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A Note From the Editor

We have made it to the ninth annual conference! As a short history of R.A.C.E. prepared by Krista Riley for this issue of RACELink demonstrates, this achievement truly shows the central part that R.A.C.E. has played in the fostering of critical race, feminist scholarship in Canada. It hasn't been easy. R.A.C.E. in general, and R.A.C.E. conferences in particular, continue to happen without a large membership base and thus a fixed source of income.

As we begin the ninth conference, so appropriately focused on the politics of compassion and 'doing good,' we face an enormous challenge as an organization. How do we keep going in a time when budget cuts mean that fewer scholars can travel, fewer feel that they can take political risks in their scholarship, and most of all, in a time when freedom of speech is under attack in Canadian universities. To criticize Israel is to invite charges of hate speech and face the wrath of administrations bent on the shutting down of discussion Israel's treatment of Palestinians. What this has to do with race, and with the privileging of a neo-liberal and avowedly Western politics is something we must all consider. As Natalie Kouri-Towe discusses in this issue, we cannot accept the banning of discussions of state racism no matter what the state is that is engaging in it. Nashwa Salem reminds us that it is under the rubric of becoming empathetic active citizens, that we are schooled to think of ourselves as outside of history, as simply superior people who engage in saving others.

As we come together to reflect on the politics of 'doing good' we should spare a thought for the material and political conditions in which we now do scholarship and for the strategies we will need to keep on producing an ethical and accountable, anti-racist and feminist scholarship.

Sherene Razack, Editor



R.A.C.E. is an association of First Peoples and people of colour who are academics and researchers engaged in anti-racist, feminist scholarship.

Our goals are to:

- * Foster and promote critical anti-racist feminist thought
- * Produce and disseminate a substantial body of Canadian anti-racist feminist research and scholarship
- * Create opportunities and foster networks among First Peoples and people of colour academics and researchers with the aim of cultivating a more equitable environment for the production of anti-racist feminist scholarship
- * Pursue institutional support to First Peoples and communities of colour
- * Provide support to First Peoples and communities of color

Current R.A.C.E. Steering Committee:

Sedef Arat-Koc, Ryerson University

Lynn Lavallee, Ryerson University

Yasmin Jiwani, Concordia University

Gada Mahrouse, Concordia University

Charmaine Nelson, McGill University

Sherene Razack, OISE/University of Toronto

Sunera Thobani, University of British Columbia

Malinda Smith, University of Alberta

This newsletter was compiled by Krista Riley.

R.A.C.E. AND CRITICAL RACE SCHOLARSHIP IN CANADA TODAY

Krista Riley

While we prepare for the ninth annual Critical Race and Anti-Colonial Studies Conference, it is worth stepping back and looking at the history and current activity of the association that organises these gatherings. Officially formed in 2002, Researchers and Academics of Colour for Equality/Equity (R.A.C.E.) involves academics and community activists from across Canada. This article is a brief look at the history of R.A.C.E., followed by an examination of the main research topics that have arisen over the course of the last two R.A.C.E. conferences.

As described in R.A.C.E. promotional literature, the history of R.A.C.E. begins with that of another organisation, RAGTAG, and the conference that it organised in 2001:

The Vancouver based Race And Gender Teaching and Advocacy Group (RAGTAG) organized a National Conference and Consultation on furthering Race and Gender studies in Canada in May, 2001. RAGTAG is a voluntary group of anti-racist activists from various academic institutions and community organizations committed to contesting dominant race and gender relations in our teaching and learning.

The Conference and Consultation were held at the University of British Columbia.

Approximately two hundred academics and community activists participated in the events and adopted the following three recommendations at the national consultation:

1. Organize a national conference on critical race and gender issues on an annual basis;
2. Develop a national association for Aboriginal and people of colour academics and researchers to promote critical race scholarship;
3. Build networks at the regional level.

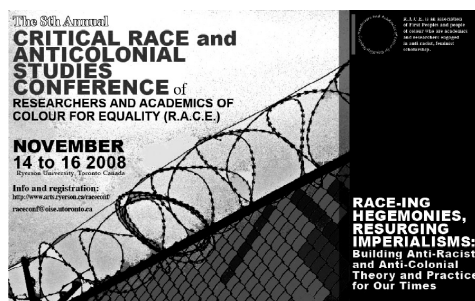
A national steering committee was elected at that time to work on implementing the recommendations.

From this came subsequent national conferences. In 2002, the Critical Race Conference hosted by the Centre for Integrative Anti-Racism Studies was held at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) at the University of Toronto and involved 350 participants, including 80 presenters. It was at this conference that the association of Researchers and Academics of Colour for Equality – R.A.C.E. – was formally established.

Race and Critical Race Scholarship in Canada Today (Continued)

The following year, the University of British Columbia hosted the next Critical Race conference, titled Pedagogy and Practice, and attracted 400 participants. In 2004, it was York University that held it, again with a focus on Pedagogy and Practice. The next conference took place at Dalhousie University, under the theme of Racial Violence and the Colour Line of the New World Order. In 2006, the Critical Race Conference was held at the University of Regina, and looked at the Race/Culture Divide in Education, Law and the Helping Professions. The 2007 conference was hosted by OISE, with the theme of Transnational Racism & "The Right to Have Rights."

The most recent conference – the seventh official Critical Race Studies conference, and the eighth of the conferences that began with the 2001 RAGTAG consultation – was hosted by Ryerson in November, 2008. The theme of that conference was Race-ing Hegemonies, Resurging Imperialisms: Building Anti-Racist and Anti-Colonial Theory and Practice for Our Times. It was also the first year that "Anti-Colonial" was added to the conference title, making it the Critical Race and Anti-Colonial



Studies Conference, in recognition of some of the particular struggles of indigenous scholars and activists.

Over 300 people, including professors, students, and community members, attended, and the conference programme included over 100 presenters. The 2009 conference will take place in June at McGill and Concordia, with the theme of Compassion, Complicity and Conciliation: The Politics, Cultures and Economies of 'Doing Good.'

While the conferences have been largely successful, the realisation of some of the other goals of R.A.C.E. has been more difficult. A proposed committee structure within the organisation, for example,

would have created six different committees within R.A.C.E., responsible for steering, fundraising, survival/advocacy, communications, pedagogy and conference planning. Due to a lack of resources (human and otherwise), this structure has never been implemented. Many R.A.C.E. members continue to struggle for institutional support and recognition, and for an effective way of networking and sharing support and resources with other scholars researching similar issues across Canada.

Having looked at some of the history of R.A.C.E. as an association, I want to explore some of the content of the scholarship being done by R.A.C.E. members. What are its members researching, where are they working, and what does this say about critical race studies across Canada? For the purposes of this article, I will be looking at the programmes from the past two conferences (the 2008 conference hosted by Ryerson and the 2007 conference at OISE), as a way of mapping some of the major centers of critical race scholarship in Canada, as well as some of the main areas being researched.

It should be emphasised that this is far from a comprehensive survey of all critical race studies research being done across Canada. As it reflects the specific scholarship being done by researchers who choose to affiliate themselves with R.A.C.E. (at least to the extent of participating in a conference sponsored by R.A.C.E.), it leaves out those who may be doing this work but are not taking part in R.A.C.E. events.

Given the challenges that R.A.C.E. has faced and continues to face in terms of organisational capacity and institutional recognition, some scholars may choose not to participate, or may focus on other associations that have a greater capacity to be more active. For this reason, it is difficult to tell how many people might be doing critical race work while remaining disconnected from R.A.C.E. as an association, or to assess what kinds of research are being done across Canada that

Race and Critical Race Scholarship in Canada Today (Continued)

remain absent from the R.A.C.E. conferences. Practical considerations, such as geographic location, also influence the composition of the conference programme. However, although the lists of presenters do not provide us with an exhaustive list of anti-racist scholarship activities across the country, they can provide us at least with a starting point for considering some of the research that is taking place.

At both of the most recent conferences, universities from Canada's largest cities have been the most widely represented. Most of the presenters – students and faculty – come from universities in Toronto and Montreal; given the distance, Vancouver (and the University of British Columbia in particular) also has a strong presence. These presenters are faculty and students, most commonly from academic programs such as sociology, political science, women's studies, social work, and education, and, in smaller numbers, literature, communications, geography, nursing, and art history. Graduate students and/or professors presenting at the conferences tend to represent a range of these departments from each of the major universities present (York, Ryerson, McGill, Concordia, and UBC), as well as from some smaller universities.

A notable exception here is the University of Toronto. Each year has seen several presenters from the education faculty (OISE), specifically from the Sociology and Equity Studies (SESE) program, and, to a lesser extent, from the Adult Education and Community Development program. Outside of these two programs, however, the number of presenters from the University of Toronto has been tiny, especially considering that the two most recent conferences have taken place in Toronto. Most of the University of Toronto presenters have been from the geography and planning program, instead of from the more typical women's studies,

sociology and political science departments. Although some of this can perhaps be explained by the reputation of the SESE program as a place for critical race studies, meaning that many graduate students interested in critical race studies intending to go to the University of Toronto may gravitate towards this program, the near-total absence of non-OISE University of Toronto presenters is still striking. While anti-racist research is rarely the norm within most academic departments, it is worth questioning whether the environment at the University of Toronto is somehow especially hostile to such scholarship, or whether such scholarship is occurring but remains disconnected from these national gatherings.

The overall predominance of the large universities can be explained by a number of factors: as bigger universities with larger student populations, it makes sense that they would have a proportionately larger presence, and as universities based in major cities with higher populations of people of colour, it follows that there would be more interest and investment in researching issues related to race. There are geographical explanations as well, given the relative ease of getting to Toronto even from Montreal, as compared to the prairies or the east coast.

The geographical explanations are only partial, however; there have been very few presenters from other Ontario universities, even those very close to Toronto, and the conference held in Halifax did have an overwhelming number of Halifax-based speakers in the same way that the past two conferences have concentrated on researchers based in Toronto. Whatever the reasons, it seems clear that the majority of critical race research in Canada is taking place at these schools. Not surprisingly, programs where the R.A.C.E. executive members are professors tend to have especially good representation at the conferences.

Race and Critical Race Scholarship in Canada Today (Continued)

The areas being researched are overlapping and can be categorised in many different ways. I highlight here some of the major themes that have arisen through both of the most recent conferences, as a way of understanding some of the most common directions that Canadian critical race scholarship has taken.

Many of the presentations have examined the theme of racism in a particularly Canadian context. Colonisation, in its many forms, emerges as a major theme in many arenas, as do related issues around indigenous resistance. The role of this colonisation in the creation of the privileged white Canadian subject is evident in papers that examine topics such as the creation of the settler state, the erasure and management of indigenous identities, and the articulation – for example, through public apologies – of a national benevolence towards indigenous populations. Others explore the role of race within definitions of legal status in Canada (citizen, refugee, immigrant, non-status, migrant worker), and how these definitions are officially legislated and popularly understood. Further topics include studies of diaspora communities within Canada and their belonging (or lack of belonging) in relation to the national imaginary. Discussions of multiculturalism, and particular of its role in perpetuating racial inequalities in Canada, arise frequently.

The spatial dimensions of race are present in many of the conference topics. On a local level, some papers discuss the role of race in the production of particular urban, rural and suburban spaces and identities. Others look at these spatial dimensions on a transnational level. The topic of imperialism, whether military, political, economic, or cultural, is often discussed. Issues related to transnational racism are also expressed in discussions about global control of resources, the role of multinational corporations, international

tourism, and more benevolent-claiming discussions of global citizenship.

Several of the presentations look specifically at race in the media, popular culture and art forms; journalism, fine arts, magazines, memoirs, travel writing, dance, hip hop music, and museum exhibitions all arise as topics being researched, as do questions of media literacy and audience responses. Some of the papers focus in particular on the consumption, exotification and appropriation of certain racialised identities through these media forms. Others examine the psychoanalytic dimension of these images, looking at issues such as race pleasure and colonial fantasies.

Many researchers are focusing their work on race in the post-9/11 context. This scholarship examines the construction of Arab and Muslim identities, both within Canada and globally. It looks the invocations of race contained within the language around the “war on terror” and issues of “national security.” Questioning the dichotomy created between “good” and “bad” Muslims, some of this research also challenges the supposed neutrality of calls for secularism and what this means for Muslim subjects.

Black identity forms another major topic of research, especially in the context of blackness constructed as criminality and as a threat, and also arises in the context of black-focused schools and marginalisation of black spirituality in the academy. Additional identity-specific areas of research listed among conference presentations include indigenous, South Asian, Iranian, Korean, Asian, Caribbean, Balkan, Palestinian, Arab, African, and Jewish. Several of the papers also look at constructions of whiteness. Very few of them discuss mixed-race identity from any backgrounds.

Many papers look further at some of the other social categories with which race

Race and Critical Race Scholarship in Canada Today (Continued)

may interlock. Gender seems to be the most prominent area where interlocking forms of oppression are considered, as they relate to both the oppression faced by women of colour and the accumulation and articulation of white masculinity. Other papers examine race alongside sexuality, queer identities, disability, class, welfare status, health, and environment.

Some of the research that scholars have presented leads directly into the theme of this year's conference. Professions including teaching, social work, midwifery, and "development" work have all come under scrutiny;

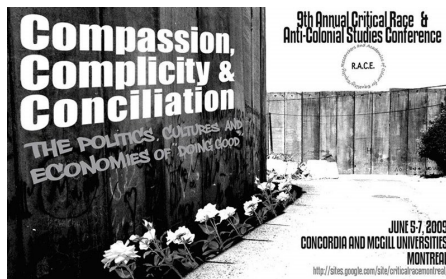
certain forms transnational and/or transracial solidarity face similar critiques. Some papers criticise these

practices outright; others attempt to articulate visions for them to be implemented in anti-racist and anti-oppressive ways. Other more successful manifestations of anti-racist activism and resistance are covered in many of the papers, with topics including grassroots and indigenous resistance movements, and work related to migrant justice and anti-war activism. Activism among women of colour is an especially prominent theme within this category.

As final major topic covered within the R.A.C.E. conference presentations returns us to the challenges of doing anti-racist

scholarship within the academy. Conference papers have investigated the privileging of whiteness and of Eurocentric knowledge, and the roles of racism and colonisation in faculty appointments, academic leadership structures. They have studied the marginalisation of identities and the efforts made by faculty of colour to claim a space. They have also looked at the development of area-specific studies (such as Caribbean studies) within academic settings. These papers form part of the scholarship on race, while also indicating some of the main obstacles that researchers face when doing this work.

The array of papers presented at recent R.A.C.E. conferences represents a diverse range of topics and disciplines, one that even comes across as fragmented. Although it emphasises the many areas in which a critical race analysis could be used, the variety of topics and programs – and, perhaps more crucially, the absence of any centres that prioritise or demand a race analysis – also points to the difficulties involved when attempting to organise around such a perspective, particularly when faced with multiple interests and with the evident lack of institutional prestige and support for the critical race field. Still, the high number of presenters and their diverse areas of study also demonstrate a widespread commitment among faculty and graduate students to researching issues related to race, however fragmented it may be. Such commitment can be used as further motivation for conducting this research and for continuing to hold conferences and to strengthen networks of scholars involved with critical race studies.



FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND THE CENSORSHIP OF NAMING RACISM

Natalie Kouri-Towe

As Israeli Apartheid Week (IAW) was organized this winter at universities around the world, activists and academics at a wide range of universities across Ontario and Quebec – including the University of Toronto, York, McMaster, Carleton, the University of Ottawa, and Concordia University – witnessed a series of administrative blocks to the organizing of their events. Two common themes laced campus responses to the IAW events, which disguised acts of censorship through the language of human rights and freedom from discrimination by equating criticism of the state of Israel with hate speech and manipulated bureaucratic procedures to attempt to shut down events from being held on campus.

Rejecting and canceling room bookings at universities has been one of the main bureaucratic tactics used by administrations to censor events that criticize the Israeli government. University censorship has increasingly been cloaked behind the bureaucratic neutrality of room booking procedures, which is a tactic that is difficult to appeal and even harder to prove as a tactic of censorship. This has become one of the most popularly employed strategies for university administrations to censor criticism of Israel while appearing neutral and politically impartial. Student groups at York, the University of Toronto, and Concordia have documented various instances of last-minute booking cancellations and ambiguously worded rejections for booking requests. Liisa Schofield's exposé of the University of Toronto upper-administration's collusion to prevent pro-Palestinian activists from booking space on campus reveals in shocking detail how administrations have used bureaucratic neutrality to purposely censor these groups.¹

Censorship is also increasingly justified through claims that appeal to the language of human rights and freedom from discrimination. For instance, the University

of Ottawa and Carleton University banned the IAW posters through the language of human rights, implying that the poster violated the dignity and equal rights of students.² The IAW poster was therefore banned for depicting imagery that could be interpreted as violating the rights and dignity of students – which implies that naming a state as apartheid is an act of hate speech.

Accusations of hate speech and anti-Semitism are now employed as a common strategy for disrupting, dismissing, and censoring dialogue that is critical of the Israeli government. For instance, the Canadian government cut funding to settlement programs and language services offered by the Canadian Arab Federation (CAF) after Citizenship, Immigration and Multiculturalism Minister Jason Kenney accused CAF of supporting anti-Semitism and terrorism in response to being criticized for supporting the Israeli government.³ In both these cases, groups have been censored and punished for expressing critiques of the Israeli state without a space to defend themselves. Instead, hearsay is taken as evidence of discrimination without proper investigation into these charges.

The underlying assumption in these instances is that criticism of Israel is at risk of sliding into the terrain of hate speech. But what makes the possible risk of hate speech in pro-Palestinian activism exceptional to hate speech in general? Few cases of anti-Semitic hate speech have been cited at IAW and other pro-Palestinian events held on university campuses in Canada,⁴ and there is little documentation of any cases of hate speech actually investigated and charged at these universities. If this is the case, then there is little evidence to suggest that hate speech is any more a risk of being reproduced at pro-Palestinian events as it is in any other space or event at the university. While the danger of anti-Semitic and other forms of racist hate speech are always present and must be

taken seriously, the claim that IAW or pro-Palestinian events are exceptionally susceptible to this risk is unwarranted. Such a suggestion acts more as a strategy to delegitimize criticism of the Israeli state, rather than upholding Canadian laws that protect people from discrimination. Indeed, universities need to be responsive to the violation of these rights, however it has become clear that concern over hate speech has been taken up as a form of justification for censorship and violation of freedom of expression by preemptively identifying spaces of critical dialogue as discriminatory.

There is something to be said about the role of censorship of language and threats to the freedom of expression that reveals the underlying racism of state formation and state practices. As with South African apartheid and the Canadian dispossession of indigenous lands, the naming of state racisms such as apartheid and settler-colonialism incite strong responses from those who benefit from state racism. The language of hate speech is therefore taken up in these contexts as a way to disassociate hegemonic subjects from being held accountable for state racism by claiming to uphold freedom from discrimination. Here, censorship and the violation of freedom of expression act as ways to close off critical dialogue that might further reveal the mechanisms of state racism, and abuse the language of human rights and freedom from discrimination to prevent investigation rather than uphold these ideals.

On April 15th, the Freedom of Expression Campaign was launched in Toronto, calling on individuals and organizations to defend the right to speak, educate and organize for Palestinian solidarity and human rights by signing onto the following statement for free expression:

For Free Expression on Palestine

We believe that discussion and debate on the Israel/Palestine conflict falls within the realm of free expression and should not be suppressed. We believe that political criticism is among the classes of speech we should be most interested in promoting and protecting.

We demand that the full range of views on the conflict, from Israel advocacy to Palestine advocacy, be protected and not be subject to bans, penalties, or sanctions.

We reject hate speech, anti-Semitism, incitement to violence, racism and discrimination.

We believe that discussion, debate, and advocacy around Palestine and Israel should be conducted in opposition to all forms of racism, discrimination, Islamophobia, and anti-Semitism.

We do not believe that characterizing Israel as an 'apartheid state' or campaigning for 'boycotts, divestment, and sanctions' against Israel constitutes hate speech, anti-Semitism, incitement to violence, racism, or discrimination.

We need not agree with these characterizations or campaigns to agree that these are legitimate positions that should be protected on free speech grounds.

We believe that speech that is critical of a government and its policies, which does not target an ethnicity, nationality, or religion, must not be suppressed by a democratic society. Criticizing Israeli policies toward the Palestinians does not target Jewish people just as criticizing Sudan's policies in Darfur does not target Sudanese people, criticizing Saddam Hussein's past treatment of the Kurds did not target Iraqi or Arab people, criticizing China's policies in Tibet does not target Chinese people, and criticizing the U.S. occupation of Iraq does not target American people.

Freedom of Expression and the Censorship of Naming Racism: Footnotes

¹ Liisa Schofield. "Exposed: University of Toronto suppresses pro-Palestinian activism,"

Rabble, In Her Own Words. (February 18, 2009). Available online: <http://www.rabble.ca/news/exposed-university-toronto-suppressed-pro-palestinian-activism>

² SPHR University of Ottawa. "Urgent IAW Posters Banned on Campus,"

Solidarity for Palestinian Human Rights University of Ottawa Blog. (February 23, 2009). Available online:

<http://sphrottawa.blogspot.com/2009/02/urgent-iaw-posters-banned-on-campus.html>

³ Justin Podur. "For Free Expression on Palestine," *The Bullet*. Socialist Project, E-Bulletin No. 211 (April 28, 2009).

Available online:

<http://www.socialistproject.ca/bullet/bullet211.html>

⁴ There have been some claims of anti-Semitic hate speech published in the media, however these cases have remained largely un-documented by the press, and little inquiry has been made into the validity of these claims. For more details, see: John Riddell. "Israeli Apartheid Week beats back attacks on free speech," *Rabble News*. (March 16, 2009). Available online: <http://rabble.ca/news/israeli-apartheid-week-beats-back-attacks-free-speech>



CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION AND THE TDSB LOCALLY-DEVELOPED COURSE ON GENOCIDE

Nashwa Salem

In September 2008, the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) introduced a locally-developed grade 11 social studies course that focuses on the topic genocide and other crimes against humanity. Emerging through the TDSB's Equitable Schools initiative and approved by the Ontario Ministry of Education, the course promises to critically engage students in a study on genocidal violence in the past and present.

A critical examination of the courses' curriculum, however, reveals the ways in which encounters with violence and genocide are mediated through whiteness. Most notable is the Eurocentric epistemological frame of the course and its expressed objective to cultivate an empathetic active citizen.¹ This figure of the active citizen emerges as a performative feature of white civility that consolidates a white settler nationalist subject. I will briefly trace how this figure only emerges through a selective historiography of genocidal violence that requires the narrative erasure of colonial settler genocide in Canada.

The relationship between white civility and state violence reemerges in a course textbooks' selective historiography of Jewish migration to Palestine after World War Two—a narrative that negates both the existence and displacement of Palestinians. Put together, it is clear that privileged notions of violence and of victims, alongside the legitimization of violence committed by modern sovereign states, operate to consolidate a white settler nationalist subjectivity that continues to be abstracted from histories of violence and domination, and hence able to 'objectively' intervene in instances of injustice.

Narrative erasure of settler-colonial genocide

The popular national myth that Canadians are representative of an objective and neutral middle-power is made possible only through the elision of settler-colonial violence. Hence, the most glaring absence from TDSB's course on genocide is the inattention to Canada's own settler-colonial history and genocidal attacks on Aboriginal peoples.

How does the course account for violence in Canadian history? The courses' description suggests:

As the course unfolds students will be challenged to draw appropriate connections between the history of genocide *and* Canadian history and between the lives of the people they are investigating *and* their own lives (emphasis added, TDSB: 3).

The inclusion of the word 'and' operates as a semantic intervention. Histories of genocide 'and' Canadian history are rendered as two separate historical threads. Such established differences then serve as entry points into the topic of genocide linked only through 'appropriate' (and temporary) connections.

The narrative erasure of settler-colonial genocide can be explicated through Daniel Coleman's notion of bounded civility (2006). The concept of civility, as Coleman suggests, emerges through a progressive telos and moral-ethical disciplinary framework attached to orderly conduct; therefore, civility diffuses a time-space metaphor (2006: 11). The universalization of the social ideals emerging from Enlightenment-thinking depends upon the racial stratification of humans into categories of civilized/uncivilized. Thus, productions of racialized tropes of the vanishing Indian that relegate Aboriginal peoples to prehistoric time are used to legitimate the exclusion from modern historical narratives.

Renée Bergland (2000) suggests that the settler-colonial subjectivity is explicitly national, distinguishing it from an imperialist European subjectivity (13). She suggests that ideas of the nation are central to nationalist subject-formation in settler-colonies, and that the ghosting of Indians is a technique of removal that reconciles national guilt while affirming a modern character (Bergland 2000:4). Ghosting techniques, which in the case of this course is represented through the inattention to colonial-settler genocide, then serve both as a means of removing Aboriginal people from Canadian *physical* and *imaginative* landscapes.

Though the title of TDSB's course proposes to explore the historical and contemporary implications of genocide, it limits its investigation to the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.² In this sense, Canada unproblematically shifts from colony to settler society. Even still, an analysis of the ongoing effects of the deleterious social policies imposed upon Aboriginal people fits within this limited temporal focus.³

In arguing that the Canadian government's Indian Residential School system fits within international legal definitions of genocide, Ward Churchill notes that Canada's denial of genocide as expressed through the truth and reconciliation process reflect its narrow interpretation of the United Nations genocide convention (2008: 21). When Canada ratified the genocide convention, Churchill explains, its implemented statute of 1952 had removed two actions of genocide originally included in the convention: "forcibly transferring children of the group to another group and causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group," (ibid: 21). George Tinker (1993) and Ward Churchill (1997) suggest that the limited scope of contemporary definitions on genocide foster the systematic denial of settler-colonial genocide in the Americas.

Rather, both of their works call for a return to Raphaël Lemkin's comprehensive definition articulated in *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe: Laws of Occupation, Analysis of Government, and Proposals for Redress*. Churchill explains that Lemkin's conception of genocide acknowledges various forms of violence used as methods to destroy and persecute. Such acts range from assaults on culture, language, religion, national feeling, to attacks on social and political institutions; a groups economic existence; as well as nonlethal acts that deny a groups rights to liberty, dignity and security (1997: 407-8).

Invoking Lemkin's original definition, however, would not only explicitly name settler-colonial violence as genocide but would also significantly reshape conceptions of the perpetrators of violence in the Western social imaginary.⁴ Further, the naming of genocide as the vehicle of colonial conquest would challenge Canada's self-definition as a peaceful nation. Thus, settler-colonial genocide is the fantasmatic historical specter that haunts the very pronouncement of white Canadian settler-civility. As a result, the curriculum document contributes to the ghosting of indigenous peoples in order consolidate the Canadian settler colonial project.

Instead, it is the Holocaust that is rendered as the paradigmatic example of orchestrated violence, its uniqueness lies in the extent of horror that unfolds within the civilized borders of modern Western Europe. I suggest that this also imbricates with locating particular Holocaust victims within the boundaries of white civility in order to consolidate the settler colony of Israel. Hence, the curriculum document's construction of white civility narrates a particular production of victimhood that indigenous populations of white settler colonies cannot access.

Shifting Boundaries of Whiteness: The Shoah

The origin of TDSB's course emerges out of a specific desire to engage students

with the topic of the Holocaust. High school teachers had informally been teaching about the Holocaust for over twenty years and became concerned by the limited scope of the Ontario Curriculum in Canadian and World Studies introduced in 2000 (TDSB: 2). In response, a Steering Committee formed under TDSB's Equitable Schools initiative to propose this course. Despite the courses' objective to investigate various accounts of genocide, the centrality of the Holocaust is apparent in both the frequency of naming; and, by the disproportionate number of recommended sources devoted to the topic.⁵ The vast selection of texts covering the Holocaust includes memoirs and first-person narratives of both victims and survivors of the Holocaust.⁶ I am not undermining the horror of the Holocaust and the importance of studying it, but I do want to question its paradigmatic centrality to the course. I also want to briefly draw attention to how the study of the Holocaust reveals the fluidity of race and how the conditions, as well as borders of white civility, change over time.

A fluid identification with whiteness as a claim to white civility characterizes the narrative shift from the persecution of Jews to the representation of Israel as an expression of European sensibility. It is this seamless shift that I propose reinstalls bordered forms of civility. This shift is particularly evident in the course-sanctioned student resource entitled, "Holocaust and Human Behaviour." This text dedicates close to six hundred pages to an in-depth analysis of the Holocaust. The text also presents a problematic historical shift from the persecution of Jews in Europe to their arrival in Palestine post-WWII. Only three references to Palestine appear throughout the text and all follow a singular narrative that express dismay towards the British for their ambivalent position on accepting Jewish refugees (Stern Strom 1994: 259; 298; 404-5). Consequently, Arab Palestinians are completely removed from the historical narrative and Palestine is only understood as a territory under British rule

Citizenship Education and the TDSB Course on Genocide (Continued)

(ibid: 259). This narrative erasure of indigenous non-Jew presence in Palestine, alongside an inattention to the implications of British colonialism reintroduces a similar symbolic expression of history in a white settler-colonial nationalist context. Bordered notions of civility are utilized not only as the basis for appeals to the British, but also as a rationale for dismissing Arab resistance to Jewish migration into Palestine:

[Yet the] British remained adamant...but they couldn't or wouldn't stand up to the Arabs at all—although much of the Arab world was openly pro-Nazi...

After all, what would have happened if the British has [allowed Jews to find refuge in Palestine]? A few Arab leaders might have made threatening speeches. Perhaps there would have been a protest march or two. Maybe there would even have been an additional act of pro-Nazi sabotage somewhere in the Middle East. And maybe it would have been too late to save most of the Jews of Europe anyway. But thousands more of the [millions murdered] might have survived...And the civilized world might then have been freed of the terrible accusation that not a finger was lifted to help the Jews in their torment (Golda Meir in ibid: 404-5).

Appealing to the moral sensibilities of the "civilized world" Golda Meir's statement represents Arabs as a powerless and inherently anti-Semitic entity as a mode of relating the plight of the Jews to modern notions of civility. Further, every utterance of Palestine in this text is enabled through the voice of Golda Meir. Not apparent are Meir's repeated statements that deny Palestinian existence (Pappe 2004: 211). The narrative absence of Arab existence and displacement from Palestine demonstrate the paradoxical

texture of victimhood which remains attached to structures of white civility. Moreover, since Zionism not only depends upon the extensive colonization of Palestine (and transfer of power from a colonial regime) but also by virtue of its European sensibilities, it is able to assert itself within the privileged narrative of modernity. In other words, both Canadian and Israeli white-settler projects are achieved through colonialism, hence symbolic narrativizations of history attempt to reconcile spectral histories of immense violence through techniques of nonrepresentation.

Consequently, with the ideological and material support of the West, Israel continues to assert itself as the democratic "hope" of the Middle East and brutal forms of violence perpetuated under the rubric of white civility also continue to claim Palestinian victims. State terror in defense of white civility is rendered as incommensurable with human rights violations and unjust violence.⁷ Consequently, contradictory notions of victimhood extended through modern knowledge systems consolidate a white settler-colonial subjectivity as civilized despite its explicit emergence through racial domination and violence.

This brief tracing of TDSB's newly developed course demonstrates the various ways curricular documents and school textbooks relating to the social studies in particular, sanction selective representations of Canadian history in the interest of promoting nationalism (Montgomery 2005a, 2005b). I am writing with an understanding that the education system plays an important role in perpetuating racialized knowledge. As a result, TDSB's genocide course exposes a recent shift in the education system in that race-thinking is now being reproduced through courses that ostensibly promote critical inquiry and self-reflection.

Citizenship Education and the TDSB Course on Genocide: Footnotes and References

¹ This is part of a larger project that interrogates the pedagogical underpinnings of the course by exploring its explicit objective to cultivate particular affective qualities that propose to shape students into “active citizens.” Such qualities—rational capacity, moral judgement, and empathy reveal the ways in which the course recenter whiteness and the white subject, rendering the course as a nationalist process shaped by white civility.

² See note 1 in reference to discrepancies reflecting the title of CHG28M.

³ Coleman notes, for instance, that many of the racist policies conceived and enacted in the late nineteenth century were carried well into the twentieth century. For instance, First Nations people were systematically excluded from legal consultation and due process until the 1927; pass laws instituted until the 1930s restricted physical movement to reserve lands (unless granted permission); status Indians received federal voting rights only in the 1960s; up until the mid-twentieth century the Indian Act criminalized participation in Indigenous ceremonies such as potlaches (Coleman 2006: 13). The civilizing imperative and violent abuses extending from the Indian Residential School system came to an end only in 1996.

⁴ It would, for instance, directly implicate Western nations as perpetrators of genocidal violence over the past two centuries (e.g. U.S.’s role in Philippines, Iraq and El Salvador; Canada’s role in Afghanistan; the state of Israel).

⁵ The Holocaust is mentioned 32 times in the 15-page document. Furthermore, nineteen texts in total are recommended for the study of the Holocaust, with 9 specifically designated as suitable student resources (TDSB: 9-14). In contrast, there is only one student text recommended for the Ottoman-Armenian module; one that covers all of Asia from 1931-1945; three for a general introduction to genocide; and, one for each of the following: Darfur, Eugenics in Canada; and Rwanda.

⁶ Some of these texts include the Anne Frank’s *Diary of a Young Girl*, 1995; Karen Levine’s *Hana’s Suitcase*, 2003; Faye Schulman’s *A Partisan’s Memoir: Woman of the Holocaust*, 1995; and Alexandra Zapruder’s *Salvaged Pages: Young Writers’ Diaries of the Holocaust*, 2002.

⁷ This bounded notion of white civility continues to obfuscate any criticisms of the Israeli state, most recently exemplified by the investigation launched by the TDSB against an alternative school in Toronto whose student council identifies Israel as an apartheid state (Bowden 2009 Mar 4). The school has been accused by a TDSB trustee as “demonizing Jews” and preventing a “balanced” debate on Palestine-Israel issues (ibid).

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HOW TO WRITE ABOUT MUSLIMS

Sobia Ali and Krista Riley

Reprinted from Muslimah Media Watch, www.muslimahmediawatch.org

Rule #1: Don't assume that Muslim women need to be saved, or that you know how to save them.

By making this assumption, what one is essentially doing is:

- Assuming that all Muslim women are somehow oppressed at the hands of their fellow Muslims. The Muslim community is just as diverse as any other. By generalizing in such a way, one maligns the entire community, including the women. This is offensive to the many women who are treated with respect and equality by their fellow Muslims, including Muslim men. This assumption also ignores the forms of oppression that Muslim women may be facing from outside of the Muslim community, such as racism and Islamophobia (or even war and occupation, in cases like Iraq and Afghanistan), which for some women can be much more disastrous than anything they experience from their Muslim community.
- Assuming that Muslim women can't take care of themselves. This is very patronizing. Muslim women have agency, and a great deal of it. Throughout history and today, Muslim women have been taking various forms of leadership. In situations where women are being oppressed, they are resisting in all sort of ways that the media doesn't always think about. Additionally, most Muslim countries have Muslim women's organizations that are working hard to support themselves and other women.
- Assuming that what you're going to do for them is going to be helpful. The assumption is that you know better than them what's good for them. It also suggests that you are actually in a position to help them, which might not be true.

Rule #2: Rather than assuming you know what Muslim women's lives are like, try asking them.

Too often, writers write about Muslim women without ever having tried to find out what Muslim women's lives are like from their perspective. This is poor research, and feeds into the problematic assumptions discussed in Rule #1. Do your homework, and try hard to connect to the specific women that you are writing about. Even if you are writing about women in another country, try to connect to women's organisations in that country. At the very least, try to connect to women from that country who are living in your own community.

Rule #3: Be careful of who you talk to regarding Islam and/or Muslim women.

Don't assume, just because someone is Muslim, that all Muslims will agree with them or that they represent all Muslims. For example, Muslims who have made a career out of calling other Muslims Islamists, and who base their credibility on the number of other Muslims who don't like them, are not a good source of information. Generally, people who work within an Islamic framework, as opposed to always bashing Islam, are more likely to understand the Muslim community.

If you're looking for information on Islam and Muslims, works by the following people might be of interest: Dr. Jasmin Zine, Dr. Asifa Quraishi, Dr. Amina Wadud, Dr. Asma Barlas, Dr. Tariq Ramadan, and Imam Shabbir Ally. (Note that neither we nor *MMW* necessarily endorse everything that any of these people say.)

Rule #4: Understand that Muslims are just like anyone else in terms of their belief systems. Not everything a Muslim does has to do with Islam.

Although Islam may play an important role in the lives of many Muslims, this does not mean that every action a Muslim takes, good or bad, is related to his/her religion. Believing everything a Muslim does must be related to Islam is the same as believing that everything a Christian, Jew, Hindu, or Sikh does is related to their religions. As irrational and nonsensical as this seems for these religious groups, it should seem equally as nonsensical to apply this belief to Muslims. Muslims, just like all other people, are impacted and influenced by many aspects of their contexts – culture, economy, employment, relationships, health, etc. The ways in which Muslims behave, just like the ways in which all people behave, are influenced by the many experiences in our lives, *just one* of which is religion. To assume that a Muslim's behaviour is based on his/her religion alone is assuming that Muslims live in a vacuum which is devoid of culture, economy, patriarchy, social problems, health issues, etc.

Rule #5: Understand that there is no such thing as a "Muslim culture." Muslims come from a variety of cultures, and culture is dynamic – it's constantly changing.

Muslim culture does not exist. There is no one region of the world from which Muslims hail. Don't take our word for it. Ask any researcher in cross-cultural studies (psychology, sociology, etc) and they will tell you that a Muslim culture does not exist.

Muslims hail from a variety of different cultures. Researchers also say that culture is a dynamic phenomenon. Every culture is dynamic and is constantly changing. Hence, the cultures from which Muslims hail are also changing. What may have happened in a culture 50 years ago, may not necessarily happen today. And just like North American culture, cultures around the world, are diverse. People of various cultures are not blindly following their cultures. Just as North Americans are not drones acting in ways dictated to them by their culture, similarly Muslims do not mindlessly follow their respective cultures.

Rule #6: Don't create a dichotomy between "Muslim" and "Canadian" (or "American," "British," etc.), or between "Muslim" and "Western."

There are a lot of Muslims who also identify as Western, Canadian, American, and so on. Talking about Canadians and Muslims as if the categories are mutually exclusive reinforces the idea of an irreconcilable divide between Islam and the West, and erases the identities of the many Muslims who feel connected to both categories.

Rule #7: Tone it down! Be mindful of the language you use.

Language is a powerful tool that can shape people's perceptions, and can have far-reaching implications for the way that people are seen. For example, words like "terrorist" and "honour killing" get thrown around with little attention to their appropriateness, and can easily be used to portray all Muslims (and the cultures that Muslims are assumed to come from) as violent, scary, oppressed, dangerous, and so on. It's useful for fearmongering, but often antithetical to responsible journalism or other writing.

And please, *please* stop trying to make up clever titles involving some play on the word "veil." It's been done. Ad nauseum. (See Rule #9.)

Rule #8: Take responsibility for the consequences of your writing.

If you do decide to write in ways that seem to generalize, patronize, insult, or demonize a whole group of people then take responsibility for your words and realize that people will be offended and upset. Do not be surprised when people feel insulted, demonized, or patronized by your words. And do not be surprised when they critique it in community or online forums, or write seething letters in response.

How to Write about Muslims (Continued)

Rule #9: Leave the headscarf alone.

The headscarf is really not a big issue for a lot of Muslim women. And most Muslim women would really appreciate it if the media would figure this out soon. Muslim women wear or don't wear the headscarf for a variety of reasons. Many Muslim women who wear the headscarf believe it is their religious obligation, while others wear it to increase their spirituality, while others wear it as an expression of their modesty, while others wear it for political reasons, and others still for all of the above. Many Muslim also do not wear the hijab because they feel it is not a religious obligation. Whatever their beliefs may be, for Muslim women the headscarf is a personal and private choice. A choice they have the right and *ability* to make. By assuming that the headscarf is somehow problematic, one undermines the agency of the women who have chosen to either wear or not wear the headscarf.

Even for women who are in situations where headscarves are imposed, they are probably having lots of other things imposed on them too. The obsessive and often exclusive focus on the scarf is still reductive and misses the point.

Really, it's getting old. Give it a rest.



RECENT STUDENT WORK ON RACE

At Risk: The Racialized Student Marked for Educational Failure **PhD Thesis by Ozma Masood, OISE, 2008**

This thesis investigates the role that educational discourse--in particular standardized practices like province-wide standards and testing--has played and continues to play in the production of student subjectivities. Using the theories of Michel Foucault, I argue that the discursive practices in and around the recent secondary school reforms in Ontario--especially the Grade Ten Literacy Test--have led to the increased categorization of racialized student bodies as marked for educational failure. The 'At Risk' designation that originally sought to identify and remediate students who were at risk of failing standardized tests and not graduating from high school, functions instead as part of discourse that profiles and pre-emptively punishes racialized bodies through techniques of discipline and in the guise of remediation. This research is therefore conceived of as a first step in identifying and understanding the ways in which power relations embedded in the discursive practices of the current education system effectively circulate to produce racialized subjects marked as potential failures. The thesis tracks the emergence of three tiers of 'At Risk' students: those who fail the Grade Ten Literacy Test, those who might fail the test as described in particular by two Ministry documents "Think Literacy Success" (2003) and "Building Pathways" (2003), and those who have characteristics or visual markers that indicate potential risk as described by the early intervention identification tools. The discursive shift from marking bodies based on academic merit or achievement to profiling based on potential failure is significant as it invokes a narrative that school failure is a condition that can be read on the body.

Boundaries of Possibility: Race, Nostalgia and the Saskatchewan Centennial
PhD Thesis by Lynn Audrey Caldwell, OISE, 2008

In *Boundaries of Possibility: Race, Nostalgia and the Saskatchewan Centennial*, I draw from critical race theory and cultural studies to investigate moments from Saskatchewan Centennial celebrations. Through event observation, interviews with event organizers, and analysis of visual and textual materials, I examine how Saskatchewan is commemorated as a place, as people, and as a past. My analysis interrogates nostalgic identifications with a European invader-settler society toward developing increasingly equitable, heterogeneous and multi-cultured understandings of Canada and Canadian citizenship.

This research takes up questions of nostalgia, attachments, irretrievable losses and desired returns, and I structure my line of questioning as a route through which to unsettle invader-settler Saskatchewan fictions and their hold on possibility - and on territory and history. The theoretical framework includes a recognition that the tension between coherence and fracture in commemorative practices means that this Centennial is not one monolithic event consistent in its productions. A critical race perspective further underlines that to the extent that the Centennial does appear consensual and unified, it does so through denials of or diversions from the ongoing and racialized iniquities of colonial nation-building.

This analysis of race and nostalgia reveals ways that the intentionality and violence of colonization is neutralized or modified in what is imagined as a "reconciliatory" terrain of Saskatchewan, depicted as not so far removed from the processes of colonizing modernity, with a landscape that is not seen to be dramatically/excessively industrialized or urbanized. I argue that Saskatchewan is available and accessed in very particular ways in the sticking of colonial racism to nation in Canada - and that certain attachments to Saskatchewan as a knowable place, population and past contribute uniquely and persistently to ongoing racist national formations. The 2005 Centennial has presented a vital opportunity to decipher such attachments and their particularities; and, the analysis and conclusions of this thesis propose directions for intervention and for reconfigured possibilities.

Entertaining Subalternity: The Performance of Nation and the Politics of Indian Classical Dance
MA Thesis by Sitara Thobani, OISE, 2008

The critical gaze of Victorian morality and colonial bureaucracy affected many of India's cultural and artistic practices, including dance. As a result, reconstructing 'lost' art forms and invoking the 'real' traditions of pre-colonial India were central to nationalist movements rallying for political independence. However, in reconstructing the dance, elite artists largely ignored the lives of the actual women who practiced it. This contradictory appeal to a sanitised 'glorious past' has had significant impact on historical and contemporary representations of Indian dancers. This thesis examines questions of nationalism, citizenship, gender, subjectivity and power through a study of Indian classical dance to interrogate the tradition/modernity binary vital to colonialism and subsequently multiculturalism. I argue that the interconnected ways in which dancers were/are imagined through colonial, nationalist and contemporary multicultural discourses have shaped race and gender relations alongside notions of national belonging in the larger and related contexts of postcolonialism and multiculturalism.

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