhaps seemingly tedious, the documentation panel suggests that consideration to this task be given in the following ways:

- Teach one-on-ones early in the discernment process since this organizing tool is one that can be utilized to determine the self-interest of people of color who may be invited into the institution’s anti-racism work.
- Devote much more time to a strategic analysis identifying where people of color exist in or related to the institution.
- Create an intentional opportunity for interested people of color to learn more about the focus of the work, the desired outcome, and expectations.
- Providing the Planning and Design Task Force with introductory organizing tools to equip them for building intentional relationships with potential team members of color.
- Offer ongoing oversight and assistance in the search for and selection of team members of color.
4. **Develop teaching and organizing tools for teams working with stakeholders located in stage two of the Continuum on Becoming and Anti-Racist Multi-Cultural Institution.**

Teams identified an enormous need regarding tools for working with constituents in stage two of the Continuum of Institutional Change, stating that the current training options offered by Crossroads met only the needs of a small sector of stakeholders. It is advisable that Crossroads create tools, exercises, and trainings geared for people who are only recently moving into an understanding and/or appreciation of multicultural diversity. These tools should center around interpersonal and cultural sharing, cultural competence, prejudice awareness, and diversity development. The documentation panel recommends that any new diversity programs also encourage people to understand that there is anti-racist transformation beyond multiculturalism – but to take care to do so in a developmentally appropriate way.

5. **Maintain relationships with teams.**

Several teams stated that after training was completed, they felt abandoned by Crossroads. The documentation panel counsels that Crossroads devise a way to be in intentional relationship with teams and team leaders in order to nurture the connection, keep the team connected to the national network, and help teams be aware of new materials, trainings, and innovations. It is the belief of the panel that this change will not only assist teams, but could potentially make Crossroads more likely to listen, strategize more appropriately for respective institutional cultures, and contribute to the morale of a national anti-racism movement.

Ideally, highly relational organizing would be the sole focus of one or two lead organizers, preferably on staff. Though this is nearly impossible financially for Crossroads at this time, the Board and staff need to begin thinking as creatively and strategically as possible in order to make this change happen.

6. **Clarify accountability to people of color: what it means, what to strive for, how to make it possible.**

Accountability and how to live it remains ambiguous and amorphous for all teams interviewed in this process. Whether lost in translation or not spoken at all, teams identified very little information received regarding accountability, primarily the nuts of bolts of its creation and execution. Crossroads needs to provide clearer direction in the following ways:

- Heighten the emphasis on accountability in team training.
- Provide examples of accountability to teams and organizers.
- Share possible strategies for the development of accountability structures.
- Identify the organizing measures necessary for effective accountability.
- Give examples of best practices and successes.
- Underscore the symbiotic relationship between responsibility and accountability.
- Maintain an interest in and expectation of deepening relationships with anti-racist leaders in communities of color.
7. **Teach the importance of caucusing, and provide the skills necessary to practice the discipline.**

Like accountability and organizing skills, many teams indicated that they heard or remembered very little from training about caucusing. Primary issues of concern shed light on a lack of clarity of its purpose, how to technically engage in caucusing, and how to deal with the conflict that can be related to caucusing. These issues need to be addressed more directly in training, as well as in extra sessions or events if necessary.

Most importantly, Crossroads is advised to teach teams about the organizing possibilities of caucusing. Individual interviewees said that they believed caucusing was just for personal sharing, and that this became tiresome and self-indulgent. Strategic ways caucusing can be used to make decisions, exercise accountability, build and create intentional relationships, and transform culture are not communicated well to teams.

8. **Center the analysis of racism around white supremacy instead of only one people of color community’s experience(s).**

A critique of Crossroads’ analysis is that it is primarily black and white, to the exclusion of other people of color. This criticism is consistent from people of color who do not identify as African American/Black. Crossroads needs to reframe the analysis in a way that allows for representation of all communities of color, centralized around the construction of white supremacy rather than the experience of only group. It is likely this change will reduce the effects of internalized racist oppression among people of color in training and on transformation teams.

9. **Create more trainings to meet teams’ varied needs.**

In response to concerns regarding limited training options, the panel suggests that Crossroads consider the creation of new trainings or skills-deepening opportunities for teams. These events could focus on team life, caucusing, stakeholder analysis, etc. Teams are likely to benefit greatly from these additional resources and advanced opportunities for growth.

Additionally, it is suggested that Crossroads also develop trainings that may be used by teams to engage or further develop stakeholders and strategic partners. These trainings may have fewer prerequisites than full team training.

V. **CHANGES ALREADY IN PROGRESS**

Prior to this documentation process, Crossroads staff and board members were already anticipating the evolving needs of teams, especially as they relate to training and consultation. During a period of leadership transition and organizational restructuring approximately five years ago, new energy emerged within Crossroads that afforded greater openness and transparency, vulnerability and honesty. It was also during this time that those intimately connected with Crossroads began more authentically and intentionally wrestling with the ways in which white power and privilege shaped – and continues to shape – the way even Crossroads functions.
It is this self-scrutiny and honesty within Crossroads that has led to opportunities for change. According to intuition and ongoing conversations with teams and individuals, staff and board began to implement changes. These changes are listed below (in no particular order), with detailed descriptions following.

1. An organizer was hired as staff to be in contact with teams and team leaders.
2. Crossroads board members regularly attend our annual national networking and advanced training in an effort to make significant connections with teams.
3. Development has begun on new trainings including Organizing 101, linking multicultural diversity and anti-racism, and the connection between race and class.
4. A “menu” of team training options has been made available to current teams (see Appendix #8 Training Brochure).
5. A more human-centered and organic team training process was developed and is currently fully implemented.
6. The analysis of institutional racism has expanded to centralize white supremacy, and reduce the negative impact of a binary, Afro-centric approach.

1. An organizer was hired as staff to be in contact with teams and team leaders.
   Two years ago a contract trainer was hired as part-time staff to accommodate the need for team organizing. This person both checks in with current teams, and aids in exploring new leads.

2. Crossroads board members regularly attend our annual national networking and advanced training in an effort to make significant connections with teams.
   During the time of organizational restructuring an intentional decision was made to gather as many board members as possible each year for Crossroads’ national advanced training. This invitation to participate was part of encouraging a stronger connection between Crossroads’ leadership and the anti-racism teams organizing in the field. As a result teams have begun to see Crossroads as greater than just one or two people.

3. Development has begun on new trainings including Organizing 101, linking multicultural diversity and anti-racism, and the connection between race and class.
   Crossroads staff and core organizer/trainers have started the initial steps for a new training model creation. This work is housed primarily in the Leadership Development Institute’s (LDI) Core Organizer/Trainer and Apprentice (COTA) Roundtable*, and is convened by the Director of LDI.

   *The COTA Roundtable currently includes 26 individuals from Crossroads and numerous partner institutions. Their experience ranges from apprentices beginning the core trainer process to organizer/trainers with decades of anti-racism training and organizing experience. This group is diverse on all levels, and has the capacity to lead bilingual (Spanish/English) trainings.
4. A “menu” of team training options has been made available to current teams. (See Appendix #8 Additional training opportunities brochure).

   Approximately 18 months ago Crossroads staff compiled a brochure listing a ‘menu’ of additional training options for teams and their constituents. This brochure has been widely distributed, and several teams have utilized the trainings offered.

5. A more human-centered and organic team training process was developed and is currently fully implemented.

   During the last three years an extraordinary amount of work went into overhauling the team training process. Under scrutiny were content, methodology, historical data, and institutional application. The team training process has also become more human process-oriented, with increased flexibility and the openness for organic team development and learning based upon the strengths and needs of each team in formation.

   An added benefit to changing team training is that it has created the need for highly skilled trainers. Team training facilitators must think quickly ‘on their feet’ and adapt to the presenting issues of each respective group. The COTA Roundtable believes that this change has nurtured advanced skills in organizer/trainers that may not have previously existed.

6. The analysis of institutional racism has expanded to centralize white supremacy, and reduce the negative impact of a binary, Afro-centric approach.

   Crossroads staff, organizer/trainers, and board have gone to great lengths to shift the analysis of racism from Afro-centric to white supremacy-centric (see Appendix #1 - Historical Development of Institutional Racism). This was a deeply challenging task, and forced all Crossroads members to slog through myriad racist socialized norms. This significant transformation began shortly after our leadership change, approximately five years ago.

   The resulting effects of this change have been remarkable. When applied in a training setting, participants – both of color and white – often grasp history in new ways. Trainees have repeatedly expressed gratitude to organizer/trainers for the opportunity to understand racism in a holistic way. Organizer/trainers have also reported a stronger sense of coalition among people of color because of this.

   As the analysis has expanded, additional areas of how racism and oppression manifest have been explored by Crossroads and Crossroads colleagues. Appendices #9 Racism, Classism & Worker Injustice: an Historical Wagging Tail; #10 Anti-War Statement issued by Crossroads and The Peoples Institute for Survival and Beyond; and #11 Anti-Semitism Reflection are included as examples.
VI. CONCLUSION

Though ripe with challenges, the documentation panel believes Crossroads’ approach to anti-racist institutional transformation has great potential for effectiveness. The identified areas of need are almost exclusively about skill development and translation. Meanwhile, the model content went virtually uncontested, with nearly all interviewees reflecting positively on the information presented in training and the transformative outcome they experienced. One leader of color shared specifically, "...there was a transformation happening that was more than intellectually. It was intellectually competent, but it was more. People could see, they changed worlds almost; they were invited to and some did! So it was like something that carried people to a new place; and I saw that! And I was intrigued at ‘How did they do this? What happened here?’ And so it was that, because I saw what happened! I saw what happened to people during training!"

The challenges in the training and organizing model exist primarily for two reasons: one, Crossroads inadequately teaches the skills necessary for anti-racism organizing; and two, teams fail to execute said skills properly. The panel sees these two issues as intricately linked, and involving both ‘teacher error’ and ‘user error’. Crossroads is capable of remedying this problem, and can also better assist teams in skill development and application.

As much as the panel can determine, there are not many organizations in the field designed to organize in and transform historically white institutions. Several interviewees and teams also made this observation. "...[We] were blown away, enthralled, excited! We thought ‘we've got what we need here!’” “... We’ve looked at other methodologies, we’ve tried some things, but we haven’t had any success… In my opinion, Crossroads is the best model...” To this end, the panel advises that Crossroads continue developing and adapting this method/model for institutional change.
VII. APPENDIX

Supporting Documents and Supplemental Resources

1. Historical Development of Institutional Racism
2. Team Formation Brochure
4. Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Crossroads Documentation & Evaluation Process
5. Continuum on Becoming an Anti-Racist Multicultural Institution
6. Interviewee Consent Form
7. Transforming Values (Values that Transform): Anti-Racist Core Values
8. Crossroads Training 'Menu’ Brochure
9. Article: Racism, Classism & Worker Injustice: an Historical Wagging Tail
10. Anti-War Statement issued by Crossroads and the Peoples Institute for Survival and Beyond
11. Anti-Semitism Reflection
Historical Development of Institutional Racism


Preface

History has always intrigued me, filled as it is with stories about people, their lives and the decisions they made and the actions they took. But beyond that, as a student I was always more intrigued with the stories that were missing or scantily referenced, not to mention the half truths and outright lies. As a Native person and female, I always felt the most interesting stories, the stories about people like me were the ones I most wanted to hear, and were the ones most glaringly absent from my grade school and high school history books, from the encyclopedias and reference books found in school libraries.

But history intrigued me never the less. There is always a sense of reading between the lines to discover more than the story articulated in text. I understand now what I was doing even back then. I was looking for the patterns, looking at events and circumstances, dissecting words and deeds of historic figures in an attempt to discern more broadly the social dynamics of the time and their consequences for us today. You have to do this if the people you care most about are written out. But even in the writing out or distortion of the stories, there is evidence of the truth. It wasn’t until I learned to make baskets that the patterns described in this paper became clear to me. Perhaps concentrating on the basket I was working on and dreaming about the baskets I wanted to make, re-ordered my mind so I could see new patterns in the peoples’ stories I have experienced either directly or by reading them. What had once seemed like loosely related stories suddenly come together in a whole new way for me to weave their divergent strands together to form the basket of history.

The strands of the basket lay in my hands long before I knew how to fit them together. I knew there was a blood criteria to identify Blacks and Indians, one drop for one group, blood quantum for the other. While both criteria are clearly motivated by racism, why the big difference? At first it didn’t make sense, the different ways racism manifests pertaining to these two groups. White supremacy and colonialism seemed to be at the core, but it wasn’t until I wove them together with U.S. apartheid, in its fullness that the frame of the basket began coming together. Eventually I came to see the main fiber in the basket’s frame was white supremacy; colonialism and apartheid were laid along side the white supremacy to give the basket shape, and form and strength. Then I finally saw the patterns in the stories of People of Color, their lives and their struggles. I saw them woven on this frame of white supremacy, colonialism and apartheid, saw all the lives woven together. The stories and current realities of each racial group woven in patterns over this powerful frame, holding all of us captive in its fibers. September 11 and the aftermath helped a lot too. The crisis removed the veils of political correctness and allowed hateful racist rhetoric (especially toward Arabs) to resurface in the mainstream discourse. A pattern some pretended didn’t exist anymore suddenly reemerged.

These patterns are so deeply imbedded in our society, I can’t look at our laws and systems without seeing them any more. That they are so deeply imbedded but obfuscated in our collective psyche emphasizes the importance of understanding racism as White supremacy and looking at history through the lenses of colonialism and apartheid. We have been taught not to see these patterns, to see racism in disparate pieces as if it makes no sense. But seeing the three as interrelated and dependent strands, like the strands of a braid allows us to see the
fullness of White supremacy in all of its manifestations. This working paper is intended to reveal some of the patterns woven over the frame of White supremacy, colonialism and apartheid.

Acknowledgements The ideas in this working paper are dependent on and inspired by the work of a number of other people. Bob Blauner for his understanding of colonialism, especially that colonialism springs from racist ideology, Dr. Jack D. Forbes for first exposing me to the whole idea of colonialism and the need for race discourse that includes a full analysis of it. Dr. Luanna Ross for first exposing me to the need for revolution which starts by first decolonizing our minds. William H. Watkins for his articulation and illustration of the power of ideology. The elderly woman (whose name I do not know) at the native women’s conference who told me I would be alright if I learned to make baskets. Judy Dow who taught me to make baskets and who continues traditional basket making using materials at hand including DiGiorno pizza boxes and Trader Joes soy milk containers. California basket makers whose skill and beauty inspire me, only in my dreams do I make baskets of such grace and perfection. Their enduring presence is a reminder to continue traditional cultural practices not just for the sake of esthetics, but because of the unique ways they structure our thinking and define reality, Dr. Maulana Karenga, Barbara Major, and Michael Washington for the definition of race we use in Crossroads training materials, which links the origin of race as a construct to world wide European colonial expansion. Crossroads Ministry for creating the environment where I had to think about race and racism creatively every day. Dr. Victor Rodriguez and Joe Barndt who developed the training model and early training content for Crossroads, particularly the Historical Forms of Racism and the Wall of History. The Crossroads Analysis organizer-trainers who contributed to this working paper examples of laws and events that deepened the color of the patterns and tested the material in training; Chuck Ruehle, Anne Stewart, Dr. Emily Drew and especially my sisters PaKou Her, and Jessica Vazquez who not only defended this work from external criticism but more importantly protected it from my own self doubt. Debra Russell for interpreting and formatting my scribbles for the chart which accompanies this working paper. Lino and Chiara Sottile, if not for them, I might not have cared about any of this.

Introduction Colonial, for many people in the United States, refers to the historic period prior to 1776 and the “American Revolution” and particularly to the interactions between the British monarchy and its representatives and the American patriots. Rarely does the focus of the colonial period fix on the experience of People of Color; yet, many consider themselves to still exist in a colonial state within the United States. To understand US colonialism, one must focus on the experiences of People of Color whose lands, lives, cultures and resources were exploited historically and continue to be so today; also, to understand the role and relationship of colonized peoples to Europeans and Euro-Americans who benefit from the exploitation.

Through a deep analysis of the colonial project, the foundations of the systemic economic, cultural, and racist oppression that we have inherited today are made visible. To do this honestly and authentically we must rely heavily on the insights and experiences of those for whom colonialism is an ongoing reality. At one time we might have referred to them as indigenous peoples and recognized them by their true names, but today, because their homelands have been invaded, with many people forcibly removed and traditional societies
destroyed, they have become part of US society with names imposed on them; Afro-Caribbeans, Central and South American Indians or Indios, Native Hawaiians, Puerto Ricans, Samoans, Filipinos, African Americans, Asian Americans, Arab Americans, Mexican-Americans, Native Americans, Latinos, and Chicanos. The key to understanding the historic experience and current realities of these groups, is to understand that the way they came to be present and their roles in US society differs significantly from that of Europeans Americans.

Immigration and colonialism [are] the two major processes through which new population groups are incorporated into a nation. Immigrant groups enter a new territory or society voluntarily, though they may be pushed out of their old country by dire economic or political oppression. Colonized groups become part of a new society through force or violence; they are conquered, enslaved, or pressured into movement. (B. Blauner. Racial Oppression in America, 1972). Thus there are four conditions that differentiate the experience of People of Color from that of European immigrants. The first is forced entry [by the colonizer] into the [indigenous] society or metropolitan domain. The second is subjection to various forms of unfree labor that greatly restricts the physical and social mobility of the [colonized] group and its participation in the political arena. The third is a cultural policy of the colonizer that constrains, transforms, or destroys [indigenous] original values, orientations, and ways of life. [Fourth is] the experience of being managed and manipulated by outsiders in terms of ethnic status...the lives of colonized people tend to be administered by representatives of the dominant political and legal order. (Blauner) Blauner also indicates that what fuels and enables the colonial project is an underlying racist ideology which dehumanizes indigenous peoples and defines humanity as white, european, and christian. cite this Rodolfo Acuña describes six conditions of the colonial project:

1. The land of the people is invaded by people from another country, who later use military force to gain and maintain control.
2. The original inhabitants become subjects of the conquerors involuntarily.
3. The conquered have an alien culture and government imposed on them.
4. The conquered become victims of racism and cultural genocide and are relegated to a submerged status.
5. The conquered are rendered politically and economically powerless.
6. The conquerors feel they have a “mission” in occupying the area in question and believe that they have undeniable privileges by virtue of their conquest.


“Colonialism is comprised of a complex set of relationships stemming from the underlying condition of subjugation in which one power has control over another people’s education, language(s), customs, lands, and economic means of sustenance” (Dobles & Segarra, 1998)

In the first two descriptions of colonialism, Blauner and Acuña, both name an underlying ideology fueling the colonial project. Blauner describes a racist ideology underlying colonialism, Acuña describes it as the conquerors mission. Understanding the power of ideology is key to understanding the power of white supremacy or racism as an ideology, as William H. Watkins states, A body of ideas may serve to rationalize and justify any political,
educational, or economic system, but ideology helps organize our world and explains it in relation to power and vested interests (Watkins, 2).

White supremacy is the ideology behind colonialism and apartheid, and this is our inheritance in the United States, it is still the ideology organizing our lives today. Too often we settle for simplistic understandings of white supremacy. But for those of us engaged in processes to dismantle racism, we need to understand the fullness of White supremacy and all its complexity. In 1971 Dr. Neely Fuller wrote, “If you don’t understand white supremacy (racism) what it is and how it works, everything else that you understand will only confuse you.” (citation) One of the simplistic ways we have thought about White supremacy in the past was to think of it was a single ideology, what this working paper identifies are patterns that reveal White supremacy as multiple, mutually reinforcing ideologies.

These ideologies originally organized the US into an apartheid nation, legally and socially segregated into White and “non-White” worlds. Apartheid was created differently through specific laws and their interpretation for each distinct People of Color group. Although apartheid laws have been changed, colonialism remains and the racist ideologies remain. Life in the United States continues to be organized by White supremacist ideologies. One of the predominate ways is through our systems and institutions.

The Relationship Between the United States and Institutions
The tradition of racism that began in Europe continued in the United States after the Revolution as a way to legally create a system of White dominance and as a way to carve out nationhood. The founders of the United States were building up systems and institutions, and even a distinct “American” identity that incorporated and perpetuated the racist paradigm that was begun in Europe, in order to establish the United States a White, Protestant nation.

Institutional power is an extension of “state” power in the United States. Institutions not only abide by the laws of the United States, institutions are sanctioned by the state because institutions maintain the laws and preserve the standards and norms defined by the laws. Institutions give form and function to the values under-girding the laws.

Racism was originally built into the US legal system because White supremacy was among the values the “founding fathers” were trying to preserve. As institutions were built along side the building of the US legal system, racism and its underlying racial ideologies were built in to the laws, and built in to the institutions.

As we look at the laws (including how they have been interpreted by the Supreme Court) and institutions of the United States it is important to pay attention to the fact that while racism has drastic and deadly impacts on all People of Color, the “concept of race” is not applied in the same way to each People of Color group. Race and racism are applied differently to Native people than to Blacks, for example. It is important to investigate these differences in order to fully understand the impacts and dynamics of White supremacy. Although People of Color are negatively impacted by racism, the purpose of racism is not to harm People of Color; rather, to provide power and privilege to Whites. Thus, in order to not be confused by racism, we need to investigate the economic benefits White society derives from the exploitation of each People of Color racial group. Over time, we can discern a
pattern to the exploitation which reveals a racial ideology and economic strategy to exploit each group. Historically, these ideologies were reinforced and the economic strategies codified into the laws and institutions of the United States, and are now perpetuated as if on auto-pilot into our modern time, even though many overtly racist laws have changed.

The Ideologies and Related Racial-Economic Strategies
Each of the racial ideologies discussed in this section are summarized on the accompanying chart, Historical Development of Institutional Racism. The chart lists five distinct People of Color groups in the U.S., names the racial ideology applied to each group and accompanying racial economic strategy. The third column for each groups lists specific laws or legal interpretations that established apartheid for each group. The fourth column lists changes to laws that were intended to end apartheid and the final column contains examples of how racism continues to self-perpetuate in spite changed laws.

US racial ideologies have their roots in Europe, one of the longest running ideologies applies to Arabs and continues full steam today. It manifests in the belief that Arabs “hate us, hate our freedoms and want what we have.” This ideology has its origins in the Reconquista and the Crusades. The Reconquista of Spain (and Portugal) resulted in driving out the Moors and Jews and uniting Spain under a single Christian monarchy. The Crusades were earlier attempts by European Christians to establish military and economic footholds in the Arab world. The European Christian belief that Arabs and Jews were heathens and infidels, rendered them unworthy to possess the physical wealth of God’s creation. These beliefs paved the way to the Doctrine of Discovery that justified the European conquest of New World (Sardar and Davies, 143-149 and160-161). But it also established the racist ideology of Arabs as “marauding invaders” in which Whites are justified to acquire and control Arab’s natural resources in order to prevent those resources from being used to invade and conquer free, democratic, Christian society (Sardar and Davies, 146-150).

The racial ideology applied to African Americans defines Blacks as social and intellectual inferiors incapable of creating and maintaining civilized society. Driven by this ideology White Europeans made Africa an early target of colonial expansion and exploitation. Indigenous Africans were enslaved both on the African continent and were kidnapped and removed to Europe and to many parts of the so called New World. Chattel slavery evolved in the United States in its most virulent form and persisted long after the practice had been outlawed in Europe. Even after the Civil War, the ideology of White supremacy and Black inferiority has shaped the US social, political and economic landscapes. The United States became a world economic super power based on the unpaid labor of enslaved Africans. Even after emancipation, the perpetuation of White supremacist ideology has maintained a large pool of low wage earning and permanently unemployed African Americans.

The Doctrine of Discovery defined the European experience in the New World. This legal doctrine was mutually established by the Vatican and the European monarchs. designed to reduce conflict in the Old World and maximize exploitation of the New World, the Doctrine of Discovery declared that the first Christian nation that discovered an area of land in the New World belonging to heathens, infi-delis and savages, then had claim over that land and all the people and resources found there. There were two Inter Cetera Papal Bulls that initially codified this Doctrine, the first by Pope Nicholas V in 1452 and the second by Pope
Alexander VI in 1493; in addition there were decrees from the Euro-peon monarchs charging their seafaring explorers to discover new lands, claim them in the name of their monarchs and bring home the spoils (Deloria in Jaimes, 271-272 and Sardar and Davies, 144). One example is the decree of King Henry VII of England to John Cabot in 1482, which formed the basis for all English claims to what became the United States of America, and says in part:

*Seek out, discover, and find what so ever islands, countries, regions, or provinces of the heathens and infidels, what so ever they be, and in what part of the world so ever they be, which before this time have been unknown to Christians* (Haudenosaunee UN Intervention, and Sardar and Davies, 144).

Manifest Destiny is the direct descendent of the Doctrine of Discovery and resulted in a continued genocidal racial strategy directed at Indigenous peoples, which started out as outright war and colo-nial conquest, and today continues through the application of *blood quantum* to racially define who is and is not *Indian* (see Dawes Act below) as well as by making Native peoples invisible and irrelevant.

To understand the racial strategy applied to Latina/os, we have to understand the difference between Spanish Colonialism and English Colonialism. Spanish colonialism did not set out to create *all White* European spin-offs in the new world; it was the exploitation of the land, its people and resources, and domination by Whites that Spain and Portugal pursued. There was never any angst about creating a *Mestizo* nation, in fact over time, a whole ideology around the supremacy of the mixed race man emerged in Latin America. But this was not true in the English colonies in America, where the goal was to establish all new, all White, all Protestant countries in the New World (Forbes, 3-5). Yet once the US conquered and colonized former Spanish colonies (Mexico, Puerto Rico, Philippines and Cuba) and in order to justify the neo-colonial exploitation of Latin and South America, the US adopted the Spanish model of colonialism as its racial strategy for Latina/os. According to this ideology, Latina/os are mestizos (racial hybrids) tainted by African and Indian inferiority. With this strategy, some elite Latina/o individuals are granted *honorary white* status—at least for a time—as a way of separating the elites and co-opting them in the exploitation of the masses, and particularly to separate them from the most vulnerable Latina/os. So those Latina/os who are better educated, speak English without an accent, are economically advantaged, who often have lighter skin tones, and in other ways are more ‘comfortable’ for Whites are encouraged to think of themselves only as individuals, co-opted into identifying with White society and abandon the interests of Latino communities.

The racial ideology applied to Asian Americans defined them as racial inferiors undeserving of US citizenship and full incorporation into US society. This allowed Whites to exploit the labor and resources of Asian immigrants while denying them citizenship and the full participation in the legal, social and economic systems of society. This status of perpetual foreigner keeps Asian American communities vulnerable and marginalized from the US mainstream as well as using them as scapegoats during times of economic uncertainty and social unrest.
It is instructive to look at specific laws in order to detect how the various racial strategies emerged, beginning in what is commonly called the colonial period of the United States. A lot of people think the colonial period ended with the Revolutionary War, but that obfuscates who the original colonized people are in the US—Native Americans, for whom the colonial period has never ended, and who continue to be a colonized people today (Ross, 11-12).

In the beginning... after the Revolutionary War, the United States was a rogue nation, having broken away from England, one of the greatest imperial powers on the planet. The new Americans were anxious to establish themselves as an independent and sovereign nation and so set about beginning to do the things that sovereign nations do, these include establishing an economic base, defining who is and is not a citizen of the country and negotiating relationships (trade, military, etc) with other free and sovereign nations, through the process of treaty making. Another important function of sovereign nations is developing fundamental legal documents like the Constitution, and to define who can and cannot be a citizen. The economic foundations of the United States had already been forged by the end of the Revolutionary War, on land stolen from Native Americans and through the forced labor of enslaved Africans. The first Congress of the United States (1789-1791) decided the citizenship question during its second session; the first law defining US citizenship, the Naturalization Law of 1790 specified that naturalized citizenship be reserved for “any alien, being a free white person.” This law remained in effect until 1952. Though in 1870, after the Civil War, Black citizenship became possible, though in practice, it was a second class citizenship at best (Takaki, 79-80 and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (1) and Wikipedia (1).

Treaty making was and continues to be the established way in which relationships are negotiated and maintained between independent and sovereign nations. At the time the US was beginning to establish itself, treaty making had historically been done in Europe between the European monarchs, and in the Americas the European monarchs had also made treaties with the Indian Nations on the east coast of what became the United States. The new Americans were anxious to continue this tradition and so very early entered into treaties with various Indian tribes. The Treaty with the Delaware in 1778 was ratified even before the Treaty of Paris of 1783 which ended the Revolutionary War. In addition, Native nations held the balance of military power along the western border of the new United States and so to protect its White citizens, treaties were more important to the United States than to Indian Nations (Robbins in Jaimes, 89-90).

The US Constitution defines treaties as binding agreements between two sovereign nations and states that they are “the supreme law of the land.” One of the crucial treaties for the newly created United States came just one year after the end of the Revolution with the 1784 Fort Stanwix Treaty with the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) Confederacy (or Six Nations; Onondaga, Mohawk, Oneida, Cayuga, Seneca and Tuscarora). The Confederacy was very powerful and four of the tribes, Mohawks, Senecas, Cayugas, and Onondagas, allied with the British during the Revolution so the United States was very anxious to make treaties with the Confederacy in order to insure the safety of the Whites and to delineate the borders of the newly constructed United States of America (Churchill in Jaimes,152). Thus, in the early days of the new United States, it was through mutual agreement evidenced by treaties that the
US was a nation apart from the Native American nations with which it co-existed as co-equals.

Slavery was one of the most profound dynamics of oppression during this period that dramatically contributed to US Nation building and to the building of the US economy. The issues of slavery and the slave trade were intentionally avoided in the Declaration of Independence. In the Constitution of the United States, as a concession to the Southern states that had sparse White, but large Black populations, the 3/5 Doctrine was created for the purpose of determining White representation in the House of Representatives, Black slaves in the South were counted as 3/5 of a human being. Not because they would get rights or representation, but because it was a way for wealthy White southerners to gain more power in the US Congress.

In addition, a whole set of laws codifies differential treatment for Blacks and Whites which kept poor Blacks and Whites from joining their struggles, for example the punishment for runaway White indentured servants was considerably less than the punishment for Black runaway slaves (Takaki, 56). These punishment laws had deep roots in the legal statues of the British Colonies, for example, murder of a slave by a master in the course of punishment was not considered murder, in 1705 the Virginia Colony Slave Codes, Chapter 34 provided that a master who killed his slave in an attempt to correct the slave would not be held to have committed a felony:

**XXXIV. And if any slave resist his master, or owner, or other person, by his or her order, correcting such slave, and shall happen to be killed in such correction, it shall not be accounted felony; but the master, owner and every such other person so giving correction, shall be free and acquit of all punishment and accusation for the same, as if such accident had never happened.**

These racially disparate sentencing laws persist today, one example being the differences between sentences for crack cocaine convictions which are longer than sentences for powdered cocaine convictions. Crack cocaine tends to be a drug of choice for poor Blacks while powdered cocaine is the choice of middle class Whites.

In 1706 the colonial government of New York Colony further clarified its earlier position by declaring that the baptism of a slave did not entitle said slave to freedom:

**Be it Enacted by the Governr Council and Assembly and it is hereby Enacted by the authority of the same, That the Baptizing of any Negro, Indian or Mulatto Slave shall not be any Cause reason for the setting them or any of them at Liberty.**

This is one of the defining characteristics of slavery as it evolved in the United States. In Europe, Christians could not enslave Christians, yet in the US Christianity was specifically used as a tool to control enslaved blacks. For example, slave owners invoked biblical passages that exhorted slaves to “obey thy masters.”

What emerged from this is the racial strategy that Blacks are social, political and moral inferiors to Whites, in order to create a perpetual pool of free and cheap labor, and the means to ensure the continued segregated reality of the United States.

**1790-1954 US Apartheid, Colonialism and Neo-Colonialism**

Over time as European immigration increased and the US population grew, the balance of power shifted, The Haudenosaunee, and other tribes became militarily vulnerable and the
United States violated treaty agreed borders and encroached on Indian territory and other treaty rights. The United States unilaterally abrogated the treaties. This is illegal by US law (Robbins in Jaimes, 91). In 1824, the US established the Bureau of Indian Affairs in the War Department, clearly signaling that its intent toward Native Peoples was to subdue them through wars of conquest, not treat them as co-equal nations (Ross, 16-17). Through a strategy of conquest and genocide, the US maintained an apartheid state that alienated, exploited and oppressed Native American peoples.

One significant example is the series of treaty breaking events that led up to Cherokee Removal and the Trail of Tears. The United States entered into dozens of treaties with the Cherokee and their related tribes, known to the US as the Five Civilized Tribes. The Cherokee believed they were immune to the racist tendencies of the US and that the US was their ally. The Cherokee had adopted many European customs, including formal education, written language, newspapers, some even owned Black slaves. But when gold was discovered on Cherokee land in 1829, they quickly found out the US was not the friend they thought it was (Nies, 242-251).

The state of Georgia refused to honor the federal treaties with the Cherokee and passed its own state law to take over jurisdiction of Cherokee land. Georgia even passed a law making it illegal to be Cherokee in the state of Georgia. These and other laws made it impossible for the Cherokee to defend their treaty protected homeland, of course this was all very illegal, but President Andrew Jackson did not want the treaties to be enforced. The Cherokee took their cases all the way to the Supreme Court, and lost. Because by time they got there, there was already a bill going through Congress that in 1830 was passed as the Indian Removal Act. Thus paving the way for the Cherokee to be forcefully removed from their homeland to the so-called new Indian Territory which was established in what is today Oklahoma; a policy framework originally crafted by non-other than Thomas Jefferson (Nies, 242-251).

But it wasn’t just Indian treaties that were abrogated in this way. When the United States entered into the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which ended the US war with Mexico in 1848, the US acquired half the landmass of Mexico. But the treaty also established Mexican cultural and religious norms in the new territory and guaranteed the former Mexicans living in the territory all the rights and privileges of US citizenship. Gradually, over time, as White US citizens moved into these former Mexican territories, the rights and privileges of the former Mexicans eroded, disappeared and the cultural norms became Anglo-American. Once the territories had a significant White majorities (instead of Indian or Mexican majorities) the territories became states, and the constitutions and laws of these states directly contradicted and violated components of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo. Most of the former Mexicans lost their treaty guaranteed rights of citizenship, land and resources in these new states (Acuna, 53-56). Apartheid citizenship for Whites only was reinstated.

Before the Civil War Blacks attempted to access the US legal system both to end their enslavement as well as to assert various other civil and property rights. In 1857, Dred Scott (a Black slave) was not allowed to sue in federal court for his freedom because access to the courts is predicated on citizenship, The Dred Scott Decision held that Scott and all other Blacks—free and enslaved—could never be citizens because they were “a subordinate and inferior class of beings” (Haney Lopez, 40). This ruling was invalidated by the Civil Rights Act of 1866.
The years immediately after the Civil War and the end of slavery, was the period of Reconstruction in the south and federal troops were used to protect the rights of the newly freed slaves (Zinn, 193-194). During this time numerous Blacks were elected to local offices, state legislatures and to the US Congress. Between 1870 and 1901, a total of 19 African Americans served in the US House of Representatives and two in the US Senate (Higginbotham). During the late 1860’s and early 1870’s numerous laws were passed protecting the rights of Black citizens. This culminated in 1875 with the passage of a Civil Rights Act, outlawing the exclusion of Blacks in public accommodations. Yet these hard won gains were lost again once the federal troops were removed from the south as a result of the Compromise of 1877. The 1876 presidential election was contested by three southern states. Rutherford B. Hayes, promised to remove the troops from the south and end Reconstruction in return for the electoral college votes he needed to be elected president. Some refer to this as the Corrupt Bargain, Regardless of the name, the result was to reinforce white supremacy (Wikipedia (2). In 1883 the Supreme Court nullified the Civil Rights Act and in 1896 the court ruled on Plessy v Ferguson, the separate-but-equal doctrine, that returned many Blacks to a state of de facto slavery, and reaffirmed the US policy of legal apartheid (Zinn, 193-194 and 199-205). It also paved the way for the rise of the Ku Klux Klan, Night Riders, and the harassment and violence (including lynching and Jim Crow laws) that were wrought on African American communities; as well as economic exploitation through share cropping, etc.

In 1901 North Carolina Representative George White was the last of the African Americans of this era to leave Congress. In his farewell address on January 29, 1901 he said: This, Mr. Chairman, is perhaps the Negroes temporary farewell to the American Congress; but let me say, Phoenix-like he will rise up some day and come again. These parting words are in behalf of an outraged, heart broken, bruised and bleeding—but God-fearing people; faithful, industrious, loyal people—rising people, full of potential force (Higginbotham).

Also during this period, the United States determined that it isn’t really very efficient or expedient to violate treaties with Indian tribes one at a time, and so we begin to see the wholesale abrogation of treaties with Indians. One of the most profound and devastating of these tactics was the Dawes Act, or the General Allotment Act of 1887. In 1887 there were about 138 million acres of land held by Indian tribes. None of this land was owned individually, rather tribes held it collectively and as best they could, tried to maintain their traditional patterns of life on their reduced territories. The Dawes Act imposed individual land ownership on Indian people, but worse than that, with the Dawes Act the United States usurped the power to define who is and who is not Indian. It did so in the following way. Every US defined Indian person was to receive their own 160 acres of land from the pool of land formally held collectively by the tribe. But in order to be eligible to receive the land, an Indian had to prove that they were at least one half Indian from one single tribe. So if a person could meet this blood quantum standard and prove it, they would receive160 acres, if they couldn’t meet it and prove it, they got nothing. This one policy violated hundreds of treaties and reduced the Indian land holdings from 138 million acres to 48 million acres. The so called surplus land that resulted from this became some of the land that was given to White settlers through the homestead acts (Jaimes, 125-126).

And let’s look at this another way, isn’t it interesting that the definition of who is Indian is determined by being one half, but at the same time, there’s a whole different definition of
who is Black, what’s the blood quantum for being Black? One drop, according to the One Drop Rule. In order to understand this, you have to understand what those different racial strategies are about, look for the economic benefits to White society. Native Peoples held large tracts of land and the resources above and below the soil, so in order to get access to that land the racial strategy is get rid of the people, genocide, either by outright killing people or by exercising the power to define identity and decrease the numbers of Indians—or people who could legally identify themselves as Indian. The conservative estimate is that there were 12 million Indigenous people at the time of contact (1492) in what became the United States. A less conservation estimate puts the pre-contact US population as high as 20-50 million (Sardar and Davies, 158). By 1890 when the Indian Wars officially ended, the population was 250,000 and in 1900 it was less than 240,000 (Stiffarm and Lane in Jaimes, 27-28 and 36-37). But the strategy for Blacks is to increase the pool of free and cheap labor, therefore, the One Drop Rule, which increases the population of Blacks.

Some other examples of wholesale treaty violations… The Dawes Act was in effect until 1934 when it was replaced by the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA). This act was a unilateral breach of all the US treaties with tribes that guaranteed annuity payments or supplies in exchange for land concessions. What IRA did was to force Indian tribes to reorganize their governments from traditional forms of governance to forms mandated by the United States, if tribes did not do this, they were denied their treaties rights of supplies, and their people would have literally starved to death. IRA established direct colonial rule over tribes following the British colonial model (Robbins in Jaimes, 94-98 and Jaimes, 128).

The next wholesale abrogation came in the form of Termination Policy in effect from 1945-1960, in which the US unilaterally decided to terminate the existence of Indian tribes; to unilaterally decide that sovereign Indian nations no longer existed, so the US would no longer have any treaty responsibilities to these people. This was simultaneous to the Claims Commission (1946) as a means to financially compensate Indians for territory that had been illegally stolen and a policy of Relocation which began in 1956 to move Indian people from rural reservations to urban areas. All are violations of treaty law (Robbins in Jaimes, 98-99).

During this period of history, apartheid was created for Blacks through slavery and for Indians through warfare and reservations. The other method for creating apartheid in this period was through immigration and naturalization laws. As noted earlier, Black citizenship was made possible by the 1870 Naturalization Act, which specifically excluded Indians and Asians.

Various Asian groups were recruited and brought to the United States as cheap labor. Most notable of these in this time period were the Chinese, who were brought to work on the railroads, farms and in the mines of the western US. Yet, these Chinese workers were allowed to come and work, but then they were supposed to go back home. Only men could come legally as workers leaving behind their families and they were never allowed to naturalize as citizens if they did stay, this was codified by the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. It singled out Chinese on the basis of race, and excluded them from citizenship (Takaki, 192-200). It should be noted that a lot of young Chinese girls and women were kidnapped, brought here illegally (though often with the knowledge and approval of local officials) and forced into the sex trades—but generally they did not live long enough to become an immigration problem (Takaki, 211). What emerged was the racial strategy that
pertains to Asian peoples, to keep them perpetual foreigners and therefore outside the protection of the Constitution and civil rights. This is another side of legal apartheid.

But the Chinese Exclusion Act went even further to maintain an apartheid US in that it denied any further immigration of Chinese into the United States. And in 1917 (with the 1917 Immigration Act) this ban was extended with the creation of the *Asiatic Barred Zone* and further expanded in 1924 to include all countries in Asia (Ueda, 20) which remained partially in effect even after the passage of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952, and was not fully lifted until the Amendments to the act were passed in 1965 (Haney Lopez, 38).

The 1917 Immigration Act also established a literacy test (in English) for all foreigners applying for citizenship (U.S. Citizenship and Immigrations Services website (2)).

The first significant wave of Arab immigration began in 1875 and lasted until 1917 when the US restricted immigration from Arab countries. Like many other immigrants who came to the United States, Arabs were seeking opportunity. Factors in the first immigration were Japanese competition that hurt the Lebanese silk market and a disease that hurt Lebanese vineyards. Most early Arab immigrants were from Lebanon and Syria, and most were Christian. At various times Arabs have been classified as Africans, Asians, Whites, or in a classification of their own (Detroit Free Press website). Arab immigration was curtailed when Congress created the Asiatic Barred Zone in 1917 and expanded it in 1924 to include all of Asia by saying aliens could not immigrate if they could not become citizens, and Asians were denied citizenship by virtue of the 1790 Naturalization Act (Ueda, 20-22 and U.S. Citizenship and Immigrations Services website (2)).

Looking specifically at Naturalization, in the 1922 Ozawa v US decision, the Supreme Court declared that White was synonymous with Caucasian, and that Ozawa, a light skinned Japanese, was ineligible for naturalized citizenship even though he qualified for citizenship in every way but being White. This ruling was applied to the citizenship appeals of all Japanese people (Haney Lopez, 7-8, 92-95).

In the 1923 decision (just a few months later) US v Bhagat Singh Thind, the Supreme Court ruled that Asian Indians were ineligible for naturalized citizenship. Arguing that the definition of race was based on the “understanding of the common man,” the court held that the term “White person” meant an immigrant from Northern or Western Europe. The law does not employ the word “Caucasian,” but instead uses the words “white persons.” Thus, Asian Indians, though considered Caucasian, were not commonly known to be White, therefore making them ineligible for US citizenship (Haney Lopez, 7-8, 92-95). This ruling negated the decisions in cases US v Balsara (1910) and Ajkoy Kumar Mazumdar (1913). Shortly after the Thind decision, federal authorities cancelled the citizenship of all previously naturalized Asian Indians (Haney Lopez, 243).

The colonization of Hawai’i began in 1778, first by British explorers and then by the United States. The estimated population of the Hawaiian Islands at the time of contact is one million persons, by 1890 the Native Hawaiian population was 40,000. A combination of religious and economic forces enabled aggressive Americans to enter the government and the Hawaiian economy. American business interests plagued the Hawaiian king and chiefs with requests for private property and land tenure. Once establishing a foot-hold and economic base (primarily pineapple and whaling) in the country, US business interests became the interests of the US government and military. Disputes between the legitimate Native
Hawaiian government and US business interests were quickly settled through the intervention of US troops. President Grover Cleveland thwarted attempts by US businessmen to annex Hawai‘i to the US as early as 1863. Undaunted, the Whites overthrew the Hawaiian monarchy, imprisoned Queen Lili‘uokalani, and created an all White oligarchy euphemistically called, the Republic of Hawai‘i. Once William McKinley was elected president, the road to annexation to the US was assured. However, this was not done by a treaty of annexation, which would have been the legal means because McKinley and his cronies knew there was not enough support in Congress for the needed 2/3 majority (what with Hawai‘i’s “mongrel colored” population and all) Nor would the population of the islands have agreed to such a treaty. So instead, a vote was taken on a joint resolution of Congress, which required only a simple majority and no vote was ever taken in Hawai‘i. Thus, in 1898, Hawai‘i (illegally, according to US law) became a territory of the United States, and “a militarized outpost of empire” (Trask, 4-17).

In 1898, the US also won the Spanish American War and acquired Puerto Rico. The 1900 Foraker Act declared the island a territory of the US; authorized the US President to appoint its civilian governor and top administrators; reserved for the US Congress the right to annul any laws the Puerto Rican House of Delegates passed; assigned trade, treaty, postal, sanitary and military powers to the US federal government; and gave the island one non-voting delegate to the US Congress. It forbade all commercial treaties with other countries except the US, replaced the Puerto Rican peso with the US dollar, and devalued the Puerto Rican peso which made it easy for US sugar companies to steal Puerto Rican owned lands and destroy the independent Puerto Rican coffee growers (Gonzalez, 60).

The economic interests of US corporations in Puerto Rico have consistently been protected by US law, making Puerto Rico a US colony by the traditional definition. In the early 1900’s the Supreme Court ruled on the Insular Cases which provided the principal legal backing for the US holding of colonies to the present day. 1901 Downes v Bidwell was a pivotal decision of the Insular Cases, its findings state, *The island of Puerto Rico is a territory appurtenant and belonging to the US, but not a part of the U.S. and without the revenue clauses of the Constitution* (Gonzalez, 61). Basically, the Constitution and the rights it guarantees do not apply to Puerto Ricans. This decision is the Puerto Rican equivalent of the Dred Scott Decision.

In 1917 the Jones Act imposed citizenship on Puerto Ricans over the unanimous objection of the House of Delegates. While Puerto Ricans have never been granted the fullness of their citizenship rights, because of the Jones Act, many Puerto Rican men were conscripted to serve in the US military during World War 1 and subsequent wars and US military actions.

By 1947 Puerto Rico was a Free Trade Zone. According to IRS Section 936, income of US companies doing business in Puerto Rico was exempted from federal taxes, which further devastated the already weakened native Puerto Rican economy (Gonzalez, 232-233).

After the Spanish American War, the Philippines also became a ‘possession’ of the US and was pro-foundly exploited by US corporations during its period of US colonial occupation. The 1934 passage of the Tydings-McDuffie Act provided for a ten-year transition period to independence, during which the Commonwealth of the Philippines would be established. The commonwealth would have its own constitution and would be self-governing, although foreign policy would be the responsibility of the United States. Laws passed by the
legislature affecting immigration, foreign trade, and the currency system had to be approved by the United States president (Los-Indios-Bravos website).

If the Tydings-McDuffie Act marked a new stage in Filipino-American relations, it remained a highly unequal one. Although only fifty Filipino immigrants were allowed into the United States annually under the arrangement, American entry and residence in the islands were unrestricted. Trade provisions of the act allowed for five years' free entry of Philippine goods during the transition period and five years of gradually steepening tariff duties thereafter, reaching 100 percent in 1946, whereas United States goods could enter the islands unrestricted and duty free during the full ten years. The United States continues to retain a naval reservation and fueling stations in the Philippines (Los-Indios-Bracos website).

In addition to the outright colonial expansion of the United States in the classic sense. This period of time is also defined by neo-colonialism, a new form of imperial conquest that does not require actually taking possession of another people’s land, rather conquest is achieved through the invasion of the people’s economic, political and cultural life. The outcome is the same as with classic colonialism, People of Color are exploited, dispossessed of their land and resources, and their traditional cultures stripped from them. The neo-colonial dynamic was demonstrated time and again during this period, particularly in Latin American and South American countries, many which came to be known as Banana Republics, where US interests were synonymous with US corporate interests.

Ever since Mexican independence in 1821, when Mexico ceased being a colony of a European country and became a nation of Mestizos and Indios, the United States felt justified in stealing Mexican land. However, in addition to outright imperialism, the US also engaged in neo-colonial practices in Mexico as well. One of the most significant and ongoing practices of exploitation engaged by the US is the use and abuse of Mexican workers.

After 1900 in Mexico, there was an extensive movement of workers from rural areas to the urban centers, including immigration to El Norte. Dispossessed of their land, through unscrupulous land speculators and victimized by nation-wide depressed economic conditions, Mexican workers entered the US labor market in what has become an endless cycle of US recruiting workers and then “repatriating” them before they could establish an economic or political base in the US. At various times, the US has exploited both US and Mexican workers by deliberately over supplying the labor market with Mexican workers, keeping wages down for all workers. In addition Mexican workers were particularly vulnerable because they were denied citizenship and the Constitutional protections citizenship provided (Takaki, 321-22).

One such labor recruitment program existed from 1942-1964. The US had a shortage of low wage, stoop labor as a result of military service and the internment of Japanese workers during World War II. The solution was to recruit Mexicans to fill this need. This was known as the Braceros Program and the supply of workers was negotiated directly with the Mexican government with the idea that when the US was done with them, the Mexican workers would be sent back home. Over six million Mexicans came to work in the US via this program. At this same time in 1954 the US initiated Operation Wetback, in which 1 million Mexicans and Mexican Americans were rounded up and deported back to Mexico (Acuna, 285). There were numerous other abuses of the agreement by the US and to this day former Braceros have outstanding claims against the United States for unpaid wages (citation).
World War II brought about numerous opportunities for the US to show its racist underbelly. In 1942 following the bombing of Pearl Harbor, Executive Order 9066 commanded the detainment of World War II enemy aliens. This Executive Order originally included the detainment of Germans and Italians, but was only ever applied broadly to Japanese Americans and Japanese living on the west coast of the US (and to some Aleuts in Alaska) but not to Japanese or Japanese Americans living in Hawaii and only rarely to individual Italians and Germans. Referring to this action Lieutenant General John L. De Witt, in charge of the western defense, said, *You needn’t worry about the Italians at all except in certain cases. Also, the same for the Germans except for individual cases. But we must worry about the Japanese all the time until he is wiped off the map* (Wu, 99).

The 120,000 Japanese and Japanese Americans on the west coast were particularly vulnerable because they tended to live in isolated communities, their labor was not needed in the mainstream economy and perhaps, most significantly, their farms and produce businesses gave strong competition to their White counterparts. The forced internment of thousands of Japanese and Japanese Americans destroyed not only individual lives, but well established Japanese American communities and businesses and resulted in uncounted economic loss. At the same time, 33,000 Japanese Americans served in the US armed forces during the war, many of them in military intelligence, many of them with distinction (Takaki, 380-383 and Wu, 95-102).

In 1950, President Truman appointed Dillon Meyer as Commissioner of Indian Affairs, Meyer had been in charge of Japanese internment camps during WWII. It was Meyer who carried out US Termination Policy (see page 12) against Indian tribes (Nies, 306, 352, 356).

The aftermath of World War II is also rich with illustrations of how deeply embedded racism is in our institutions. The GI Bill (formally known as the Servicemen’s Readjustment Act of 1944) is often touted as one of the defining social and economic factors of the 20th century, it is even credited with creating the US middle class. Originally enacted to assist returning World War II veterans re-enter the US economy and to stave off the potential return of the pre-war economic depression, the GI Bill has become a standard benefit to men and women who complete military service. Though current service personnel experience no where near the benefits the first recipients of the GI Bill received. From 1944-1949, benefits included $4 billion in unemployment benefits to 9 million vets, from 1944-1956, 10 million vets received educational and vocational training benefits, and from 1944-1962 $50 billion in home, farm and small business loans, guaranteed by the federal government, and below the prevailing interest rate were made to veterans. It has been estimated that home ownership during this period doubled (from 1 in 3 Americans owning their own home to 2 in 3) because of the federally guaranteed, low interest home loans (Houghton Mifflin Company website).

Unfortunately not all veterans could claim the benefits to which they were entitled. Some scholars cite the GI Bill as being one of the main factors contributing to the widening gap in the 20th century between Black and White economic achievement. So while White veterans and their families greatly benefited from military service, Black veterans and their families were not able to participate and fell even further behind economically (Onkst). While the government may not have intended to deprive Black veterans of their benefits, because the benefits were administered at the local level, in a totally and legally segregated society, with very little oversight by or accountability to the federal government, how hard
could it have been to predict that Blacks, and other veterans who were People of Color, would be cheated out what was due to them? So Black vets could not get past the White gatekeepers in order to access their benefits. Abuses were particularly wide spread in the south (Onkst).

Most Blacks could not access their education benefits, for example, because colleges and universities were still racially segregated, a large number of Black veterans were admitted to the historically Black colleges, but these schools lacked the infrastructure to accommodate all the veterans who desired and were qualified for admission. The home, farm and small business loans were administered through local banks, and guaranteed by the federal government, that is the government acted as a co-signer to the loan. Most banks and financial institutions did not lend to Blacks. Job training benefits were denied because the White program administrators refused to place Black veterans in apprenticing positions, even when the business specifically requested a Black worker. Unemployment benefits were denied because White bureaucrats would steer Black veterans into available menial and manual labor jobs rather than certifying their unemployment claims, filling the low paying jobs with Black veterans and allowing White veteran to claim unemployment benefits for up to one year and wait for higher paying jobs or educational opportunities to open up (Onkst).

Much of the low cost housing that was built for returning veterans and paid for by federally subsidized VA loans was built in the suburbs, consequently the post war suburbs began their existence as all White enclaves, leaving Blacks in the inner city urban or rural farming areas. Many of these new suburbs included restrictive covenants which dictated, by race, who a home owner could and could not sell their property to. That maintained the suburbs as White enclaves for decades, until through Civil Rights legislation it became illegal to do so. But, undeterred, White real estate speculators would find other methods to keep US neighborhoods racially segregated.

Post World War II was a complex time for Arabs world wide, this is the time period of the second wave of Arab immigration to the United States. This time it was not for economic reasons as much as because of the Arab-Israeli conflict and civil war. This meant that people came from many more places. The second immigration also had many more people who practiced Islam, a religion that was not as familiar in the United States. Immigrants in this group tended to be more financially secure when they arrived than people who had come earlier for economic opportunity. Many people in the second wave were students (Detroit Free Press website). Following the 1967 Arab-Israeli Six Day War in which Egypt blocked Israeli access to the Gulf of Aqaba. Israel retaliated by capturing Sinai, the West Bank and Golan Height (Nies, 366), Arab-American life in the United States became more complicated and difficult as US support for Israel mounted.

1952 The Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952, also known as the McCarran-Walter Act, nullified the 1790 Naturalization Act and for the first time race was not a legal impediment to naturalized citizenship (Takaki, 400 and U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services website), though initially McCarran-Walter left in place the racialized “national origin quotas” determining immigration eligibility until it was amended in 1965. But McCarran-Walter was still a big problem for People of Color because it also created a long list of grounds on which “aliens” could be excluded or deported and the procedure for admitting Asians continued to be complex. The result was there continued to be differential immigration. But even more insidious was the fear McCarran-Walter caused among
immigrant workers making it one of the most powerful tools for strike busting and keeping labor unions segregated. It greatly restricted the ability of immigrants to organize workers, thereby maintaining low wages for immigrant workers and especially People of Color (Acuna, 301-302).

And that brings us to 1954, Brown v Board of Education, one of the most significant building blocks for ending legal segregation and apartheid in the United States. It became the foundation upon which the 1964 Civil Rights Act was built, prohibiting discrimination in employment and public accommodations on the grounds of race, gender, and national origin. And also the 1965 Voting Rights Act which assured People of Color access to the ballot box and ultimately to a variety of state and federal public offices (Higginbotham).

1954-1973 Movement Time
Typical of this period were strategies to maintain racial segregation, in defiance of Civil Rights Law. The area of housing is illustrative.

Steering, where real estate agents will only show prospective buyers some of the available housing stock, namely the houses located in neighborhoods where other people of the buyers race already live.

Redlining, in its original incarnation banks (and other institutions) would literally draw a red line around a neighborhood and say, “We will not make any mortgage or home improvement loans in this area because that’s where People of Color live.” This became technically illegal in the post Civil Rights era. These laws were not consistently enforced between 1948 and the 1970s and redlining persists today by excluding certain zip codes, or with the advent of caller ID, by excluding certain phone number exchanges. This also works for service providers. In some neighborhoods it’s nearly impossible to get a taxi or pizza delivery. And in some neighborhoods the cost of home owners and car insurance is through the roof!

Block busting, is way to exploit a community that is in transition. A real estate speculator goes to a home owner in a White neighborhood and convinces them to sell their home below market value to the speculator because, “They’re moving in,” meaning People of Color are beginning to move into the area and the assumption is property values will decline as a result. The speculator then goes to a Person of Color home owner in another neighborhood and sells the home to them at a premium. Then the process is repeated over and over until the racial make-up of the neighborhood has changed and the speculator has made tons of money.

Many activists and People of Color refer to urban renewal as Negro removal; it is also called gentrification. In urban areas, city governments provide incentives for businesses and land speculators to begin operating in depressed (as in People of Color) neighborhoods. The existing small businesses already located in these neighborhoods cannot compete with the new businesses with all their special incentives and tax breaks. In many cases the new businesses are not even intended to serve the people in the existing neighborhood, but still the existing business have to compete for rental space and services with the new businesses. In addition, land speculators begin to sell real estate to people from outside the community as affordable housing, the prices being higher than the existing residents can afford to pay, but lower than what the outsiders could find elsewhere. Eventually, the existing neighborhood is displaced, and a whole new (White) population has moved in. In addition poor People of
Color neighborhoods are labeled as urban blights, land is taken over through eminent domain processes, homes are torn down and new “cultural establishments” are built in their place. In this way many cities have found space for theatres, museums, convention centers and stadiums, while the people who formerly lived there are displaced and their neighborhoods and communities are disrupted and destroyed.

After World War II, the United States government, with its nuclear weapons capability, became increasingly obsessed with “The Red Scare” and the potential for the world-wide spread of communism. The interstate highway system was initially a military spending project, part of the huge build up of the military budget. While the US nuclear arsenal included missiles located throughout the US in stationery silos, the government feared those silos would be easy targets for Soviet missiles and so a mobile nuclear arsenal was also created. The rationale was to keep nuclear warheads moving around so they could be preserved in a nuclear attack and available to be used in a counter strike. Originally constructed to permit safe and efficient movement of mobile nuclear warheads the interstate highways also contributed greatly to the physical and economic growth of the suburbs and the demise of urban areas as business and residential centers.

One way this happened was because the highways were never intended to serve inner city neighborhoods, they were built in complete disregard to the needs of the people in these neighborhoods. They did not facilitate the residents’ ability to get to places where local jobs were available, and they often passed directly through (or over) the middle of poor neighborhoods, dangerously and inconveniently dividing the neighborhood, and decreasing local access.

In addition the highways allowed the newly created white collar, middle class to commute to urban employment, further decreasing the number of well paying jobs available to People of Color who actually continued living in the urban centers. And the highways also allowed business to relocate from the urban centers to the suburbs. This period is characterized by the deindustrialization of the US, as production facilities increasingly relocated overseas in pursuit of lower production wages. Management became physically far removed from production as the higher paying management and technical positions remained in the US, this allowed businesses to move to the suburbs in the 1950-80’s where real estate prices were lower and tax advantages were greater than in urban areas. This created an even larger gap between urban and suburban economies. During this period 71% of Blacks lived in urban areas, 66% of White lived in suburbs (Takaki, 413). Previous well paying industrial and skilled labor jobs vanished from the cities and if they were replaced, it was by low paying, low skill service industry jobs.

Although it sounds good, and it did bring an end to Termination, the American Indian Civil Rights Act of 1968, ultimately was a co-optation and further erosion of tribal sovereignty by bringing Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) tribal governments into the federal system of US government. Current civics texts in the United States describe the federal system as having three branches of government, in reality, since 1968 there are actually four; executive, legislative, judicial and tribal. The purpose of the Act was to make it even more difficult for tribal governments to maintain tribal sovereignty and treaty rights by making tribal governments part of the very foreign government that had invaded them in the first place (Churchill and Morris in Jaimes, 16 and Robbins in Jaimes,102)
Through the 1960s and 1970s, Indian people were very busy fighting not only massive erosion of sovereignty through wholesale treaty abrogation by the federal government, but were also engaged in numerous local, state and federal struggles to defend their specific treaty rights, as well. These struggles were as diverse as the treaty rights they defended, but looking at one set of struggles pertaining to subsistence rights, gives us a sense of what was going on. These cases are collectively known as the “Fishing Wars,” and were primarily located in the Pacific Northwest and the Great Lakes regions of the United States. In these regions, Indian people were guaranteed, through treaties, the right to hunt and fish in their, “usual and accustomed places.” It is important to understand that while the day-to-day reality of these cases was to put food on the tables of Indian families, the larger issue at stake is the maintenance of traditional indigenous economies, which has important implications for maintaining collective identity and keeping tribal people together (The Institute for Natural Progress in Jaimes, 217-239).

Over time, Indians had experienced gradual erosion of their fishing rights, as well as the decline of their catches, through the passage of state and local fishing regulations, encroachment by the commercial and sports fishing industries and environmental degradation. Eventually tribes in both areas took their cases to the courts. As the cases worked their way through the legal processes, Indians found themselves faced with an increasingly hostile legal and social environment. The media played a major role by dis-informing the public and playing on widely held racist attitudes. It got so bad in both the Pacific Northwest and the Great Lakes, that Indians were forced to face down violent and armed White vigilantes. Eventually many of these cases were successful in the courts, and people’s fishing rights have been maintained, but the struggle is never ending. People continue to experience incremental and wholesale infringements of their rights, and environmental pollution and poor resource conservation continue to undermine traditional indigenous economies (The Institute for Natural Progress in Jaimes, 217-239).

We cannot leave this period without talking about COINTELPRO. People often wonder why the Civil Rights Era or Movement Time came to an end. It wasn’t because the need for it ended; because we had finally achieved “justice for all” and it didn’t end by accident. The peoples’ movements were intentionally destroyed by the US government. COINTELPRO was created in 1954 as a clandestine program of the FBI under J. Edgar Hoover. Its full name was Counter Intelligence Program, and its mission was to destroy domestic groups that were protesting and organizing opposition to US domestic (and eventually foreign) policies and practices. All the People of Color resistance organizations were targets, as was the anti-Vietnam War peace movement (Churchill in Molina, 197-207). From 1956-1971, 295 separate actions were taken against Black activist groups alone (Zinn, 455).

The groups were infiltrated by FBI sponsored agents provocateur who would disrupt and disorganize the targeted groups from the inside. Individual leaders, like Martin Luther King, Jr. and Angela Davis were discredited through these campaigns and movement leaders were turned against one another. The result was that the resistance organizations were demonized and distanced from the people for whom they were fighting, and branded as terrorists, militants and insurgency by the government, media and larger public. This then justified the government and local law enforcement agencies to take action against the groups destroying their infrastructure and criminalizing their leaders and members. Outright murder was an acceptable tool of COINTELPRO operations, Fred Hampton, Mark Clark and Zayd Shakur
were among the victims. COINTELPRO officially continued until 1971, when it was exposed and purportedly dismantled, but FBI records indicate the American Indian Movement did not come under intense COINTELPRO activity until after 1971 and there is convincing evidence that COINTELPRO operations continue within resistance movements today (Churchill in Molina, 208).

A second powerful destructive force to the Peoples Movements of this time period was the US Secret War in Laos (1955-1974). This was part of the Vietnam Conflict. Laos was declared an independent state by the Geneva Conference in 1954, and as such the United States was not able to locate troops in Laos. Yet the country was a strategic imperative for the US in its war against the “communist scourge” (Zepezauer). Part of the Ho Chi Minh Trail, and important Viet Cong supply line ran through a portion of the country. Instead of sending US troops, the US recruited ‘soldiers’ from the Hmong hill tribes, some of these ‘soldiers’ were only 8 and 9 years old. In return for fighting, the Hmong were promised sanctuary in the United States when the war was over. By the end of the war the Hmong population was reduced from 300,000 to 125,000, the people had been murdered, attacked, starved, and captured (Lee Her in interview with PaKou Her).

The Hmong had for many centuries grown opium and it was an important cash crop for them. The CIA began processing the raw opium and trafficking heroin by recruiting Hmong military leaders, notably General Vang Pao (McCoy). Much of this heroin ended up in People of Color communities that were engaged in Civil Rights and other struggles of liberation, further destroying cohesion, vitality and organizing efforts in these communities.

1973-present Post Movement Time
Here we see how the structured legal racism of the past has become self perpetuating even though new laws were enacted to redress past injustice. Examples: American Indian Religious Freedom Act (1978) and American Indian Child Welfare Act (1978) (Churchill and Morris in Jaimes, 17) that are on the books to protect Indian people but which have no teeth to enforce them and so they are not enforced, in fact most people working in child welfare services don’t even know AICWA exists. AIRFA too has been used to challenge restrictions on Native Religions and especially to protect sacred sites, but it has not been effective in doing so. One example of this is Lyng v North West Indian Cemetery Protection Association, 1988 in which the Supreme Court determined that “to destroy a religion does not unfairly burden that religion according to the free exercise clause.” (Deloria in Jaimes, 275-287, Lyng Decision citation).

This period of history is marked by several powerful economic trends. First is the tacit acceptance of a permanent underclass, that is predominantly made up of People of Color who face the persistence of intergenerational poverty and increasing unemployment. Using statistics for Black families and White families during this period illustrate this point. There was a dramatic rise in female-headed families. In 1960, 20% of Black families were female-headed, but that climbed to 40% by 1980. For White families, the percentages are 8% in 1960 and 12% in 1980. In 1980 Blacks were 12% of the population but 43% of all families receiving welfare (Takaki, 411).

Unemployment was particularly devastating to young Black men, from 1968 to 1980 the unemployment rate of Black men between the ages of 20-24 increased from 13% to 22%
while during the same period of time the rate for their White cohort only increased from 8% to 11%. In 1980, 72% of Black men between the ages of 20-24 were unemployed, employed part-time or working full time earning below poverty wages. The equivalent for White men of the same age was 36% (Takaki, 412).

This created a real double bind for Black women who generally had less education and lower job skills than Black men. Welfare, low wages, inadequate child care, poor transportation, lack of affordable housing and political disenfranchisement fueled the cycle of inter-generational poverty and guaranteed a permanent Black underclass (Takaki, 411-414).

The second trend exacerbated the first, that is Reaganomics. Many of the problems perpetuated by Reaganomics resulted from shifting federal spending away from “poverty” or “entitlement” programs into military expenditures. Reaganomics is synonymous with the Cold War economy, the strategic nuclear weapons program generated enormous federal spending deficits as defense expenditures under Reagan doubled from $134 billion in 1980 to $282 billion in 1987. Sixty cents of every tax dollar collected was funneled in to the defense budget (Takaki, 417).

From 1981-1985 defense spending increased by $35 billion. In the same period spending for food stamps and other entitlements decreased by $30 billion. Since 1955, 62% of federal research funding has been for Cold War weaponry, at a cost of over one trillion dollars. This drain on national resources undermined our national ability to produce competitive consumer goods, so not only were US companies shipping jobs overseas, but trade imbalances also ensued. The lack of research and development in the commercial sector, contributed to the US inability to compete in commercial manufacturing and as commercial manufacturing declined in the US, even greater job loss resulted (Takaki, 417).

A third trend during this period is the rise of the Prison Industrial Complex and the criminalization and disenfranchisement of people of color. In the late 1960s and 1970s the federal budget allocated money to build airports and provide technical education. Today those funds are spent on prisons. The following statistics demonstrate the increase of men of color incarcerated over the last several decades: 1973 - 12%, 1985 - 25%, 1995 - 33% of young men of color incarcerated or otherwise involved with the criminal justice system. Within the next ten years, 50% of young men of color (and growing numbers of young women of color) will be in some way involved in the criminal justice system.

Currently the bureaucrats who plan the number of prisons needed 20 years from now, base their calculations on the standardized test scores of fourth graders (Critical Resistance citation). The apparent assumption being that all those who aren’t effectively served by the educational system will be served instead by the prison system. This calls into question the assertions about needing standardize testing to improve school performance and teacher accountability.

The social trends of this period are characterized by the “embracing” of multi-cultural diversity coupled with a “color blind” ideology. It seems the US woke up one day and discovered it had a lot of multi-cultural diversity in its midst. Multiculturalism has become a code word for racial diversity. The wake up call probably came at a good time given 80% of new immigrants are either Latina/o or Asian (Takaki, 421). And so US institutions began to “embrace” multicultural diversity. Mandatory diversity and sensitivity trainings are common work place practices. Cultural affinity groups have sprung up in US institutions as have
“multicultural tables and desks” to share and celebrate the multitude of cultures in the US. The problem with all this multiculturalism is that it never takes into account the inequities created by power; that not all members of the multicultural table are equal participants in institutional and cultural power. Nor does it take into consideration that it is the White institution that owns and dominates the multicultural table. So what we really end up with is *racist* multicultural diversity.

The other thing obfuscated by multiculturalism, is the very existence of *race*. With racist multiculturalism, we are not supposed to see racial diversity at all. Everyone is all the same, we see only humans, or members of the human *race*. This *color-blind ideology* can be very offensive to People of Color, not only because it is not true, but because for many People of Color, their race is one of the things that is special about them and shapes who they are and who their community is. In order to really know someone, you have to understand who they are as a racialized person in this country. This is actually true of White people too. Though this is most often not recognized by Whites, People of Color generally are very aware of a person’s Whiteness and treat them accordingly.

If we, as a society, truly valued multicultural diversity, wouldn’t we welcome or even celebrate a broad diversity of languages spoken in our public and private institutions? Why then are we seeing such a strong English only movement in the United States today? Although the particular target of English only or English first movements appears to be Spanish and is a back lash against the growing Latina/o population in the United States, any non-English speaking community is at risk, and already endangered Native American languages are also threatened by this trend.

One of the precedent cases fueling English only and English first requirements, especially in the workplace is the 1980 case, *Garcia v Gloor*. Hector Garcia was a young Mexican-American who was a salesman for Gloor Lumber and Supply, Inc. Gloor had a workplace rule saying bi-lingual employees had to speak English only, unless they were communicating with a Spanish speaking customer. One day Garcia responded, in Spanish, to a question from another Mexican American worker who had asked about the availability of some inventory. Garcia was fired. And he sued, based on discrimination to his Mexican American heritage which is protected by Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. He lost. And the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 5th Circuit upheld the lower court ruling saying, “non-observance [of the English only rule] was a matter of choice” because Garcia was bi-lingual (Perea, 447-451).

This court’s decision is particularly interesting in that it is opposed by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology website). The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission is charged with administering Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Under the Act, EEOC has the authority to investigate and conciliate charges of discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin by employers, unions, employment agencies, and joint apprenticeship or training committees (North Carolina Office of State Personnel website).

The EEOC's position is that a rule requiring bi-lingual employees to only speak English at work is a "burdensome term and condition of employment" that presumably violates Title VII and should be closely scrutinized. 29 C.F.R. § 1606.7(a). Discrimination based on national origin violates Title VII unless national origin is a bona fide occupational qualification (BFOQ) for the job in question. The employer must show that the
Discriminatory practice is "reasonably necessary to the normal operation of [the] particular business or enterprise." 42 U.S.C. § 2000e-2(e)(1). The courts and the EEOC interpret the BFOQ exception very narrowly. See 29 C.F.R. § 1604.2(a) (HR-Guide.com).

Part of the court’s ruling was based on an argument by Gloor, that the English only rule was "reasonably necessary" because some customers (who presumably only spoke English) felt uncomfortable when employees spoke Spanish in their presence. Which seems to undermine the whole point of Title VII in the first place. Perea asks, “Can you imagine the courts not upholding a Title VII discrimination case brought by an African American based on an employer saying his or her presence in the workplace made customers feel uncomfortable?” (Perea, 449). Courts consistently ignore EEOC guidelines relative to English only discrimination because (according to the rulings) “national origin” cannot be extended to include foreign languages or bi-linguals and because language discrimination is not equated with race discrimination (Perea, 451).

What generally follows English-only initiatives is fairly predictable and we only have to look to California to see where it goes. In 1986, California voters passed Proposition 63, making English the “official” language. Then in 1994, Proposition 187 passed to stem what then Governor Pete Wilson called, “the Mexican invasion.” When economic times get tough, the politicians blame politically and economically powerless immigrants. Proposition 187 denied health and education services to undocumented immigrants. Proposition 187 was driven by fear over increased Latina/o and Asian immigration and was fueled by Governor Wilson and the conservative media. Proposition 187 was overwhelmingly passed, only the San Francisco Bay Area voted against it by about 70%. Los Angeles voted in favor by a 12 point margin. Latina/o voters statewide opposed it 77% to 23%. And what about the church? The Catholic Church was strongly against it with Cardinal Mahoney and many priests leading the way, though 58% of White Catholics voted in favor of it. Many Protestant churches were silent (Acuña, 453).

After 187 came Proposition 209 in 1996, which ended the use of affirmative action in California public institutions. This was followed in 1998, by Proposition 227 which ended bilingual education programs in California (Acuña, 454-455). A silver lining poked through in 2003; in spite of a special election that recalled the sitting governor, Gray Davis and elected Arnold Schwarzenegger in his place, Californians voted down a measure that would have prevented California public institutions from gathering and tracking information using racial categories.

According to Frank Wu the statement, “You Asians are doing well”, summarizes the Asian Model Minority Myth (Wu, 40) which is the prevailing perception of Asians in the United States. Once the restrictions on Asian immigration were lifted in 1965, there was a significant influx of Asian immigrants, which have more or less enjoyed a good reputation (Wu, 40). So much so, Asian are often held up to other racial minority groups as the standard to achieve (Takaki, 414). As Wu describes it the myth goes something like this, “As a group we [Asians] are said to be intelligent, gifted in math and science, polite, hard working, family oriented, law abiding, and successfully entrepreneurial. We [Asians] revere our elders and show fidelity to traditions” (Wu, 40-41). Like many racial stereotypes, there is a hint of truth in the Model Minority Myth, but the problem is that hint has become exaggerated and distorted (Wu, 49) and the underlying standard by which Asians are measured is the White standard.
When you see statistics about Asian success, they are invariably compared to the corresponding statistics for Whites. When this is done, Asians as a group measure up pretty well. Unfortunately what the statistics don’t take into account is that the Asian American population is concentrated in three high cost of living states that also have higher than average incomes than the national average, California, New York and Hawai’i (Takaki, 415 and Wu, 54). In 1990, 60% of Asian Americans, compared to less than 20% of the total US population lived in these three states. Asian American income is unevenly distributed. Looking at the other end of the spectrum we find 13% of Asian Americans in poverty compared to 9% of Whites. Lumping all Asians into a single racial group hides the disparity within the group. Japanese Americans and Chinese Americans come closest to economic parity with Whites. On the other hand, 25% of Vietnamese Americans and 45% of Southeast Asian refugees (such as Hmong and Mien) live in poverty, compared to 23% for Latina/os, 21% for African Americans and 9% for Whites (Wu, 54). Another distortion to the income statistics comes when “family incomes” are used rather than individual incomes. In most Asian families, there are more workers contributing to the family income that in White families (Takaki, 415).

Ultimately the problem with the Model Minority Myth, lies in the very concept. What exactly are Asian Americans supposed to be the models of? There are two possible interpretations, and they are both insulting. First it could mean that Asian American achievement is remarkable, considering they aren’t White. Or it could mean that they are “exemplary” and should serve as an ideal to which all other People of Color should strive toward (Wu, 59). Either interpretation is demeaning and destructive, and racist to the core.

The 1988 Congress passed a bill of apology and payment for Japanese Internment. $20,000 was paid to each survivor, nearly two generations after the end of World War II. Yet, African Americans many more generations later still await some kind of reparations for the years of slavery and the massive accumulation of White wealth created in the United States and Europe (Wu, 102).

In 1996 the Native American Rights Fund filed suit against Secretary of Interior Bruce Babbitt and Secretary of Treasury, Robert Rubin for mismanagement of tribal “trust” funds. The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) cannot account for $2.4 billion in transactions involving Indian trust accounts (Arthur Anderson did the audit). In 1998 a Federal judge found the BIA and the Interior Department in contempt of court, because the accounts were still not resolved (Nies, 397). Here we are in 2004, the accounts are still not resolved, no one has gone to jail because of it, and Native people continue to be among the poorest people in the United States.

The 1993 US Congress passed the Apology Bill acknowledging the illegal annexation of Hawai’i in 1898, saying, “...the indigenous Hawaiian people never directly relinquished their claims to their inherent sovereignty as a people or over their national lands to the United States, either through their monarchy or through a plebiscite or referendum.” Still no land has been returned to Native Hawaiians, nor has their national sovereignty been restored (Trask, 76).

2002-2004 September 11, the War on Iraq and the aftermath. The ugly resurfacing of the “Arabs as marauding invaders” ideology, and the need for the US to protect what we have,
and acquire what they have—by any means necessary. All in the name of protecting our free and democratic society from people who hate us.

2006 finds the United States once again wrestling with immigration and guest worker programs. While the majority of illegal immigrants in the United States are people who entered legally and then over stayed their visas, or are in some other way in violation of their visas, the media focuses on people from Mexico crossing the border into the United States calling them illegal aliens. (citation) Among the solutions proposed by the Bush Administration and Congress are expanding the physical barrier (the fence) between the United States and Mexico, militarizing border enforcement and creating a guest worker program similar to those of the past (the Braceros Program for example) where Mexican workers come to the US, occupy low wage earning jobs, and then return to Mexico. The problem with this model is that guest worker programs have consistently meant the exploitation of all low wage workers by using guest workers to keep wages suppressed; in addition, keeping workers disorganized and unsettled. Guest workers are not protected by the constitution nor do they have other citizen rights and protections. The current debate on this issue also focuses on citizenship issues; whether guest workers have the potential to become US citizens if they chose but also if there are avenues for undocumented workers who have been in the US for many years to be considered for citizenship. Many lawmakers think this second group of workers should “go to the back of the line,” that they should not be eligible for citizenship because their very presence in the US makes them law breakers.

Conclusion
White supremacist ideology is not a single ideology, but multiple ideologies applied separately to each People of Color racial group. These separate and distinct ideologies created colonialism and apartheid in the United States and were applied to People of Color racial groups based on the benefits to White society derived through the exploitation of each group. The result is to maintain power and privilege for White Society. This paper has looked at the legal patterns of the United States which codified these ideologies into the laws of the country and around which all institutional structures are built. The paper further demonstrates the need to understand race and racism as a more complex dynamic that what is commonly understood in the United States as a Black/White issue or problem.


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Forming an Institutional Anti-Racism Team

“While some consulting groups will come in, deliver the services contracted for and leave, Crossroads remains present as an active, invested partner in the transformation of the institutions with whom they work.”

Rev. Jessica Vasquez Torres
Core Organizer/Trainer
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

Crossroads believes as institutions dismantle racism in their own systems, they will serve their communities on the basis of true racial equality and effective multicultural inclusiveness.

Crossroads leads institutions in forming Anti-Racism Teams which develop plans to dismantle personal, cultural and systemic racism in their own institutions.

Crossroads’ unique process of creating Teams is multifaceted and requires full agreement by institutional Leadership (formal decision making body). Though the creation of an Anti-Racism Team is specifically designed to meet the distinct needs of each institution, the following steps are typical:

Pre-Endorsement/Exploratory
An ad hoc group attends an Introduction to Anti-Racism workshop (4-6 hours). The group may then experience an Analyzing & Understanding Systemic Racism workshop (2½ days). Determining interest in exploring formation of an institutional Anti-Racism Team, they move to the next step of the process and officially request Leaders to authorize the exploration of creating an Anti-Racism Team. The group may invite Leaders to an analysis training, or Crossroads may lead an introductory workshop to assist Leaders in understanding the Team purpose and process.

Formal Team Design
Determining a need for institutional change, Leaders mandate the ad hoc group to act as a Planning & Design Task Force. Led by Crossroads, they begin the process of writing a formal proposal for creating an Anti-Racism Team.

Once the Leadership approves the proposal, the Planning & Design Task Force recruits/selects Team members and sets team training dates.

A Crossroads staff person, serving as lead Organizer/Trainer of the team creation project, will work with the institution’s designated Project Coordinator.

Equipping the Team
Once selected, team members acquire skills for developing short- and long-term strategies to dismantle racism within the institution’s structures. Specific skills include: analysis of systemic racism, research and evaluation, teaching, and organizing. This training process typically lasts 12-18 months, and takes place in three phases:

Team Analysis – Begins with a one-day orientation followed by an event where the Team develops an identity, an analysis, and team member relationships (3½ days). This event is followed by several months of team research and data collecting specific to the institution.

Team Skills & Strategy Development – Team members attend training to focus on organizing skills and strategy development (5-6 days). During this period, action plans are presented to institutional leadership for approval. Crossroads remains as consult for six months following the event.

- Follow-up Consultation – Six months after the Team Skills training, Crossroads facilitates a one-day Team consultation. At this time the Team tracks progress and completes and affirms proposed strategies.

Ongoing Support for Teams
Crossroads offers a variety of workshops to assist teams with their ongoing work. These workshops are intended to take place in the context of the team’s overall anti-racism organizing:

- Creating and Contextualizing Your Team’s Introductory Model
- Adding to the Organizer’s Toolbox
- Organizing With Stakeholders
- Applying the Analysis to Your Institution
- Understanding Caucusing and How to Caucus Effectively
- Exploring & Examining Identity Development: Understanding the Process of Internalization
- Learning and Living Accountability
- Understanding & Using History as a Tool for Organizing
- Developing Anti-Racist/Anti-Bias Identities in Children and Youth
- Team Renewal & Rejuvenation

A Crossroads Organizer/Trainer can assist in determining which may be most beneficial.

“I highly recommend Crossroads for your anti-racism planning and process design. They bring the knowledge, skills, process, and identity as consultants to the work of long-term systemic anti-racist multicultural institutional community building.”

Willard Bass, Jr., Executive Director, Institute for Dismantling Racism – Winston-Salem
Acknowledgements

This essay was developed by Crossroads to assist Anti-Racism Teams confront internalized racist oppression and internalized racist superiority. Crossroads does not exercise any proprietary claim to the thoughts and ideas expressed in this essay, rather is honored to provide a vehicle to communicate the learnings shared by several collectives who are committed both to the principles of anti-racism and to co-creating new ways of being and behaving that are anti-racist and anti-oppressive. Crossroads Ministry gratefully acknowledges these collectives: The People of Color Caucus of Crossroads Ministry, The White Caucus of Crossroads, The Peoples Institute for Survival and Beyond, Diverse & Revolutionary Unitarian Universalist Multicultural Ministries (DRUUMM), and European Dissent. In addition, particular individuals contributed their writing skills and acted as conduits for these thoughts and ideas: Robette Ann Dias, Emily Drew, and William Gardiner. Any errors or omissions are the sole responsibility of Crossroads which may be contacted at: PO Box 309, Matteson IL 60443-0309, Ph: 709.503.0804, info@crossroadsantiracism.org

Racial Identity Caucusing: A Strategy for Building Anti-Racist Collectives

Racial identity in the United States is not shaped in a neutral environment. The identities of People of Color form in response to racial oppression, and the identities of Whites form in response to racial superiority. These two identity dynamics manifest in a complex range of attitudes and behaviors that support and perpetuate the racist paradigm in this country. In order to work together to dismantle individual, institutional, and cultural racism, People of Color and Whites must understand how these identity dynamics operate in specific institutional settings, and devise strategies to overcome the barriers and oppression that are created by them.

Crossroads Ministry builds and equips teams within institutions to dismantle institutional and cultural racism. Identity caucusing is one strategy we use to confront the effects of internalized racist oppression and internalized racist superiority. Team members work in their respective racial identity groups, either as People of Color or White People. In this context People of Color work as a racially mixed group struggling together to understand and confront the effects of internalized racist oppression and to experience themselves as an anti-racist People of Color collective working together to dismantle racism. The White team members also meet in caucus to deal with issues of internalized superiority and to build an anti-racist White collective working together and with POC to dismantle racism. When the two caucus groups come back together as a team they are better able to understand, confront, and dismantle racism within the team itself and within the institutional setting that it is working. Caucusing creates a foundation upon which to build concrete organizing strategies for People of Color and Whites to work together as anti-racist allies.

Over the last sixteen years Crossroads Ministry has worked with teams in a variety of institutional settings – primarily in religious institutions, but also in educational and secular settings. In all of these settings we have introduced the concept of identity caucusing. Among the teams that have used it consistently, we have seen progress in changing attitudes and behaviors of oppression. In our own organization, caucusing has helped us make some profound shifts in our institutional structure and culture, in addition to building authentic anti-racist partnerships between People of Color and Whites.

The Reality of Internalized Racist Oppression (IRO) in Our Lives and Institutions

This section of the essay briefly explores the identity shaping power race and racism have in the lives of People of Color in the United States, and suggests ways in which identity caucusing can assist diverse groups of People of Color resist the effects of internalized racist oppression. Additionally, this essay explores the importance of caucusing for teams made up of POC and Whites working together to dismantle institutional and cultural racism.

Caucusing for POC creates a safe and liberated environment in which to explore IRO and how it has shaped our individual and collective lives. A definition of IRO that has emerged from Crossroads team training work is a complex, multi-generational socialization process in which People of Color ACCEPT, BELIEVE, and LIVE OUT negative societal definitions. These behaviors support and help maintain the
**racist construct.** While there are a broad range of behaviors and beliefs that manifest due to IRO, they can generally be grouped into four distinct areas:

- **Self concept and self esteem** — ways in which the individual perceives his or herself in the face of negative societal messages about his or her own racial identity. For example: an individual may internalize the negative societal definitions about who they are and act in ways that heighten visibility, are self destructive or risky, include substance abuse, risky or dangerous sexual activity, violence and abuse. Or an individual may deny the negative societal messages by thinking they are different or special and that while racism may affect some people, it doesn’t affect them.

- **Within the racial group** — ways in which individuals behave within their own racial group and what they believe about their racial group that perpetuates the racist paradigm. Examples of behaviors within racial groups include colorism and other visual forms of differentiation like hair texture, facial characteristics, body shape and size. Sexism, classism, and homophobia are also ways in which group cohesion is eroded. As a way of avoiding some of the negative aspects associated with the group, some individuals distance themselves from their group.

- **Between racial groups** — ways in which individuals in one racial group act toward or interact with members of other racial groups and how racial groups perceive and behave toward one another in ways that reinforce negative societal messages. For example: ethnocentrism, competition, believing and perpetuating prevailing societal messages about other groups, and refusing to acknowledge other groups’ oppression.

- **Within institutions** — ways in which individuals and racial groups behave within specific institutional settings toward one another and how they interact with the power structures and White People within the institution. For example: acting in ways to reinforce, rather than challenge, existing power structures; not being allies with other POC; not creating alliances with other POC; being individualistic and sacrificing other POC for self advancement; accepting forced competition with other POC; acting as an unaccountable gatekeeper that lets in only “acceptable” POC and not those who rock the boat; participating in divide and conquer institutional dynamics; behaving as one of the group while in the company of POC but distancing from POC when Whites are around; not advocating for POC in the presence of Whites; not supporting POC who are in leadership positions; and going to White colleagues or superiors to complain about or diagnose POC instead of confronting or negotiating with POC directly.

If left unexamined and unchecked, these dynamics will operate to undermine any effort of a diverse POC group to become a collective. In fact, the whole purpose of these behaviors is to destroy POC community to maintain power and privilege for the White society. Only through intentionally uncovering and confronting these dynamics can POC build the accountable relationships and alliances necessary to confronting and dismantling institutional and cultural racism in their institutional setting.

Part of the work of caucusing, then, is to look deeply at each of these four groups of behaviors and beliefs to identify their toxicity, and to collectively work toward new, life-giving behaviors with the support of the whole anti-racism team.

This is risky business for POC because it means dealing with oppression where we are most vulnerable, where it has become part of the very core of who we are. It means risking revealing ourselves to a collective and risking to try new behaviors. It means risking failure and success. Racial identity caucusing allows groups to focus on each of these categories of manifestations, identify where the behaviors originate, and to collectively find new behaviors that stop the self-perpetuating cycle of IRO.

Caucusing builds collective POC voice and power so that individuals (especially leaders) are not abandoned or sacrificed, and have accountability to a collective for actions and decisions. It takes time and intention to build collective accountability, time to understand the historic basis for IRO, and time to understand specific institutional dynamics and behavioral manifestations in specific institutional settings.

Once the initial foundations are built, the ongoing work of the caucus includes:

- Intentionally updating and sharpening the collective anti-racism/anti-oppression analysis and its application to both the specific institution and the society at large.
• Developing strategies to work in partnership with White allies to dismantle oppression – particularly to hold them accountable for this work.
• Discovering new behaviors and thought processes that are liberating and which heal IRO.
• Giving one another permission to identify and redirect negative and destructive behaviors.
• Setting boundaries about what is POC only business and what can be shared outside the groups.
• Developing leadership within the group and recruiting others to join the group.
• Putting individual people back together and restoring the community when devastating effects of IRO arise.
• Creating a liberating community that recognizes POC and calls individuals home.
• Mentoring young people and dealing with identity issues of the next generation.

Setting Reasonable Expectations
Each time a group meets to caucus, it is helpful to establish a set of reasonable expectations for behavior during the caucus. Some groups create a set of guidelines which are reviewed and discussed (not casually affirmed) at the beginning of each caucus session and which then become the covenant between caucus participants during that particular caucus session. A sample of these guidelines follows:
• Each time we gather to caucus we must re-establish our ground rules for caucusing.
• Our collective responsibility is to stay focused on the manifestations of internalized racist oppression.
• While learning to trust the collective is critical, trust between individuals is desirable but not necessary for the caucus to function.
• Try to give active listening feedback to caucus members before responding.
• Try to care-front versus confront.
• We each need to take ownership of our own feelings.
• Any member can call “time” during the caucus to breathe, collect the group, take a moment to reflect, diffuse a situation, etc.
• It is important for each member to “check-in” and “check-out” at every caucus gathering.
• Don’t just leave the room during a caucus.
• Any member can call for a “check-in” at any time during a caucus gathering.
• Caucusing cannot happen without a facilitator; a facilitator must be identified before any caucus gathering.
• We must be committed to cultural competence in our caucusing work.
• What arises in caucus needs to come back to caucus, either for a collective resolution or as a report back about the resolution between individual members.
• Seeking counsel from one another outside of caucus is ok, but all issues raised in caucus must be brought back to the entire group.
• Seeking counsel is not, and cannot be, gossip.
• Respect caucus confidentiality.

Getting Started
While much of caucus work is done through storytelling and autobiography, some specific exercises can help get a new caucus started and focus some necessary conversations. Recommended activities include:

Marginality and Mattering Exercise – Designed to demonstrate the connection between oppression and group behavior, demonstrates how individuals behave and contribute differently in a group based on their acceptance by the group.

Quadrants – Designed to assist participants in understanding one another’s histories in terms of colonialism and how the legacy of colonialism perpetuates oppression for each POC racial group today. Assists groups understand the differences and similarities between racial groups and POC cultures.
Identity Mapping – Designed to demonstrate the interplay of racial identity with other parts of an individual’s identity.

POC Anti-Racist Identity Development – Applying models of anti-racist psycho-social development through autobiography, for example using the work of Beverly Tatum, William Cross and others to understand individual and group identity development.

Ongoing Questions and Activities
Some questions and activities are so critical to the life and functioning of a POC caucus that they can be used in an ongoing way.

Questions
1. What strategies does the institution use to keep us divided and competing with one another for access and resources? How can we collectively resist these dynamics?
2. In what ways do we, as individuals and as a collective, perpetuate racism in the institution?
3. In what ways does IRO interfere with the functioning of our team?
4. What does it mean for POC to hold our institution accountable?
5. What relationship do we have as individuals and as a collective to POC communities of resistance?

Activities
Collective and Accountable Decision Making
Implementing new strategies of collective planning and decision making, which include structures to support one another and hold one another accountable for behavior.

Cultural Sharing
Sharing cultural expressions and norms that are traditional to POC groups, using these cultural traditions and norms when creating group and institutional structures, and extending these norms and structures when members of the group are involved in planning events for the larger institution.

Foot Analysis of the Institution
Based on the Foot Identification Power Analysis process designed by the People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond. In this exercise POC identify the power structures of the institution and how they act as feet that kick POC within the institution and in surrounding communities.

Analysis Review
Refining and deepening the anti-racist power analysis by discussing an element of popular members’ culture (movies, literature, music, etc.) or a recent experience of caucus members through the filter of various parts of the anti-racism analysis.

The Reality of Internalized Racist Superiority (IRS) in Our Lives and Institutions
As members of white institutions, and more specifically white members of multiracial anti-racism transformation teams, Whites must be aware of Internalized Racist Superiority in our lives, the culture, and institutions.

A definition of Internalized Racist Superiority that has developed from Crossroads team training work is: *A complex multi-generational socialization process that teaches White people to believe, accept, and/or live out superior societal definitions of self and to fit into and live out superior societal roles. These behaviors define and normalize the race construct and its outcome: white supremacy. When combined with the Internalized Racist Oppression experienced by People of Color, Internalized Racism supports and reinforces a kind of “dance” that helps maintain the race construct.*

Having been racialized as Whites in a white supremacist society, each of us lives out manifestations of internalized superiority in our daily lives. The anti-racist collective/teams are no exception to this. While anti-racist Whites have a heightened consciousness and commitment to undoing these manifestations, they still exist in our interactions. When white people come together in an organization or team, the manifestations of IRS in each person come together to create the collective of IRS; our individual pieces are part of a whole cloth. The cumulative power of IRS on a collective becomes more than the sum of the
individual manifestations of it. We believe that this cumulative power can undermine the whole of a team’s anti-racist work.

As white people in an organization we need to learn to identify ourselves as part of a collective. In our relationships with other Whites we need to develop a culture of an anti-racist ‘us-ness.’ Our ability to identify and understand how IRS functions collectively – and our transforming these behaviors – will have very positive and powerful consequences on the health and life of our teams.

We have learned that IRS depends upon an invisibility to the white community - the pervasive colorblind ideology of the post-civil rights era seeks to cement this. Yet despite its insidiousness and our socialization into blindness, People of Color experience it as a powerful white collective force. Because of white supremacy we have few forces keeping us in relationship to anti-racism. In fact cultural constructs such as competition, individualism, and other institutional realities work to create the sense of individual identity at any cost. Caucusing becomes a factor that holds us to the group, despite the socialization that gives us the opposite message. Caucusing provides a setting and space in which we hold each other accountable to a vision of building an anti-racist community.

How does a team ‘do’ anti-racist leadership development in light of what we know about IRS? How do individuals bring their gifts to the group, and do so in ways that are not oppressive to others? How do Whites stay engaged in the context of anti-racist work when following the leadership of People of Color? In what ways do our individual accomplishments fit into the group in a context of IRS? Caucusing aids us in addressing these questions.

Through caucusing with one another, anti-racist Whites gain greater clarity about white power and privilege, the identity shaping power of racism (power3), and anti-racism. Insights from caucus allow us to see our way through the complex web of relationships, particularly the interactions between culture, structure, and individuals.

Value of Caucus (Why Caucus?)

Difficult situations will arise in organizing against racism. As anti-racist Whites doing this work, we often find ourselves in situations that are very difficult to discuss with other white people who do not have an analysis of racism. We have a difficult time finding a place to discuss our dilemmas and to understand dynamics of racism through a lens of anti-racism. Caucus is often the only place where discussing these issues makes sense. Very simply, caucusing is one way to be white anti-racists together, with each other, working on IRS.

Caucusing is also a means to an end – it is not an end in itself. Identifying and rooting out the overwhelming consequences of internalized superiority is fundamentally important work for building an anti-racist community. However it is also a tool that empowers the entire organization to build its collective anti-racist identity and vision. This work, in conjunction with People of Color identifying and transforming the internalization of racial oppression, is a powerful organizing strategy that makes the anti-racist community possible.

Urgency of Caucus

Being together with other Whites working on IRS is an urgent issue. While many Whites recognize that it is necessary for effective team organizing, it serves a much more important value than a pragmatic necessity. When white individuals actively grapple with IRS together, we might better identify (recognize and feel) the power of racism and its shaping of our own identity. How racism imprisons us as individuals is ultimately an issue of life or death. When individuals’ dynamics come together and form a collective white identity, the very life of a team can be jeopardized. The opposite is also true – when the anti-racist white collective owns and transforms itself the life of a team may be better fully realized. In Crossroads we have become clear about the following statement: “To the extent that I identify and transform my IRS, is the extent to which I can begin to claim an anti-racist identity. Together as a white collective identifying and transforming our IRS, we can claim an anti-racist identity.”

Caucusing is fundamental for understanding identity development. It enables us to see that race ‘has’ us on more than just a psycho/socio level – it also ‘has’ us on a spiritual level. We are aware of this mis-shaped
identity and that it affects our humanity, yet our internalization of racial superiority stands in the way of changing this. Caucusing helps us learn how to see in a new way, it helps us experience the importance of seeing, even when it hurts. Caucusing enables us to own our ‘we-ness’ – empowering us to make “we (the white collective) statements” in place of “me (the white individual) statements.” Anti-racist white people need the discipline of coming together, just as we go to the doctor for check-ups, and check-ins.

Gaining clarity about racism’s hooks – how we act out of these narrow and limited identities – is an important part of claiming our anti-racist identity. So too, our health depends upon using the caucus as a place in which we define, design, plan, develop, dream, and envision what it means to be anti-racists Whites … to be anti-racist Whites contributing to building an anti-racist community.

White “Double Consciousness”
Anti-racist Whites often find ourselves in a difficult space that involves actively working to live anti-racism and be anti-racist Whites. However, simultaneously to this identity, we are operating out of our racial identity as Whites. To this degree, many anti-racist Whites experience a sort of “Double Consciousness” in which our IRS and anti-racism play out at the same time.

Our understanding of the concept of double consciousness (named by W.E.B. DuBois as a phenomenon People of Color experience) is that it is usually a white privilege to NOT have to function with this ‘double veil’ – or social (and spiritual) schizophrenia. However anti-racist Whites who are committed to working against racism must cope with dual identities. The collective sum of white individuals struggling in this space takes on a life of its own.

In the absence of a caucus, we are often afraid to talk about real struggles with race. The ‘difficult stuff’ that emerges without having a caucus space leads into silence, which becomes the complicity that keeps IRS collective.

Many white people engage in ‘looking good strategies’ in their teams and organizations. This manifestation of IRS, often unconscious (though sometimes very conscious), is evident itself in competition with other Whites. ‘Looking good’ is intended to demonstrate that we are superior in our anti-racism. This involves aligning ourselves with People of Color, and putting down other Whites who we claim don’t “get it” in an attempt to make ourselves look better and somehow less racist. It breaks up the collective by scapegoating other Whites, and pushes us into a space where we attempt to see ourselves as separate from (better than) the white collective.

Caucus & the Courage to Risk
Anti-racist caucusing is risky business. The caucus is a place for personal support, and yet it must be the place where significant identity-changing issues are faced. As Whites we have to live with the tension that while important issues get raised and we will be challenged, caucus is the only safe setting where we can risk being honest with other Whites regarding our own racialization and desire to become anti-racist.

The Benefits of Caucus include:
• Supporting and sustaining each other while looking at the difficult stuff.
• Loving each other as white people … standing together in a new way.
• Clarifying where we’re at, what is lacking, what we’re doing well.
• Owning and holding each other.
• Clarifying accountable ways to use our gifts.
• Deepening our commitments to one another, the team, and ultimately the anti-racism movement.
• Living with ambiguity and discomfort (knowing we have each other).
• A place to feel whole while looking at the difficult stuff.
• Deepening our understanding of anti-racism.
• Having authentic relationships with other Whites.
• Being clear about racism’s power in and over us as individuals, and as a collective.
• More effectively doing the collective work of our team (and thus more effectively dismantling racism in society).
• Gaining a sense of what is possible in forging an anti-racist white identity.
• Envisioning and strategizing the building of anti-racist white identity that makes possible the anti-racist organizing of the team.
• Returning to the overall collective better equipped to take up the task of building an anti-racist community.

Nuts & Bolts of White Caucusing

Before Caucus: Consider Logistics
• Adequate space – privacy for each group
• Adequate time for caucuses
• Assigned/identified leadership
• A topic and/or process for setting the agenda
• Group size – break a large caucus group into 10 person max – have a process for sharing what was learned/discerned back to the whole caucus
• Develop a clear covenant/ground rules
• Caucusing is not group therapy – sometimes a one-on-one may be called for
• Only caucus with folks who have a shared analysis

Getting Started

Getting started in white caucuses is frequently the hardest part of the caucus. Because white people are racialized into beliefs that racism can only be discussed in the presence of Persons of Color, many of us feel uncomfortable in these settings. Most of us are also ill-equipped in determining the directions caucuses take if they are to be effective and valuable tools for dismantling racism. There are some common traps that white caucuses fall into: discussions that are strictly intellectual in content and process, which often reflect and result in a distancing of one’s self from IRS; discussions that focus upon People of Color rather than focusing the lens around us and our internalization issues; and finally, at a loss for the substance of what to discuss, many caucuses are spent talking about the caucus itself … while pondering what we’re doing, we avoid doing the important work of examining how IRS has its “hook” in us as individual and collective white people. Several questions that prime the pump are very useful in digging into the manifestations of IRS:

Analyzing Individual IRS
• Recalling the lies & liars (“I remember” exercise from Phase 2 training); how did IRS get “baked into” me?
• How does IRS affect my participation on a team; in leading a caucus?
• What are some of my/our ‘looking good’ strategies as individuals, teams, and institutions?

Analyzing Collective IRS
• How do you see white privilege and power (Power²) working in your institution/team?
• What is the White culture in your institution/team?
• What is welcoming, affirming, and inviting about your institution/team for white persons?
• How have you been made welcome in your institution/team?
• What about your institution/team looks “white”?
• How does white individual IRS come together in your institution/team (at meetings, in organizing, day-to-day life)?

Ending Caucus
• Check in (debrief) on where people are at the end of caucus.
• Note issues that are still on the table for future discussion.
• Decide what will be reported back to the large group.
• Summarize items to think about and apply for the next gathering … commit to areas in which you will heighten your anti-racism and IRS consciousness.
Frequently Asked Questions:
The Crossroads Documentation Process

- Why is Crossroads doing a documentation process?
  1. We want to document our work with teams who have been working in their institution for at least the past 5 years.
  2. We want to know what teams are feeling and experiencing in their organizing.
  3. We’re trying to learn about and fix the glitches, problems, and hang-ups in our model and process.
  4. We want to document what teams have learned and share those “best practices” with others doing this work.

- What is the self-interest for a team to be a part of this process?
  1. Taking the time to do some reflection on the organizing work of the team can be helpful and useful for a team.
  2. Teams are actively helping Crossroads enhance and refine the team formation model.
  3. Crossroads will share the report out materials and “best practice” materials with all the teams who participate.
  4. Participating teams will be part of a national network of teams reflecting on their organizing work, supporting each other, and sharing resources, information, etc.

- How is a documentation team visit arranged?
  1. Once a team agrees to participate, the team contact person(s) for the site visit work with the documenting team to confirm logistics i.e.: location, dates and times.
  2. In addition to the Anti-Racism Team gathering, the contact person(s) arrange for visits with stakeholders in the anti-racist transformation of the institution i.e.: Institutional leaders, constituency members, former members, etc.

- What happens when a documentation team visits us?
  In the course of 2 days they:
  1. Meet with team members as a group to do an interview/listening process (3-4 hours)
  2. Follow-up interviews with individual team members and/or meeting with team caucuses. (3-4 hours)
  3. Meet with Institutional leaders, constituency members, former members, stakeholders in small groups or one-on-ones (8 hours)
## Continuum on Becoming an Anti-Racist Multi-Cultural Institution

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<td>Intentionally and publicly excludes or segregates African Americans, Arab Americans, Native Americans, Latinos and Asian Americans</td>
<td>Tolerant of a limited number of People of Color with &quot;proper&quot; perspective and credentials</td>
<td>Makes official policy pronouncements regarding multicultural diversity</td>
<td>Growing understanding of racism as barrier to effective diversity</td>
<td>Commits to process of intentional institutional restructuring, based upon anti-racist analysis and identity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intentionally and publicly enforces the racist status quo throughout institution</td>
<td>May still secretly limit or exclude People of Color in contradiction to public policies</td>
<td>Sees itself as &quot;non-racist&quot; institution with open doors to People of Color</td>
<td>Develops analysis of systemic racism</td>
<td>Audits and restructures all aspects of institutional life to ensure full participation of People of Color, including their world-view, culture and lifestyles</td>
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<tr>
<td>Institutionalization of racism includes formal policies and practices, teachings, and decision making on all levels</td>
<td>Continues to intentionally maintain white power and privilege through its formal policies and practices, teachings, and decision making on all levels of institutional life</td>
<td>Carries out intentional inclusiveness efforts, recruiting &quot;someone of color&quot; on committees or office staff</td>
<td>Sponsors programs of anti-racism training</td>
<td>Implements structures, policies and practices with inclusive decision making and other forms of power sharing on all levels of the institutions life and work</td>
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<tr>
<td>Usually has similar intentional policies and practices toward other socially oppressed groups such as women, disabled, elderly and children, lesbian, and gays, Third World citizens, etc.</td>
<td>Often declares, &quot;We don't have a problem.&quot;</td>
<td>Expanding view of diversity includes other socially oppressed groups such as women, disabled, elderly and children, lesbian, and gays, Third World citizens, etc.</td>
<td>New consciousness of institutionalized white power and privilege</td>
<td>Commits to struggle to dismantle racism in the wider community, and builds clear lines of accountability to racially oppressed communities</td>
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<td>&quot;Not those who make waves&quot;</td>
<td>Little or no contextual change in culture, policies, and decision-making</td>
<td>Institutional structures and culture that maintain white power and privilege still intact and relatively untouched</td>
<td>Anti-racist multicultural diversity becomes an institutionalized asset</td>
<td>Allies with others in combating all forms of social oppression.</td>
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Dear Participant in the Crossroads Ministry Documentation Project:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in Crossroads Ministry's effort to document the outcomes of our antiracism work. Your experience and reflections are important to this process and we appreciate your time and willingness to be a part of this study.

This project is being undertaken by Crossroads Ministry in consultation with Dr. Rachel Luft, Assistant Professor of Sociology at the University of New Orleans. The purpose of the study is to document outcomes of our analysis, workshops, and team organizing efforts. Information gathered from this project will be used to refine our antiracism work, and contribute both to scholarship and movement building.

In addition to Crossroads' self-assessment project, Dr. Luft will be including the documentation data in a broader study of national antiracism work. Your participation in Crossroads' documentation project will only be included in the national study with your consent, as indicated on this form by signing below. Participation might include formal and/or informal interviews with Crossroads documentation staff and/or Rachel Luft, in the form of conversations or focus groups, either in person, on the phone, or by email. Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the national research component of the study at any time, there will be no penalty; it will not affect your inclusion in Crossroads' documentation efforts, your relationship with Crossroads or the institution or community in which you work. The results of the research study may be published, but your name will not be used, and efforts will be made to preserve confidentiality.

There are no foreseeable risks to your participation in this project aside from any discomfort in speaking about the issues to Crossroads staff or members of your community.

Although there may be no direct benefit to you, the possible benefit of your participation is greater personal and/or community clarity and rejuvenation in regards to the subjects discussed during the documentation project. Additionally, your participation will contribute to knowledge about antiracism and organizing that will be made available to your community and others across the country.
Participation in this study may involve audio recording. Tapes and transcriptions will be kept confidential and will be available only to Crossroads staff and others on the documentation team. Written reports will disguise participant identity.

If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this research, or if you feel you have been placed at risk, you can contact Dr. Anthony Kontos at the University of New Orleans at (504.280.7481).

If you have any other questions concerning the research study, please contact documenters Jessica Vazquez or Art Hoekstra, Crossroads Executive Co-Directors Robette Dias or Chuck Ruehle, or Dr. Rachel Luft through the Crossroads National office in Chicago (773.638.0166).

Thank you.

By signing below you are giving consent to participate in the above study.

__________________________________________  ____________________________________________  _________________
Signature                                      Printed Name                                      Date
Transforming Values (values that transform)

By PaKou Her, Robette Dias & Chuck Ruehle

Each year the Crossroads Advanced Organizers Gathering provides an opportunity to reflect on the ongoing journey of becoming an anti-racist, multicultural institution, and to develop creative ways of sharing that with the folks who work with us. This year Crossroads Core Organizer/Trainers and Apprentices reflected on how best to express some of Crossroads new ways of “being”. That is, how to put into words the values we are trying to live as an institution that are different – and often in conflict – with the traditional values of white institutions, including Crossroads itself. Rich conversations produced the following value statements, and we share them acknowledging that connecting specific actions and behaviors to these will be crucial as we continue this journey.

Valuing ‘both/and’ thinking with a bias for action
One of our observations of white culture is that it forces us into “either/or, right/wrong” ways of thinking. While this may lead to institutional efficiency and expedience, it destroys inclusiveness and diversity. We are acknowledging that multiple realities exist simultaneously and that this is an amazing gift! As a transforming institution, our challenge is learning to be effective in our myriad ways of being, and to allow our differences to enrich and inform us. Sometimes we find ourselves paralyzed in our conflict for fear we will fall out of right relationship. We are learning to disagree with one another and engage one another in struggle and differences in a way that does not alienate or abuse one another. “Both/And”—inclusive thinking – will lead us to multiple approaches to anti-racism work, allowing us to combine strategies from a variety of contexts and re-discover the humanity in our relationships.

Embracing an abundant worldview that utilizes resources responsibly
As we grow toward an awareness of the abundance of anti-racism organizing and training resources, we are able to share more creatively and in more diverse contexts. We live in a world which requires institutions such as ours to safeguard “proprietary technology” and “intellectual property” and ensure resources not be wasted or misused. Trying to maintain absolute control over knowledge and tools is hurtful to our colleagues and to us. As we learn better ways of sharing organizing and training resources more collaboratively, the movement grows.

Practicing transparent communication that guards personal integrity
 Transparency applies to how we present ourselves to the public, and to how we conduct internal life at Crossroads including: decision making, empowering leadership and transforming our identity. We are growing in our capacity to understand how white supremacy has mis-shaped Crossroads, and challenging our day-to-day operations and ability to work effectively with partner and community organizations. Our growing transparency has been an effort to counteract the secrecy and false confidentiality so strongly supported by white culture.

Cooperation and Collaboration that nurture individual creativity
The competition and need for individual achievement nurtured by white culture can undermine our collective ability to work for a larger whole. The antiracism movement is broad and diverse, drawing people and communities from disparate places, institutions and cultural settings. Maintaining a spirit of cooperation and collaboration, bound by our collective perspective and commitment to the analysis of racism, will allow Crossroads to stand in the midst of that diversity with integrity and respect. It is in this collective perspective that encouraging individual creativity and growth can happen in a way that is fundamentally different than the kind of individualism that serves to reinforce and bolster white supremacy. In an anti-racist context, individual development happens within the parameters of an accountable, responsible relationship with the rest of the community.

These are exciting times! and we are honored to be taking this journey of transformation with so many colleagues and partner institutions. As we continue to grow into our understanding that the knowledge we hold is shared by us all, we welcome your insight and feedback.
Resistance affects the ability of Teams to build institutional relationships with stakeholders. Understanding resistance is critical to effective organizing. This general orientation to resistance looks at the specific Team needs and helps create strategies around current organizing blocks.

Length: 1 Day

**FOR ANTI-RACISM TEAM MEMBERS & STAKEHOLDERS*

**WHO HAVE COMPLETED A 2 ½ DAY ANALYSIS WORKSHOP**

Stakeholders are those who have a vested interest in the transformation of the institution

Applying the Analysis to Your Institution

Does your team desire additional conversation about how racism shows up in your institution’s structure and culture? Are there stakeholders who have experienced two and a half day Analysis Training and are hungry for a fuller understanding of exactly how racism functions in your institution? Participants will apply the analysis to their institution by: looking at the institution’s history of racism and resistance; looking for individual, institutional, and cultural racism in their institution; and identifying Power1, Power2, and Power3 in their institution.

Length: 1 day

Understanding Caucusing & How to Caucus Effectively

Caucusing helps teams build the long-term relationships necessary for healthy anti-racist organizing. But how do we caucus properly? Has your team struggled with caucusing? Has your caucusing lost its sense of direction and organizing purpose? This workshop aids in sorting through the nuts and bolts of caucusing, teaches the pitfalls to avoid, and teaches teams the proper facilitation skills and outcomes of caucusing.

Length: 1 day

Exploring and Examining Identity Development: Understanding the Process of Internalization

Internalization of Racist Oppression and Internalization of Racist Superiority fundamentally shape identities of People of Color and Whites in a race-based society. How exactly does this happen? How do our respective behaviors reflect the ways we have all been socialized? And when we act out of our internalized identities, what happens to our anti-racism organizing? This workshop provides teams and stakeholders who have experienced two and a half day Analysis Training the chance to explore this topic in greater depth, and to apply learnings to their every day realities.

Length: 1½ days

Learning & Living Accountability

Accountability to People and Communities of Color is a complex and sometimes difficult principle of creating genuine anti-racist multicultural diversity. In this workshop, teams will assess their work on accountability. Teams will also have the chance to grapple with how to live out accountability both within the white institution and in the wider community.

Length: 1 day

Understanding & Using History as a Tool for Organizing

To make sense of contemporary racism, we must know how we as a society and nation became what we are today. Effective anti-racism work draws heavily on understanding our past & when we understand that U.S. history is fundamentally shaped by its inseparable relationship with white supremacy, we have the foundation for critical and thorough organizing. Delve into U.S. history and identify the ways it applies to your organizing strategies. Participants in this workshop will be required to do some preparatory work.

Length: 1 day

Developing Anti-Racist/Anti-Bias Identities in Children & Youth

Nurturing the next generation of anti-racists requires starting with the youth in our communities. This workshop emphasizes the development of prejudice and bias in children. Participants will gain insight into developing age appropriate ways to support children on these issues. Learn how psychological & emotional health of children is affected by oppressive socialization, and what this means for your team’s organizing.

Length: 2 days

**FOR GROUPS ENGAGED IN SERVICE OR WORK CAMP PROJECTS**

*No Prerequisite*

**Work Camps in a Post-Katrina World**

This training helps to orient relief workers to some of the social and cultural issues they will face in poor communities of color in the affected Gulf area, as well as other locations across the U.S. Developing an understanding of the role that race and racism has played in these communities will significantly help make your work as effective as possible. Also good for high school & college-aged groups.

Length: 4 hours

To learn more about these workshops or to schedule an event contact Crossroads

Phone: 708.503.0804

E-mail: Info@crossroadsantiracism.org

New: www.crossroadsantiracism.org
Racism, Classism and Worker Injustice: A Historical Wagging Tail

By PaKou Her
Presented at the IWJ Conference, 17 June 2007

During a recent discourse I had with participants in an anti-racism training, a commonly expressed disagreement about the primacy of class over race quickly emerged. When urged to consider the reality of racism as a powerfully defining force of domination and control in the United States, several people purported that the condition of inequity in this country is fundamentally about classism, not racism. And if we could destroy or completely overhaul our capitalist, corporation labor-centric way of life in this country, then all people would have the ability to work, live and act together in right relationship.

Though tongue biting was my first instinct, I must admit that I don’t entirely disagree with the argument raised by not just these particular anti-racism training participants, but by many folk in this country. I have no doubt as an anti-racism organizer that the anti-class and worker justice movement is part of re-humanizing a society deeply rooted in abuse, control, exploitation, and economic colonialism. However, objections do arise when the essential binding factor of injustice in the United States centralizes only around definitions and experiences of classism, devoid of a critical under-standing of the ways in which racism also shapes the institutions and systems in our society. This essentialist viewpoint of “class only” can be the blinders we wear despite the fact that we live very much in a race-based society. Rinku Sen, publisher of ColorLines magazine and director of the Applied Research Center, describes this inability to connect both dots by saying,

“Most of the issues we’re dealing with in low-income communities of color and marginalized communities are about a combination of race and class… [Yet a class lens can often get used to the exclusion of others:] People tend to start with race and class and end up only with class. I see that much more than people starting with race and class and ending up only with race”


So how do we stitch together both anti-racism and anti-class movement work without assuming that the respective narratives displace one another, or that one ultimately trumps the other? What would the creation of a unified and multifaceted movement require of us collectively and individually? These are the questions we must be asking ourselves and one another, seeking constantly to understand that any anti-oppression work is about the restoration of a people poisoned by historically created propaganda which govern our lives.

To begin shaping the possibility of unified movement work, it is critical that we learn history. It is not unusual that many of us might recoil from such a suggestion, especially given the way we learn rote lessons on history in our educational system. I grew up believing that history was only about memorizing wars, generals, and battle sites. Further squelching our historical explorations, most of us have been shaped in the a historical waters of this nation, waters in which we can’t hardly remember what newsworthy things happened yesterday – much less what life altering events occurred 100, 300, or 500 years ago.

In my adult life I’ve come to understand history as something living and breathing, and that it has an inexorable amount to teach me about who we are today living in this place we call the United States. History is the vivid Technicolor imagery of people’s lived experiences, both those who conquered and those who were conquered. History’s incantations tell us about why we experience what we do today, and can give us a view into effective strategies for societal change and transformation.

Understanding the animated history by which we were created (and which we continue creating every day) requires an adept and critical reading – not just with eyes and lips, but with our ears. It’s a bit like putting your ear to ground, straining to hear the thundering hooves of a galloping equine herd many miles away. Only this kind of deep and intense listening to history can reveal the values, patterns, and oppressively normative ways of life in the United States. It is also in this way that we find the historical reasons behind the belief held by some that the injustice problem in this country is solely about class, and not about race.

One of many valuable stories that lends unifying insight to labor and anti-racism organizers takes place not in recent history, but in 17th century colonial Virginia. In the early to mid-1600s, persons in bondage included not only what we commonly understand as slaves from the African continent, but the workforce also held enslaved Native peoples and indentured European and African servants. In fact (and perhaps historically surprising to some), the first African laborers were brought to the “New World” in 1619 as indentured servants, and were expected to serve as their European counterparts before becoming freemen.
Given our current overarching national experience of divisiveness and backbiting between whites and people of color, colonial Virginia was a curious time in this country regarding race and class. This was a time in U.S. history when whites and people of color worked side by side, toiling through the same back-breaking labor and answering to the same elitist overseers. It was also a time of shared identity, one shaped by membership in a group whose existence was used to maintain the wealth held by only a few ruling whites. Regardless of color or racial identity, all bond laborers were at this time subjected to the same rebuke and indignities from colonists in power.

It must be noted that this multiracial work force didn’t just labor together. Workers (particularly Blacks and Whites) also fraternized with one another, cohabitated, and intermarried. It is historically evident that interracial families abounded at this time, and that the highly contested lines of race and white superiority had not yet been fully codified in the colonies. It was this very consorting and socializing of workers in bondage that ultimately led to the rise of white supremacy and its role in dividing both labor and racial justice movements.

Bacon’s Rebellion, one of the most important worker revolts in our nation’s history, took place in 1676 in Virginia Colony. Nathaniel Bacon, a white frontiersman, led the charge against the government and its leadership. Dissatisfied with the poorly legislated protection provided to white settlers against the ever present danger of Native peoples, Bacon, along with hundreds of other landless whites, bore arms and engaged in mutiny. This revolting assemblage vowed to guard itself against indigenous retaliation and do what white elites would not do for them.

(Before continuing with the historical recitation of Bacon’s Rebellion, it is important to pause and listen to all the whispers of history. Although the beginnings of this rebellion would lead to some of the most powerful organizing between bonded white laborers and laborers of color, we ought to be attuned to the fact that, even in its very inception, this resistance movement was one deeply rooted in the colonial and imperialistic culture of our nation’s first founding. Howard Zinn inquires,

“Were those frontier Virginians resentful that the politicos and landed aristocrats who controlled the colony’s government in Jamestown first pushed them westward into Indian territory, and then seemed indecisive in fighting the Indians? That might explain the character of their rebellion, not easily classifiable as either anti-aristocrat or anti-Indian, because it was both” (Zinn, A People’s History of the United States, p 40).

In the instance of Bacon’s Rebellion, had poor white frontiersmen not first laid claim to the Manifest Destiny driven theft of Native land and the governmental protection to do so, it may have taken many more years for a collective class-based movement across racial and ethnic lines to foment.)

In an act that further threatened the social order of Virginia colony, Black people began joining Bacon in the rebellion against the ruling elite, culminating in approximately 2000 Black workers and 4000 White workers burning Jamestown to the ground. Although first considered bonded laborers akin to their European cohorts, by 1676, however, the movement towards life-long servitude plagued African and Black communities and differed greatly from the continued indentured servitude for nearly all European workers. Although one might be led to believe that this difference in labor assignment would have been destructive, it proved to point out that Blacks likely had an even greater stake in the transformation of the aristocracy. For Whites, winning the rebellion would mean no more 10-year terms of service; for Blacks, winning the rebellion would mean no more life-long terms of service.

What was the ruling class to do? Although historically unwilling to relate to the plebian working class whites in the colonies, it also became clear that any unified resistance between poor people of all stripes would naturally end in a power coup. In addition to destroying the regime of Virginia colony, a revolutionary worker movement also put at stake the economic viability of the colonial United States, jeopardizing means of production, dispensation, and inexpensive (or free) labor.

Whites in power acted swiftly, choosing strategies for dividing the multiracial worker rebellion based on two things: one, maintaining the cheapness of labor by enforcing class; and two, preserving the pool of available and exploitable cheap labor by enforcing race. Combining the dynamics of both race and class, the ruling elite methodically and quickly succeeded in dividing and conquering the formerly collectivized resistance. Governmental importation of European indentured servants declined sharply in an effort to minimize the poor white working class, while the slave industry reached an alarming frenzy in order to maximize the accessible pool of chattel labor. In doing this, these early colonial leaders concretized the labor movement as we presently experience it today: fractured and injured along the racial fault line.

Utilizing race and class allowed ruling white elites to say to poor whites, “You have more in common with us than you do with them.” Poor whites began experiencing relative labor elevation within the context of chattel slavery. Indentured and landless whites received workplace promotions, leading to such things as becoming the foremen of slave gangs, receiving the ability to mete out punishment against any slave with impunity, disrupting all
signs of Native or Black insurrection, and having the ability to take any item (be it animal or material) belonging to Black and Native people to be used to benefit “the poor” (i.e., themselves).

But the *pièce de résistance* of the conquer and divide strategy of white superiority pinnacled when the once poor, downtrodden, and persecuted white laborers could now hope for what Emily Drew, professor of Sociology and Ethnic Studies, calls “the promise of Whiteness,” and the unification of all whites under a some kind of shared culture. The zenith of the “promise of Whiteness” solidified when formerly maligned whites could themselves dream of one day receiving a governmentally sanctioned swag of land, munitions, and a slave. Herein we can see that rights and privileges granted to whites only leads us into the deep divisions of race and racism in the United States, and in so it creates the assumption that Whites ought to have advantages and rights over and above those identified as non-White.

The story of Bacon’s Rebellion is a long and complicated one, and may present as doldrums. However, if we remain ever diligent in our critical and careful rumination about history, I suspect a great deal of conflict between current anti-class and anti-racism transformation organizing appears crystalline — so long as we understand that history is the tail wagging our movement dog.

The state of struggle at hand between class and race is merely the repetition of a tried and true strategy that divided poor whites and people of color, while simultaneously conquering both. It does not surprise me, nor should it surprise any historically learned revolutionary, that the patterns of fissure and separation in our anti-class and anti-racism movements are resounding reverberations of the convoluted play we were destined to act out centuries ago.

Labor historian and white activist David Roediger contends “that the assumption remains, even as the issue of race is raised, that the [worker of color] enters the story of American labor as an actor in a subplot which can be left on the cutting room floor, probably without vitiating the main story. What if race is instead part of the very lens through which labor’s story must be filmed?” (“For Asian American Workers…, Asian Pacific Labor Association of Evergreen State College, 2007). Contextually, this suggestion allows us organizers to see the interplay of oppressions, a vision that serves only to better equip us in exciting change in our respective areas of expertise.

Last year I facilitated an anti-racism training in Appalachian Tennessee with a community environmental action group. As I listened to the stories of the people, I heard echoes from the race/class canyon ricocheting off the walls. Both People of Color and Whites talked about the rampant corporate and commercial divestment in the community, leaving many without work and in fear of not being able to provide homes, food, and health care for their children and elders. The conversation, however, rapidly degraded into a blame game, with finger pointing by whites whose jobs were recently outsourced to people of color overseas or domestically underbid to poor people of color. Actors in a preordained dialogue, these white people were merely repeating the lines fed to all of us about the causal problem of unemployment and underemployment: that it rests squarely on the shoulders of people of color here and abroad. And it’s people of color, not whites or white controlled corporations, who threaten the mythological stability of whiteness in the United States.

Though undermining their best interests by doing so, I heard in these white people the inclination to align with the white elite of this country, both in government and industry, rather than with other disenfranchised and colonized peoples. Whites in power no more have social or human interest in the white working class than they do in people of color, unless and until poor whites are beneficial to the advancement of white elites. The socializing farce of white unity and the demonization of People of Color are so deeply woven into the fabric of our society as to transform our very collective and individual identities. These waltzing fabrications of white superiority and people of color’s inferiority combine into a poisonous brew that, once drunk, ignites blindness and the inability to see related societal puppeteering and dehumanization.

We cannot, as resisters of the racist and classist status quo, stand aside, knowingly nodding our heads because we now “get it,” or because we consider ourselves schooled about U.S. hegemony. How must we be clear enough about race and class in order to assist all poor people in understanding the ways whites and people of color are being bamboozled to benefit and shore a white racist and classist system? As movement leaders, it is our responsibility to speak with all parts and people of the movement — in their current iteration and the iteration we envision. We are the ones who must know how to navigate the treacherous seas between race and class, articulating that yes, whites of all classes have some kind of white privilege while poor whites are used to reinforce the racist class structure. Parallel for people of color is the ever vigilant understanding that yes, all people of color suffer in some way from white supremacy while middle- and upper-class people of color are used to reinforce the classist race structure.
Our aptitude to articulate the ways race and class reinforce one another calls us into account around two components of societal change:

First, we must be able to fully contextualize our transformation work. A view for racial justice can be applied in conjunction with other views of oppression, just as a view for economic justice can do similarly. Making salient the points of intersection reveals to organizers how and when race and class (and, really, any other form of institutionalized oppression) converge. As motivators and agitators, our capacity to identify and organize around multiple issues can be the avenue that provides for deeper, stronger, and wider strategies for change.

The counsel to understand and see through the prism of oppressions may feel a bit unnerving. Historically, it is has not been uncommon for full blown anti-oppression based movements to become a dilution of all work surrounding any specific manifestation of institutionalized oppression. A general anti-oppression approach often becomes a watered down version of justice, leaving no clear start or end point, and making nebulous organizing tactics that are perceived as too broad or too narrow. By biting off more organizing than any of us can chew, we jeopardize the integrity of all justice work.

The call to change workers, then, revolves around the imperative understanding of oppression as not just singularly institutional or individual, but endemic to the interrelated systems of dominance in the United States. This is the photo that affords the full panorama, and lends us the ability to see and experience our relative places in the struggle for racial and worker justice. It is in this way of maintaining the integrity of each revolutionary piece that our stories do not displace one another, and in fact only make clearer what each part of the movement has to say.

The racist lie that tells us the overarching, normalizing metanarrative of white superiority shapes all our behavior, and even has the power to misshape the movements we engage in that are designed to fight against this same beast. In the labor organizing milieu, white supremacy has the tendency to universalize the white worker experience as the experience of all workers, rather than name it as one experience of worker injustice dually formed within the context of white power and privilege. Unless we comprehend this reality, our worker justice constructs, re-humanizing belief systems, and organizing approaches will inherently carry a bias for whiteness and the white experience as it is lived today. Lifting the veil off this truth allows space for the myriad colonial, economic, social, and race-based perspectives of workers of all racial backgrounds. Such transparency can also illustrate how the interrelatedness of racism and classism is not simply an unsavory social behavior, but a product of the inherent values and culture of our society.

The second of two invaluable components of social change in regard to the interplay of race and class demands individual evaluation of ourselves and the ways in which each of us has been shaped to explicitly and complicity engage in and/or benefit from the racist, classist status quo. As radical and revolutionary organizers, singers, dancers, poets, caregivers, and teachers, we are subjected to the same repeating soundtrack of white supremacy just as any others in the United States. We don’t live in some kind of utopia, hidden in a mountain commune and hermetically sealed away from the realities of our society.

Our downfall as activists is that we often shirk self-scrutiny, accountability, and responsibility. The continuing injustice problem is almost always about some else’s bias, prejudice, ignorance, or misguided use of power. Should any of us here be scratching this “it’s-not-about-me” itch, I encourage you to consider aborting this mission now. If we are engaged in changing society without the admission that we – yes, even as justice organizers – have also been taught and raised to take in and act out the racist and classist messages instilled in us through family, peers, school, and media, we will no doubt find ourselves living into roles of superiority and inferiority regardless of our intentions. This is the way of socializing forces that function virtually like runaway trains in this country. This is also the way dominant cultures nourish and regenerate themselves.

As an organizer of color, my own indicting socializing behavior orbits not so much around race (since I clearly experience myself as a victim and not a benefactor of white supremacy), but around how class and income level have come to shape my behaviors. In some way or another, all of us are socialized into many levels and forms of relative privilege. Though I may know the perils of white racism and my related internalized oppression, I also must be honest about how my ability to access housing, health care, transportation, and education shapes who am I just as profoundly as my oppression as a woman of color shapes my identity.

Should I as an organizer fail to step into the ownership of my place in the matrix of oppression, I will without a doubt act upon all of my learned ways of being, oozing out my own social predispositions despite my desire not to do so. Deliberation, intentionality, and the reshaping of one’s own internalized societal norms are all that can change the deeply embedded beliefs created in us, much of it done without our permission – and sometimes even without our cognition.
Each of us is endowed with the ability to participate in and create astounding human change. However, each of us also risks falling victim to the hazards and crevasses of “oppression olympics,” and the infighting that a siloed slant imbues. This misdirected fight for social primacy is precisely what drives the wedge even deeper between class justice and racial justice. We are accountable both for the socialized baggage we bring to the work, and the strategies for shedding that ballast and replacing it with radical, unified identity.
The following is a joint statement by Crossroads and The Peoples’ Institute for Survival and Beyond. Please share it with others in your networks and send us word about the ideas, actions and plans in which your anti-racist community is engaged. To contact us, send email to: info@crossroadsantiracism.org and tiphanie@pisab.org

Resisting the War at Home and Abroad

“As I have walked among the desperate, rejected and angry young men I have told them that molotov cocktails and rifles would not solve their problems. I have tried to offer them my deepest compassion while maintaining my conviction that social change comes most meaningfully through nonviolent action. But they asked—and rightly so—what about Vietnam? They asked if our nation wasn’t using massive doses of violence to solve its problems, to bring about the changes it wanted. Their questions hit home, and I knew that I could never again raise my voice against the violence of the oppressed in the ghettos without having first spoken clearly to the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today—my own government. For the sake of those boys, for the sake of this government, for the sake of the hundreds of thousands trembling under our violence, I cannot be silent.”

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. spoke these prophetic words to address a meeting of Clergy and Laity Concerned. The speech, titled A Time to Break Silence, was delivered on 4 April 1967, exactly one year before he was assassinated. These words are as pertinent to the current state of domestic and foreign affairs of the United States as they were in 1967.

This January, as we commemorate the birthday of Dr. King, let us remember that inherent in “The Dream” is social transformation through non-violent resistance. This is the call and challenge of Dr. King’s vision for freedom, justice, self-determination and liberation of all peoples. It is not enough for the disempowered and oppressed to commit to a world without violence; it is only when the most powerful embody non-violence that it will become the basis for human interaction and relationship.

Beginning with this year’s King Holiday Celebrations we invite our anti-racist partners to use this commemoration weekend to refocus on the words and life of Martin Luther King, Jr. We must remember Dr. King was assassinated not simply because he had “A Dream,” as the sanitized Civil Rights leader is often characterized, but rather because he had a radical vision of justice, spoke truth to power and located the United States government as the axis of violence and oppression at home and abroad. Let us reclaim Martin Luther King’s legacy and celebrate our own commitment to resisting the war at home and the war abroad, and understanding that they are the same war.

Why is war in the Middle East and North Korea racist war?

Since the beginning of re-ignited conflict in the Middle East, anti-racists have worked to expose racism in our foreign policy—especially with regard to Iraq, Afghanistan, Israel, Palestine, and North Korea—and to connect the racism in our foreign policy to domestic racism here in the United States. As the inevitability of war looms closer, we call on all our anti-racism partners to oppose this war, to work for peace, and to make anti-war movements anti-racist peace movements.

US racial and cultural imperialism abroad are fundamentally based on white supremacy at home, founded on the belief that only White Europeans and White Euro-Americans should set the world’s agenda and control and distribute the world’s resources. Economic imperialism imposed by capitalism knows no boundaries in the world today—all is there for the taking.

The burden for this war is on the backs of people of color and the poor who will both fight it and fund it. Jobs, health care, education, and community infrastructure will all be sacrificed in order to fund this war. This war subverts the agendas of racially and economically oppressed communities in the United States, for example:
• Prisons are the “new projects”
• Education is at greater risk than ever
• Health care—fewer Americans have health insurance than ever before
• Structural inequalities are widening the gap between rich and poor
• Soldieryng is often the only option for gainful employment and access to higher education
• Ongoing, unresolved land claims and trust fund disputes of American Indians are disregarded while the US invades Middle East nations and perpetuates neocolonialism abroad
• Mexican workers die while crossing the border in astounding numbers—and the Bush administration ignores President Fox’s overtures toward resolution
• Calling for democratic elections in Iraq, while elections in the US are marred by race-based inequities and are far from fair
• For all their talk about diversity and racial inclusion during the election, Republican leadership is still dominated by white males, some of whom still advocate segregation
• Bombing has restarted in Vieques, Puerto Rico and the US military documents needed for withdrawal in May 2003 have yet to be submitted
• Thousands of Arab American US citizens are being secretly detained and held without due process of law and in violation of the US constitution
• Non-immigrant men from 20 Middle East, African and Asian countries are now required by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) to register and be photographed, fingerprinted and interviewed under oath

The United States now treats legitimate, law abiding visitors to our country as suspected terrorists, requiring INS registration of men over 16 who are nationals or citizens of Iran, Iraq, Libya, Sudan, Syria, North Korea, Afghanistan, Algeria, Bahrain, Eritrea, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Somalia, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates and Yemen. Pakistan and Saudi Arabia will be added soon, and others may follow. Already we have seen this registration process used to wrongly initiate deportation proceedings against people with pending applications of legal permanent residency. This new profiling strategy targeting people on the basis of national origin, race, and religion has already discouraged people of color from entering or remaining in the United States and is designed to unfairly restrict immigration from targeted countries.

Anti-racism organizing strives to restore the humanity of Whites and People of Color alike. War with People of Color abroad means citizens of the United States are forced to sell our humanity for the price of oil. As this war turns our young men and women into killing machines that destroy communities in the Middle East and North Korea, it also destroys communities here at home. This war demonizes our “enemies” while simultaneously creating demons of us. We are the enemy abroad; we are no longer human in the eyes of the rest of the world.

People in the Middle East and North Korea do not fear (or hate) our freedom. They fear (or hate) us because our actions are not consistent with our ideals. We are the world’s economic bully, creating poverty at home and abroad. We ourselves are not in the land of the free, yet because of our collective white supremacy we act with aggression and arrogance abroad.

We, people of the United States, pay with our lives and our tax dollars to perpetuate violence while white-dominated and driven US corporations profit from oil imports, military arms sales, opening overseas markets, resource extraction, and exploiting labor in this and other nations.

We oppose this war from an anti-racist standpoint. This is a racist war of imperial economic expansion, fueled by the same mythology that birthed Manifest Destiny. We trust we can unite our anti-racist analysis with anti-war coalitions, building sustainable anti-war movements based on a wide range of standpoints. Building common ground and strong resolve to resist war and work for peace requires activists from a range of standpoints to merge diverse political, economic, and racial ideologies.

A Call to Anti-Racist Partners

This letter is a call to our anti-racist partners and anti-racists everywhere to oppose war in the Middle East and North Korea. This is an appeal to deepen our collective analysis and understanding of the racist motivations and repercussions of the war including: who is most affected by the war itself in terms of the cost of lives and resources, and who benefits most from increased military spending while decreasing spending for housing, education, health and social programs. We are not asking our partners to change direction or do something different, but rather to engage in "applied anti-racism" by applying their analysis, intelligence and resources to opposing the war on the grounds that this is racist military action.

We call for an anti-racist anti-war movement. Anti-war movements are often dominated by liberal white organizations (especially the religiously rooted part of anti-war movements). We must build movements connecting globalization and imperialism with white supremacy, linking what happens abroad with the oppression and repression here in the United States.

Please share with us the ideas, actions and plans in which your anti-racist community is engaged. Together we can resist the war at home and abroad.
An Interfaith Reflection for the Holidays:  
Crossroads Ministry Statement on  
_Mel Gibson’s The Passion_

Dear Anti-Racism Colleagues:

With the holiday season upon us and the close of the year in sight, Crossroads would like to share some reflections on the impact this year of Mel Gibson’s film, _The Passion of the Christ_. At the time of its spring release there was considerable international debate about whether or not and/or in what way its representations were anti-Semitic. While the fanfare over the film’s autumn DVD release has died down, we imagine that the disc will appear in Christmas stockings around the country. We thought that bringing our anti-racist analysis to bear on the film was a fitting way to send our holiday greetings as we look to the New Year and ever-growing ways to become more effective anti-racist organizers.

As an anti-racist, interfaith organization devoted to undoing racism, and with a special commitment to undertaking this work in the Church, we think it is crucial to contextualize _The Passion_ by drawing on the same historical and institutional principles we use to organize against racism. For example the fact that the film offers yet another depiction of a Caucasian Jesus – albeit it with somewhat ambiguous melanin – indicates that it is continuing the white supremacist tradition of the Church. In particular we would like to use this year of the passion to begin an exploration of the relationship between anti-Semitism and racism, which we believe will enhance both our anti-racist work and callings in our respective religious communities. As we share in our Mission Statement, Crossroads recognizes that resistance to racism is inseparable from resistance to all other forms of social inequality and oppression.

Soon after the release of _The Passion_ a reputable poll provided evidence for fears that the film was having a significant impact on public perception about responsibility for the death of Jesus. Despite the 1965 Second Vatican Council edict which declared that “the Jews should not be presented as rejected or accursed by God,” a growing number of Americans think Jews are responsible for the death of Jesus. As reported in the April 10, 2004 Los Angeles Times the Pew Research Center announced that “roughly a quarter of the population (26%) now express the view that Jews were responsible for Jesus’ death. This is a statistically significant increase when compared with a 1997 survey.” The report also notes, “The shift in opinion among young people (under 30) and African Americans has been striking. Currently 34% of those below 30, compared to 10% in 1997, and 42% of African Americans, compared to 21% in 1997 hold this opinion.”

We at Crossroads are concerned that the film is having an alarming influence not merely on American ideology more generally, but on our youth in particular. Additionally, the poll’s findings among Blacks suggest that it is likely to increase tensions between Blacks and Jews, which have often acted as a divide-and-conquer tactic to distract from very real issues of racism and power.

What is Anti-Semitism?

Anti-Semitism is the oppression of Jews and the demonization (literally) of Judaism, two distinct but mutually reinforcing and inseparable phenomena. Both were linked historically to the colonization of the land of Israel, such as that by the Assyrian Greeks in the eighth century BCE and by Alexander the Great in the 4th century BCE. These invasions included the explicit repression of religious observance as well as other aspects of sovereignty. The colonial period culminated in 70 CE when the Romans destroyed the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem and initiated the Jewish Diaspora, which eventually produced large migrations to Europe and the advent of a European Jewry.

It was only with the rise of Christianity, however, that an initial ideology of anti-Semitism developed. As part of a theological explanation for why the bulk of the Jewish community did not accept Jesus as the Messiah or repudiate their Judaism, Jews were accused of being demonic – literally the devil’s people doing his work. In the absence of a Christian theological pluralism, and in the context of the political power struggles that followed the rise of Christianity, this theological demonization helped to explain the ongoing endurance of Jews and their religion long after Jesus’ arrival.

Instances of this demonization abound in Christian history. The myth that Jews have horns, for example, is a persistent remnant of this theological belief later justified in Biblical mistranslations. Depictions of Jews with horns were symbolized in European art, including most famously in Michelangelo’s “Moses,” which was intended for the Vatican and is exhibited today in Rome at San Pietro in Vincoli. Another persistent anti-Semitic myth is the notion of the Jews as ruthlessly powerful
– for by definition any group fueled by the devil would have to be. This accusation can be seen throughout the Medieval, modern, and contemporary periods as beliefs that Jews control the government, media, or engage in international conspiracy against Christians.

It was during the rise of the modern period in Europe that we see the linking of the earlier theologically based ideology about Jews to the newly emergent discourse on race. As first European and then American Christian scholars began to articulate a pseudo-science of race they struggled to classify the Jews. Were they or weren’t they a distinct race? For example Sir Thomas Browne, a physician from Norwich, devoted an entire chapter of his 1646 work *Pseudodoxia Epidemica: or, Enquiries into Very Many Received Tenents [sic], and Commonly Presumed Truths* to examining the idea that “Jews stink naturally, that is, that in their race and nation there is an evil savour [which] is a received opinion” (Gould 1996:394). (Browne actually concluded that it defied the laws of reason to argue that Jews stink, or that they were a discernable race. We can recognize in his investigation, however, the common themes of the racial discourse of the time.) Ultimately debates over the racial classification of Jews culminated in the Holocaust when Hitler used expressly racial language and images to rationalize genocide.

It was in a post-Holocaust America that European Jews were, for the most part, granted white status. This occurred primarily through economic means such as the GI Bill and new anti-discrimination legislation that banned explicit, restrictive university quotas and housing covenants. Consequently most European American Jews in the last two generations have endured less anti-Semitism than in the previous two millennia. Nevertheless, given the shape-shifting, agenda-driven boundaries of race in the United States, and also because many Jews of European descent (Ashkenazim) are still recognizably distinct from Anglo, Northern Europeans, some still experience anti-Semitism in racial terms. Furthermore many Sephardic and Mizrahi Jews, who have come more recently from the Middle East and Africa, are not Caucasian by any measure. Judaism, as a tribal, ethnic, and religious identity is not neatly reducible to racial categories.

The term “anti-Semitism” is relatively new in the history of oppression against Jews. It was first coined in the late 19th century by Wilhelm Marr, “a German Jew-hater” (Plitnick, 2004). Some have alleged that Marr was the son of a Jewish convert to Christianity, suggesting an example of internalized oppression common to Jewish and other marginalized communities (Rosenwasser 2004:72). While the term “Judenhass” (hatred of Jews) had been used previously, Marr wanted to scientize and systematize it by planting it firmly in the terrain of race. He chose the linguistic term “Semitic” for this purpose, which referred to Middle Eastern languages such as Hebrew and Arabic. Despite the linguistic association, Arabs “were beyond the racist consciousness of Marr, who never encountered them”; the new terminology of “anti-Semitism” as advocated by Marr was specifically intended for Jews (Plitnick 2004:2).

This historical discussion of anti-Semitism should not be used to deny that Arab Americans have and continue to experience racism. As the boundaries of racial classification change to benefit those who would be counted as white, Arab Americans have been placed in shifting racial gray zones. Unfortunately, divide and conquer tactics which manipulate tensions between American Arabs and Jews and between Blacks and Jews sometimes misrepresent both Arab American and Jewish experience. For example Richard Goldstein, recent executive editor of *The Village Voice*, writes that “In Crown Heights, there’s a black Episcopalian priest named Rev. Heron A. Sam who preaches that Jews have appropriated the term Semite, which rightfully belongs to Africans and Arabs as well as [to] ‘the Hebrew race’.... [S]uch a race of people...become manipulators and anarchists” (Goldstein 1994:208).

The fact that historically the term “anti-Semitism” refers to the oppression of Jews should not detract from the proper study of Arab experience and racism against Arabs. Similarly, to misrepresent the historical emergence of the term in order to further demonize Jews perpetuates racism. While there are very real issues involving white racism and Christian anti-Semitism that underlie “Black-Jewish relations,” we believe that perpetuating distortions of history only distract from the important task of understanding these real issues. To the extent that Jews are white, there is racism to reckon with. To the extent that most elite power-holders in the United States are Christian whites, there is Christianity to reckon with. To the extent that Black-Jewish relations do not focus on the real sources of tension and misunderstanding, the distortions act as a smokescreen.

**The Passion in the Context of The Passion**

As Editor of Tikkun Magazine Rabbi Michael Lerner noted at the release of *The Passion*, along with many other Jewish and Christian commentators, “Few Christians today know the history of anti-
Semitism and the way that the Passion stories were central to rekindling hatred of Jews from generation to generation" (Carroll 2004). Explains The Jerusalem Report, (3.3.04.):

Watching the renewed passion plays at the Bavarian town of Oberammergau in 1934, Adolph Hitler was impressed with their potential, calling them 'precious tools' in the effort to eradicate the Jews. Several years later in 1942, Hitler, attending the cycle of plays once again, addressed the adoring masses and stressed a direct link between his vision and the tradition of the plays. Quoting Matthew 27:25, 'His blood be on us and our children,' Hitler said, 'Maybe I'm the one who must execute this curse...I do no more than join what has been done for more than 1,500 years already. Maybe I render Christianity the best service ever!' (P. 35).

The passion plays at Oberammergau, performed every ten years since the late Middle Ages, are part of a tradition of incendiary anti-Semitic interpretations of the crucifixion that often prompted violent attacks on Jewish communities. However Rabbi Gary Bretton-Granatoor, Director of Interfaith Affairs for the Anti-Defamation League, notes that the producers of Oberammergau have now approached this history in an accountable way: “...relying on the same four Gospels, [they] are able to present the Passion without it appearing that the entire Jewish community was arrayed against Jesus, thus downplaying one of the classic sources of anti-Semitism” (Bretton-Granatoor, 2004).

There are myriad other links between Gibson’s interpretation of the Passion and classic anti-Semitism, many of which critics brought to light after the film’s spring 2004 release. Gibson’s own father’s rejection of the Second Vatican Council’s acknowledgement that the Jews are not to be held responsible for killing Jesus and his denial of the Holocaust help to contextualize Gibson’s vantage point. Despite the extreme nature of these personal ties, however, it is important to place the significance of the film in much broader historical and institutional context.

For it is not simply personal viewpoints (though Gibson’s mega million dollar film being viewed by millions can hardly be called personal) that are of concern here, but rather how they perpetuate historical patterns and institutional power. For example one theological source for the film comes from a 19th century self-named “prophet,” Sister Anne Emmerich, whose visions included images that do not appear in the Gospels but do make their way to Gibson’ movie, such as a sympathetic Pontius Pilate conferring with his even more sympathetic wife, or as in Emmerich’s own writing, “numerous devils among the crowd, exciting and encouraging the Jews, whispering in their ears, entering their mouths, inciting them still more against Jesus” (Sheehan, 2004). Even today, some within the Church are pressing for Emmerich’s beatification, the step prior to canonization. Analyzing the links between “artistic” or “religious” interpretations and historical arrangements of power and violence are crucial to understanding their significance and implications.

**Anti-Semitism and Racism: An Anti-racist Perspective**

As with other kinds of oppression, anti-Semitism has historically taken institutional, cultural, and individual forms. In the United States today the institutional, economic, and racial oppression of Jews is significantly less than it has been in most times and places in Western history, and clearly less than that of people of color. When anti-Semitism does manifest it is more often individual and cultural. However because Jewish history has seen such dramatic cycles of violence and (apparent) inclusion, even Jews who do not face systemic anti-Semitism often believe – both correctly and incorrectly – that it always lies dormant.

Anti-Semitism furthers a key dynamic of racist ideology – *obscuring the real source of institutional power* – to spark, justify, and reinforce violence and oppression. As Paul Kivel notes,

> Whenever the stereotypes of Jewish money or power go unchallenged, the injustice of our economic system is strengthened and racism is continued. Blaming Jewish bankers or African-American women on welfare are parallel strategies to divert our attention from the corporate elite that makes the economic decisions that affect our lives. These strategies give the majority of white people the mistaken impression that they are controlled by Jews and in competition with people of color – squeezed on both sides (Kivel, forthcoming, cited in Rosenwasser 2004:64-5).

This distract-and-displace tactic has a long history. Since the Middle Ages, Jews have repeatedly been made the middle men in the local power construct (e.g., tax collectors or slumlords), appearing as the face of power to the disenfranchised, but rarely sharing in power’s privileges. Often, Jews had little choice. Denied land ownership, national education, professional occupations, or other governmental positions by European leaders, they were funneled into gate-keeping positions that were easily targets of resentment and scapegoating while the real sources of power remained invisible and aloof.
Interpretations of the Passion that place the responsibility for Jesus’ death on the Jews who had recently been colonized by the Roman military empire repeat this pattern. Even today when many Jews have “made it,” having been allowed to assimilate to whiteness and live free of racial and economic oppression, they are much more likely to be found in medicine and education than in the seats of corporate or governmental power. Regardless of pervasive stereotypes, every demographic study of the United States shows that the greatest concentration of power in America continues to be held by Christian whites.

We believe that understanding this history is crucial to understanding the processes through which twentieth century American Jews moved from being racially marginal outsiders to being granted and choosing whiteness. It is by virtue of their race and class, not by virtue of their Judaism, that American Jews gain relative social power. The dynamics involved in the institutional pathways, cultural costs, economic benefits, and coalitional setbacks of this move from marginality require careful analysis.

The study of how American Jews were turned into a gate-keeping class is also applicable to the experience of other marginalized groups. As Melanie Kaye/ Kntrowitz points out, “Japanese, Koreans, Arabs, Indians and Pakistanis are also branded as ‘money-grubbing’ – while young disenfranchised men of color are blamed for [other] societal problems. ‘One group is blamed for capitalism’s crimes, the other for capitalism’s fallout,’ she observes. ‘Do I need to point out who escapes all blame?’” (Rosenwasser 2004:68).

The discussion of anti-Semitism is not intended, as some may fear, to distance Jews who are white from the responsibilities of whiteness. On the contrary, its purpose is to precisely and accurately uncover the real history and relationships between racism and anti-Semitism. To collapse Jews into a generic white category is to deny history, which has rarely allowed such absorption. At the same time, to exceptionalize Jews from the benefits of whiteness is to deny the present. Unfortunately, some Jews have so internalized a history of oppression that they fail to recognize the benefits of privilege they have been granted. To them, the bestowal of whiteness gives them.

**Actions To Take**

We encourage Crossroads teams to see these “Actions To Take” as an opportunity to deepen their understanding of both anti-Semitism and racism. Understanding the relationship between racism and other forms of oppression strengthens our analysis of racism, develops organizing strategies for working with different groups, and helps to undo all forms of oppression. We especially hope that those teams who are affiliated with the Church will take a leadership role in turning the release of *The Passion of The Christ* DVD into teaching and organizing opportunities.

- **Teams educate themselves.** One useful resource is a publication by the American Jewish Committee (AJC), New Jersey chapter titled: "Passion Plays: A Resource Manual". It includes talking points about the film that are very useful. The Manual can be ordered by calling 973-379-7844, cost is $3.00. The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) also has useful information on its website. "The Jerusalem Report” article (March 22, 2004 entitled "Putting 'The Passion' in Perspective” provides analysis and examples of how the Jewish people have been depicted in books, stage and screen).

- **Teams organize damage control around The Passion** by educating their communities about the dynamics of anti-Semitism and how these dynamics manifest themselves in the film. Teams use this discussion to generate commitment to eliminating anti-Semitism, which begins with being able to recognize it in its various forms. Teams can discuss/role-play ways to interrupt anti-Semitism they encounter. (Many faith communities have resources available, i.e.: *The Bible, the Jews, and the Death of Jesus: A Collection of Catholic Documents* from the UC Conference of Catholic Bishops, and *Talking Points: Topics in Christian-Jewish Relations* from the Department for Ecumenical Affairs of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.)

- **Teams apply their anti-racist analysis to anti-Semitism** in order to strengthen anti-racist organizing, and develop institutional tools for fighting anti-Semitism when it manifests. Applying an anti-racist analysis to anti-Semitism includes:
  - Deepening an understanding of the history of anti-Semitism, and in particular its Christian theological and European racial elements;
  - Learning about the process by which American Jews became white;
  - Developing organizing tools that are both anti-racist and not anti-Semitic for doing anti-racist organizing with Jews and others;
• Including non-white Jews in team thinking and examples;
• Deepening an anti-racist analysis of the American Arab experience in the racial construct.

➢ Teams set up discussions with a Jewish congregation in their community to talk about the Mel Gibson film and to explore ways to further learn about each other. This can be undertaken in the spirit of anti-racist organizing, and building bridges for future coalition.

➢ Teams encourage other religious leaders in their communities to also open up discussions about “The Passion” film and anti-Semitism. The Anti-Defamation League issued a "Call to Understanding," which was signed by representatives of several denominations. It outlines the history of inter-faith relationships between Christians and Jews, highlighting Passion Plays and efforts to bring about respect of Judaism among Christians. (Teams can find out if their faith community has signed this statement.) The statement also asks Christians to appreciate the “Jewishness” of Jesus and his followers, the oppressive circumstances of Jews living under Roman imperial domination, and the rich diversity of Jewish life during Jesus’ time as essential to understanding the historical circumstances of Jesus’ execution.

We hope that the analysis presented in this statement will open up productive discussion and activities among our team members and the people with whom we work. We also look forward to hearing from you about your thoughts and experiences.

References