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## **INTEGRATIVE ANTI-RACISM**

**[draft, draft, draft]**

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### **I. INTRODUCTION:**

Thanks to Dr. Handel Wright, CRC – Cultural Studies and David Lam, Chair Multicultural Education for the invitation.

Also to Dr. Leslie Roman for giving a response to my remarks; Caroline Rueckert, Hartej Gill, and all who have had a hand in making this event possible.

### **Jokes**

Let me share some of the perils of doing ‘critical work’.

In a recent review of my department (my tenure as Chair ends June 30), one of the reviewers asked:

a) “George, your department prides itself on being a very critical, cutting-edge department. So let me ask you this: Is there room for someone who is not ‘critical’ here? I responded by reminding the reviewer, “Well, remember that we are both critical and cutting edge and this means that we drive the ‘non-critical’ out of town with our ‘cutting-edge’ knife!

b) At this same meeting of the reviewers and students, I was told that most graduate students were extolling the virtues of the Department Chair until the pre-service students arrived... and rocked the boat: “Who is George Dei?”

Oh well, the lesson here is that we all maintain some blindspots in our work. Anti-racism and even intersectional analysis is not exception.

c) After a recent presentation when I minced no words on ‘White privilege’, I was asked certain questions such as: “How can an anti-racist discourse avoid being racist itself?”

Isn't the 'anti' confrontational and a turn-off? And what should whites do – just fold our arms, since we are damned if we get involved or not?"

I reflected hard on these questions and also wondered why we don't seem to have any concern with 'anti-war'. It is like – be nice when we are being racist to you. But more seriously, these questions reflect a deep concern about the 'stigma' which those who are bent on protecting the status quo have attached to anti-racist work and scholarship.

I would hesitate to say that if someone does not like 'anti-racism education' then they must like 'racist education'. When it comes to racial politics and discourse there is nothing like a neutral stance. Dominant bodies, in particular, often assume the position of racialized neutrality to avoid speaking about issues of complicity and responsibility.

Having said that, I also recognize that we have different conceptions of what 'equity' is. I would reiterate that race equity (like any equity work) is a process and a collective undertaking. Equity is not a 'thing' (to use my colleague Tanya Titchkosky's phrase), that is, something someone has, but rather something we work together to achieve.

I have often encountered a few progressive workers/colleagues who would point out that the anti-racism discourse may be too limiting in that it does not allow for embracing broader politics around questions of globalization, Western militarism and ensuring the effects of transnational capital on local communities. While I share these concerns, I beg to differ. Often these individuals are working instead with a narrow conception of anti-racism as erroneously about simply 'race and skin colour politics'. As I allude to later, anti-racism today is about the processes of racialization and how class, gender, sexuality, culture, language and ethnicity have all become powerful tropes for racializing groups as different, and to subject them to differential and unequal treatment. So, when we examine these broader macro-structural processes of global capital, at the heart of their effects is the racialization of groups and communities.

As noted elsewhere, community, coalition and social movement politics must not subsume anti-racist struggles under international capitalism. Race is still salient and of course the struggle against racism must be fought on a global, international level.

I would like to begin this presentation with this observation: In 1903, W.E.B. Du Bois proclaimed that the problem of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was of the colour line. I will restate that for the 21<sup>st</sup> century the problem we have to contend with is the conceit of globalization.

## **II. SUBJECT[IVE] LOCATION AND POLITICAL PROJECT**

I come to speak with you this morning from a grounded and situated position as someone working in the area of anti-racism, Indigenous philosophies and anti-colonial thought; and engaging schools in the politics of inclusive education.

## Researching Schools

I am here to engage in conversations on ‘Integrative anti-racism’ and to make some connections with issues of Indigeneity and Aboriginality.

I share in the project of bringing multiple readings to anti-racism.

I also want to reaffirm an intellectual goal: that is the recognition that ‘race matters’ conceptually, theoretically, geographically and politically.

I say this because of the sensation of moving while standing still. Not everything that passes today as ‘anti-racist’ is really anti-racist.

The neo-liberal appropriation or co-optation of such terms as accountability, quality, standards, competence comes with it the risk of depoliticized readings. For example, accountability is now seen more in terms of fiscal responsibility and ensuring that the ‘community’ is served well for its dollars. But a different reading of accountability is about institutional and state responsibility to diverse communities and particularly to marginalized communities. ‘Excellence’ now means gearing schools towards the ‘best and brightest’. Excellence is defined in dominant restrictive ways that heavily favour test scores and academics, rather than a holistic interpretation combining the ‘social’ and ‘academic’.

My point is that anti-racism may mean different things to different people.

By the same token, anti-racism cannot be just one thing. As I have repeatedly argued, there is no one model of anti-racism.

### **III. HISTORY OF EUROPEAN RACISM AND THE IMPLICATIONS FOR LINKING INDIGENEITY AND ANTI-RACISM**

In this paper I would reiterate that I see the question of Indigeneity as distinct [albeit related] to the question of Aboriginality. For me, the latter is more culture-specific, while the former brings an expanded international dimension to debates about Indigenous knowledge production. Nonetheless, Indigenous philosophies and Aboriginal epistemologies share many ideas in common.

The uniqueness of Aboriginal histories and existence necessitates a conceptual and practical distinction of issues affecting these communities and those of other racialized communities. However, I do not believe that it serves any purpose [except for the interest of the dominant/oppressor] for the causes of Indigeneity and anti-racism to be pursued in ways that create divisions and binaries between concerns of Aboriginality and racism. In the Euro-American context, while I agree that Aboriginal bodies experience a separate and distinct kind of racism, this form of racism is in a great part related to their identities

(e.g., Indianness). In other words, “anti-Indianness” as a virulent form of racism, different and yet connected to anti-Black/African racism. The epistemological and pedagogical understanding of oppressions points to powerful connections of racisms and Aboriginal colonization, imperial and cultural genocide.

Increasingly, it is being perceived as the ‘limitations’ of conventional anti-racism in not broaching current questions of globalization, Western imperialism and militarism and the impact of the labour-capital processes on local communities.

Coincidentally, last week marked the commemoration of March 21, the UN day for Elimination of Racism. Important for us to think beyond the events of Sharpeville in South Africa when, in 1960, police opened fire and killed 69 people at a peaceful demonstration in Sharpeville, South Africa, against the apartheid “pass laws”.

Racism goes deeper in history.

History of racism – The Holocaust of African enslavement, European genocide and colonization of Aboriginal peoples and their lands, the history of residential schools and ‘cultural imperialism’.

Lawrence and Dua’s work ‘Decolonizing Anti-Racism’ brings to the fore some important issues for me. How is anti-racism conceptualized in work that seeks to decolonize? For example, how is the centrality and saliency of race featured in the supposedly ‘anti-racist scholarship’? How can we separate the discourse itself (i.e., principles/ideas of an anti-racist discursive framework) from the actual questions/issues of scholarly gaze or focus?

It seems to me that there is a re-insertion of a hegemonic reading of anti-racism in a particular decolonizing approach we may be putting forward. It raises the question: Is there one model of anti-racism..... such that all approaches must make issues of Aboriginality as a central departure point?

Indigeneity and anti-racism are two interrelated struggles. There is obviously a congruence of politics and thought between the two discourses. We can assert this connection without making a claim that there is a true model of anti-racism that is non-hegemonic.

This is the politics of building solidarity of a mutual engagement.

### **Some Points of Note**

a) Aboriginal and Indigenous peoples are racialized for punishment and oppression. The history of cultural genocide among Indigenous peoples in North America is all too familiar. I agree that any anti-racist practice in Canada must recognize this history of Aboriginal existence.

Colonizing and imperial relations in Canada go way back to Aboriginal self-determination, European conquest and genocide, and the institution of assimilation schools.

b) Anti-racism is about the holistic interpretation of our experiences and realities. This means connecting individual accounts to broader macro-social processes, and to group and community experiences. It calls for matching rights with responsibilities at both the individual and group interface. It also means looking for a synergy of body, mind and spirit. Such understanding calls for re-embodiment so that colonized and oppressed people can speak from their subjective experiences. This is what Indigenous and Aboriginal philosophies teach us. There are implications for knowledge production.

c) There is also the notion of multiple knowings and what this means for critical work. For example, how do we come to know and understand our own experiences of oppression? How can the dominant determine the terms under which the racially oppressed speak about their own oppression? There is the epistemic saliency of the oppressed which must be understood as part of the search for multiple ways of knowing. This “epistemic saliency” ought to be distinguished from the critiques of “epistemic relativism” since the latter emphasizes the fact that the experiences of oppression positions one to know differently [not better] about oppressions.

d) Difference is central to anti-racist work. Also, how we speak of difference: the Indigenous idea of thinking in hierarchies as opposed to thinking in circles.

e) Identities are linked with knowledge production. We speak about anti-racism from our different locations, experiences, histories and identities.

It is important that today’s academy be a decolonizing space where we begin to interrogate, think and re-think the ways in which dominant knowledge, discourse and practices have shaped our understandings of social power relations, of our relationships with one another, of who we [individually and collectively] are and who we believe ourselves to be, of our understandings of socio/political difference in terms of race, class, gender, sexuality, dis/ability and body image.

In viewing this space as a space of decolonization through the evocation of embodied knowledges that we all bring to this space, we can all begin to discuss and think about resistance and the ways in which we can and do assert, collectively and individually, our own sense of who we are and where we come from in the face of ongoing dominating institutionalized relations of power.

The development of a critical embodied consciousness is a primary objective. Asserting this/our [classroom/academy] space then as a decolonizing space means [crucially] that we are all responsible for knowledge production and dissemination, and the politics of embodiment that is required.

f) Anti-racism is about reclaiming the past, present and future as part of discourse and politics - borrowing from Fanon's conception of a 'resistance to amputation' return to the source.

**Let me elaborate with my schooling research to show the links of indigeneity and anti-racist practice.**

In my schooling work I have repeatedly pondered over five key questions that can lead to a discussion of how we make connections between anti-racism and spiritual knowledge:

a. How do we [as anti-racist workers] ensure that social institutions and settings respond to the needs and concerns of a diverse body politic?

[These needs and concerns extend beyond material/ physical considerations to questions of emotional, psychological, affective, and symbolic well-being].

b. How do we ensure that excellence is not simply accessible but is also equitable?

[i.e., to speak of excellence is to speak of multiple, collaborative and collective dimensions of knowing. Excellence is not an individual accomplishment. It is the conglomeration of the collective production and acquisition from and by each of us. Excellence also happens when we work with the 'trialectic' of body, mind and soul].

c. How do we ensure that all members of our communities develop a sense of entitlement and belonging to their spaces?

[We have students in school physically present in bodies but absent in minds and souls. These students need to feel a sense of belonging; that their souls and hearts are in the right place, a place they can collectively call their own and identify with, both emotionally, psychologically and materially. This is the idea of teaching, learning as an emotionally-felt experience]

d. How do we move beyond the bland talk of 'inclusion' to a radical politics of social accountability and transparency?

[i.e., to be accountable, not simply to ourselves but to our communities and to a higher order (e.g., ancestors/elders)].

e. How do we ensure that what is theoretical does not stand in opposition to what is pragmatic?

[Elsewhere (Dei 2000a), I have argued that the worth of a social theory should not be measured solely in terms of its philosophical grounding. But, perhaps more importantly, the relevance of a theory should be seen in its power to offer a social and political

corrective; which is to say, the power of theory to bring about change and transformation in everyday political practice].

#### **IV. WHY ANTI-RACISM?**

I raise now this pointed question: why anti-racism?

First, contrary to popular rhetoric, we have not gone, and cannot go, beyond race, especially when we are in denial. Race and difference provide the context for power and domination in our society.

Race is an essential element of Canadian citizenship.

Race, class, gender, sexuality, [dis]ability are critical to conceptions of nation state, belongingness and citizenship.

On this point, I do not believe that Canadian multiculturalism has made race irrelevant [see also Cecil Foster]. To think otherwise is sheer intellectual wishful thinking. Irrelevant to whom and why? If anything at all, what uncritical multiculturalism has done is to silence race in the dominant discursive imaginings and interpretations, at the same time masking the power of White racial privilege. We should not confuse the question of 'relevance' with a politics of 'silencing'. The hypocritical and strategic evocation of race in dominant discourse and social practice does not make race irrelevant. In fact, race is ever more salient by the dominant's denial and strategic evocation of power and privilege.

Second, there is growing hostility to affirming race and there is need for anti-racism to challenge the complacency, silencing, and hostility towards race and racialized bodies. Indeed it is important that we distinguish "the discomfort of speaking race" from "the urgency and necessity of addressing the race/racial problem".

Third, racism is not situational or situated. Anti-racism calls for the engagement of history, social structure and relations, as well as questions of institutional responsibility.

Fourth, as I reiterate later, oppressions have many things in common (e.g., all oppressions work within structures; they are intended to establish advantage/disadvantage; and they lead to creating a process of 'Othering' groups, with material consequences. At the same time, it is maintained in anti-racism discourse that oppressions are not equal in their consequences.

Fifth is the fact that Whiteness, despite complications of gender, sexuality, class and ethnicity, is a system of dominance and we cannot do away with racism without addressing the oppressive aspects of Whiteness.

Sixth, is the seduction of privilege. Within our institutions, racially minoritized bodies at times assume some of the trappings of Whiteness in a bid to gain acceptability and credibility. For example, we see this in the mimicking of Eurocentric ideas, as well as in the uneasy distancing of self from a community that has been labelled in totalized and essentialized racist terms as “criminals, “deviant and subversive”).

Seventh, we need to speak of the qualitative value of justice, which is to say that the ethics and ethicality of our [anti-oppressive] politics require that we become strategic and counteract the majority propensity to sweep race under the carpet, notwithstanding perceived and real glaring racial inequities.

Eighth, that ‘goodness’ and ‘racism’ can co-exist within us. These are not contrary claims or politics. We affirm this in anti-racist practice to uncover the limits of Whites engaging in defensiveness and a pedagogy of guilt when charged as “racists”.

## **V. POSING NEW QUESTIONS**

In looking at anti-racism in a post-modern context, asking new questions is very pertinent. These questions call for an integrative anti-racist approach to dealing with social oppression. For example,

- a) Within the academy we need to ask about the possibilities, in this historical juncture, of every learner escaping racist, sexist, classist, hetero-patriarchal ideologies.
- b) Furthermore, how do we challenge the fact that most of our students appear set in their knowledges and thinking because of the school curriculum?
- c) How do we examine the ways that racism, sexism, homophobia, ablesim are travelling today – e.g., the globalization of racism (e.g., through colonial discourses; ways of knowledge production and the validation/legitimation of such knowledges; the making of the race ‘experts’ and the ‘knowers’ of the Other.
- d) How can we bring race and difference back into the centre of discourse and challenge the politics of dis-embodiment subjects?
- e) How do we challenge the propensity of the Western academy to celebrate diversity and yet not respond concretely to difference?

## **VI. THEORIZING INTEGRATIVE ANTI-RACISM**

Notwithstanding the expanding literature on critical race and anti-racism studies, it is disheartening to constantly hear ‘critics’ and their obsession with a supposedly ‘lack of conceptual and analytical clarity’ about race and what anti-racism is all about.



In the following, I offer some critical pointers in theorizing 'integrative anti-racism' (see Dei, 2007).

a) The integrative anti-racism discursive framework works with the idea that despite what some may see as a lack of 'conceptual clarity', race still has a powerful explanatory power in racialized and racist encounters and communities. In other words race has discursive, communicative, political and material power and currency.

b) Integrative anti-racism is a discursive lens to interrogate asymmetrical power relations and structured lines of difference (race, class, gender, sexuality, [dis]Ability, etc) while foregrounding race.

c) Integrative anti-racism highlights a 'race saliency', not to be confused with 'race reductionism' or the idea of irreducible/essentialized difference. The saliency of race is a fundamental analytical conception and an entry point in understanding the lived experiences of those who have been racialized.

d) The 'saliency of race' is a strategic evocation that offers the *raison d'être* for foregrounding race in intersectional analysis.

e) The theory of intersectionality in 'integrative anti-racism analysis' is based on the understanding that racism achieves its full effect when intersected with class, gender, sexuality, [dis]ability, language and religion.

f) Theorizing race saliency as an entry point in integrative anti-racism works with four conceptual understandings: a) the relative saliencies of different identities; b) the contextual and situational variations in intensities of oppressions; c) the severity of issues for certain bodies; and d) that oppressions may have things in common (working within structures, intended to establish advantages/disadvantages, and to create self/other distinctions) but are NOT equal in their consequences.

g) Integrative anti-racism is about structural/systemic racism', including what Scheurich and Young (1999) in their piece, "Coloring Epistemologies" published in the *Educational Researcher* 26(4):4-16 identified as: i) 'Civilisational/epistemological racism' (i.e., racism built on assumptions of Western civilization) e.g., privileged knowledges in the academy; ii) 'institutional racism' (i.e., the standard operating procedures that privilege dominant groups, while disadvantaging racial minorities); iii) societal racism (i.e., entrenched public racist discourse and practices (i.e., the narratives/texts) that operate on the wider scale to favour Whites and other dominant groups) [see, for example, O.J. Simpson, Katrina; the U.S. public response to the outburst from Michael Richards (Kramer) and the surge in buying Seinfeld tapes; also, the criminalization of Black youth].

h) While structures exist because we have people within these structures, it is important to affirm that racism is not situational. Consequently, integrative anti-racism

maintains a focus on institutions and structures. Integrative anti-racism discourse argues that within social institutions (e.g., the academy), racism revolves around certain ontological, epistemological and axiological foundations. For example, the ontological-nature of social reality - academy is fair, value-free and objective; epistemological - particular ways of knowing about this reality by working with 'merit', 'excellence' and a 'prism of thinking in hierarchies'; and the axiological - disputational contours of right/wrong - treating everybody the same, social justice for all, and discounting the qualitative value of justice; the fact that equal opportunity and colour blindness which we all herald so much may complicate racism by masking its real material, and political effects and consequences).

i) At the core of structural racism is the dominance of Whiteness. Integrative anti-racism highlights the extent of the “scripting of Western civilization”, the “fabrication of Whiteness” and the “racial boundary policing that comes with these. That is, the supremacy of Western civilization or White racial supremacy is anchored in a fabrication of Whiteness. Historically, this fabrication required an immense psychological, physical and intellectual energy to keep up the alleged purity of Europe and the West (e.g., look at the attempts by so-called enlightened European scholars to deny Egyptian and Nubian influence on European history, Western [Greek] civilization. But this fabrication also exacted, and continues to exact, a heavy material, physical, psychological and emotional toll on racialized subjects (e.g., spirit injury, the emotional harm of racism).

j) An understanding of the process of racialization is also central to integrative anti-racism discursive framework and practice. Racialization in this context refers to the process of ideological, material and symbolic signification of different groups in the dominant’s imagination and subsequent positioning of these groups in the social formation.

k) Racial groups exist and they exist in hierarchies of power. Such hierarchies of power are only meaningful in a competitive culture with asymmetrical relations in positions of power and influence. The competitive nature of our communities itself helps produce racialized subjects. But social groups are racialized differently, some for power and privilege, others for punishment. For those racialized for privilege there is usually a false sense of superiority and entitlement to the privilege.

l) Within the concept of racialization, the signification of race has since been extended to class, gender, sexual and other sites of differences. Anti-racism views relevance of race in how the term itself (i.e., race) has metamorphosed into a racialization of subjects through the notions of culture, biology, class, gender, language, religion and sexuality.

m) Integrative anti-racism is about subject[ive] agency and collective resistance. Integrative anti-racism centres the agency and interests of racially minoritized subjects in accounting and resisting oppression. This entails a critical understanding of how race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, culture, language and religion mediate the power of

communal social practice and action. For example, a study of the ways minoritized bodies work to transcend our marginality towards a self-actualization and collective empowerment, as well as the ways the dominant groups question or do not question their power and privilege, and their complicities in the maintenance of structural inequity.

n) Integrative anti-racism is also about the ways of resisting the dominance of Westernity and its power to subsume all forms of thought: for example, in the way the modernist project has come to be associated with “reason”, “progress”, “rationality” and the “enlightened discourse”. Integrative anti-racist politics is about subverting these meanings as simply the prerogative of western modes of thought.

o) It is through a nurturing of oppositional stances, informed by our relative subject positions and experiences, that the dominance of Westernity and Eurocentricity can be subverted. In fact, the anti-racism discursive framework claims the intellectual agency of the racially minoritized to define oneself. It affirms the epistemological relevance of the oppressed, while subjecting their understanding of oppression to a critical interrogation.

p) Integrative anti-racism works with alternative conceptions of ‘difference’ and ‘Otherness’. The call for ‘integrative anti-racism’ emerges from the dominant positioning of social difference as ‘problem’. The integrative anti-racism discourse sees an important distinction between affirming difference and engaging in a politics of ‘Otherness’. A ‘theory of difference’ emphasizes the strengths of acknowledging difference as sites of identities, knowledge and power; while a ‘theory of Otherness’ is about constructing difference as the negative ‘Other’. It is about the negative interpretation of racial differences through a process of Othering those who look ‘different’. The process of Othering establishes ‘self/Other’, and ‘us/we’ distinctions and provides a basis for denying resource and power to those who are marginalized, subordinated and/or minoritized in society. Otherness imagines difference simply in the exotic Other, rather than seeing difference as an embodiment of knowledge, power and subjective agency. By conflating difference and Otherness, and neither separating nor distinguishing the ‘theory of difference’ from the ‘theory of Otherness’ it has been argued by some critics that anti-racists actually create the problem of race and racism by the insistence of working with racial differences.

q) Bodies matter, not simply in terms of a project of representation or linking identity to knowledge production and the idea of multiple knowings, but there is also the “rootedness (or ‘embeddedness’) of racist ideologies in bodies”. The White body is potentially prone to racism, and this profoundly complicates any engagement in critical anti-racist work. The White body itself gives rise to certain liabilities in any work that would be deemed ‘anti-racist’. Yes, this liability is attached to the body. However, this does not mean that White bodies cannot do anti-racist work (see also Howard, 2006).

r) There are emotional risks and consequences with racism and pursuing anti-racist politics (e.g., the emotional engagement, the stories of pain and anger, the attack on one’s credibility and the resulting spirit wounding). Understanding agency and resistance in

anti-racism praxis is also to evoke spirituality and spiritual knowing. Furthermore, critical scholarship must work with knowledge as embodied experience. Hence, integrative anti-racism calls for the evocation of notions of the 'spiritual' and to deal with the despiritualization of the 'self', 'spirit injury' and a healing of the soul. Integrative anti-racism places at the centre the 'spiritual' in the axis of social movement politics, thereby making questions of economics, culture and history the superstructure. This approach to anti-racist work cannot be viewed simply as a project of decolonization and the unraveling of the power relations of knowledge production, interrogation, validation and dissemination.

s) The Independence of 'Scholarship' and 'Activism'. Integrative anti-racism does not subscribe to the luxury of independence of scholarship from politics/activism.

## **VIII. BEYOND THE CRITICAL INTERROGATION: WHAT IS TO BE DONE?**

The call to look at the broad prism of accountability and responsibility.

**a) Each department/faculty needs to revisit their objective, mandate, policies and practices to consider internal exclusionary barriers and what can be done to remove them.**

(e.g., review of admission and hiring practices, tenure and promotion)

The issue of curriculum review is central.

**b) Institutional support for race, anti-racism and Aboriginal initiatives (e.g., academic programming).**

Having racial minorities and Aboriginal students in our institutions, promoting anti-racism and Aboriginal courses, and developing equity programmes all require leadership, foresight and sustained protection and support from our institutions. Addressing these issues cannot simply be subjected to economic arguments of demand/supply and the easy and simplistic rationalization. Race and equity concerns are often pushed to the background because they are considered "special interests" by defenders of the status quo.

Our universities should be promoting new and critical arguments about how to do programme planning in the Aboriginal and minority areas. For example, the offer of courses creates the demand for students to come to our institutions.

[I have seen how the number of Aboriginal and racial minority students has grown in my department with our emphasis on race, equity and Aboriginal issues. Minorities never ask our universities to create something they do not have. We assume the 'institution' is just not a place for us. So if the university has the foresight and builds initiatives, and

develops trust with communities, it generates interest, and the racial minorities and communities will come].

This is akin to what David Theo Goldberg calls 'consumer-directed discrimination'. In other words, "there is no interest in these areas and therefore we cannot promote them".

### **c) Representation and Proactive Recruitment for Equity:**

Expectations of department heads to ensure diverse faculty; incentives to ensure such goals are reached; additional resources for ensuring diversified faculties and sustaining these faculty

Creating funds to support these initiatives.

Such diversity will address questions of mentorship of Aboriginal and racial minority students; the promotion of counter and oppositional discourses such as race-based epistemologies, anti-colonial thought, etc.

The possibilities of decolonizing research and having courses on books which aim to promote multiple/Indigenous Knowledges and critical race perspectives.

With a diversified faculty we stand a better chance of developing practices to mentor young faculty and students alike.

The question of accessibility of our institutions to a diverse clientele. This calls for proactive measures to reach underrepresented groups - racial minorities.

### **d) Coalition and Intersectional Politics**

Students, faculty and staff pursuing 'Coalition Politics' (e.g., study groups of Aboriginal and racial minority students, anti-racist coalitions) and integrating race, gender, class issues.

Having allies is key to our collective success, provided we can deal with the question of power and privilege, and hear the voices of those who want to reclaim their identities and histories in the academy.

Within the academy we can surely pursue the politics of social movements broadly and yet keep certain goals at the centre. As we pursue anti-racism broadly to encompass other forms of oppression (sexuality, age, gender, class, religion) we can simultaneously maintain the gaze on race and Aboriginality. Why? The power to deny race and push race discussions to the background.

**e) Outreach: Educational Relevance, Mentorship and Enhancing Student Diversity:**

Addressing the question of educational relevance of our work:

Making our academic work meaningful to communities from which we draw our students.

This can serve to break the perception of the ivory tower of our institutions.

Departments and universities must continue to work collaboratively with communities. But we must seek out projects that can benefit faculty, students, institutions, and communities, and in particular, be mindful of the power pitfalls and how they should be addressed.

Specifically on Mentorship

Universities could expand their mentorship programs with local community youth groups to attract Aboriginal and minority youth to our programs (e.g., science and medicine).

Connecting with other educational outlets outside the university.

Encouraging students and faculties to become ambassadors for their schools and for the institutions.

These efforts can lead to transformation by bringing in different perspectives and using them to affect policies, procedures, etc.

**IX. CONCLUDING THOUGHTS**

I will end where I began and paraphrase what the youth cultural icon, Tupac Shakur, said some time before his untimely death. His words are very profound, prophetic and yet problematic:

“I may not be able to change the world, but I can guarantee you that I will do my best to influence the minds and thoughts of those who can change the world”.

I think this is knowledge that all educators must work with. We do not simply change our own world. We change ourselves.

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