

## Antiracist practice for the helping and legal professions: A reading List

As a requested follow-up to my keynote and workshop I am including core subject matter guidance and an abbreviated reading list. I hope this will be helpful in furthering your antiracist, decolonized, equitable and inclusive work. It has been a pleasure to meet you all at the SCRP conference. For further inquiries, you can reach me at [ncurrie@cau.edu](mailto:ncurrie@cau.edu). -Dr. Nathan Currie

### **DEIPAR: Framework and Definitions**

(diversity, equity, inclusion, intersectionality, power analysis, anti-racist)

**DEIPAR** is an evergreen, or living, framework that is grounded in principles of social justice, and is used to organize the way we include these principles. It is not designed to be static in definition, but to evolve with the changing social definitions of each of its facets. It is designed to be stable in its role as a framework that helps those engaged with it to develop baseline understandings of these principles of social justice. This framework infuses the particular foci and emphases of those who use it to help them develop their own DEIPAR informed perspectives on issues central to them (Dyer, 2020).

#### Diversity

- “Diversity includes all the ways in which people differ, and it encompasses all the different characteristics that make one individual or group different from another. It is all-inclusive and recognizes everyone and every group as part of the diversity that should be valued. A broad definition includes not only race, ethnicity, and gender—the groups that most often come to mind when the term "diversity" is used—but also age, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, education, marital status, language, and physical appearance.” Racial Equity Tools

#### Equity

- “Equity is the condition of fair and just inclusion into a society. Equity will exist when those who have been most marginalized have equal access to opportunities, power, participation and resources and all have avenues to safe, healthy, productive, and fulfilling lives. It requires restructuring deeply entrenched systems of privilege and oppression that have led to the uneven distribution of benefits and burdens over multiple generations. Society will be stronger when the promise in all of us is actualized.” (City of Boston)

#### Inclusion

- “Inclusion is the active, intentional, and ongoing engagement with diversity—in people, in curriculum, in the co-curriculum, and in communities (intellectual, social cultural, geographical). This engagement with diversity has the potential to increase one's awareness, content knowledge, cognitive sophistication, and empathetic understanding of the complex ways individuals interact within systems and institutions.” (New England Resource Center for Higher Education)

#### Intersectionality

- Conceptions of discrimination and disparities must account for the interaction of marginalized identities for those who are “multiply burdened...[b]ecause the intersectional experience is greater than the sum of” any single -ism experienced (Crenshaw, 1989, p140). The use of “greater than the sum” highlights that at the intersection of multiple marginalized identities the experience of social injustice is also multiplied, rather than added, because there are now “crosscurrents” that can generate an intensified experience of injustice (Dyer, 2020). Intersectionality operates as both the observance and analysis of power imbalances, and the tool by which those power imbalances could be eliminated altogether. And the observance of power imbalances, as is so frequently true, is far less controversial than the tool that could eliminate them (Coaston, 2019).

## Power

- Grass Roots Policy Project: The 4 Faces of Power [\(PDF\)](#)
- The word power is derived from the Latin word *potere*, which means “to be able”. This basic definition focuses on power as the potential to shape our lives and the world around us. While there are many definitions of this word, power as “capacity” to do things to “achieve a purpose” is a good starting point. **Structural** power comes from the relationships that social groups have with each other, and because of their structural position in society. **[C]lass** is a structural relationship and the kinds of power that owners and workers have is shaped by and through this relationship. Race also is a key variable in structuring power relationships in our society in ways that create and maintain racial hierarchies and race-based disparities which have accumulated over the past five centuries. Similarly, power relations correspond with the ways in which gender roles are constructed. Power relations based on gender permeate our institutions to the extent that, even when individuals try to behave differently, the social structures tend to perpetuate inequality.
- **Ideology and worldview—shaping meaning: The third face [of power]** is about the power to shape people’s conscious and unconscious understandings of the world, of what is politically possible, and of their own place in the world. This kind of power operates in the arena of worldview, where myths, stereotypes and values from our cultures and histories converge, and sometimes diverge. Those who control meaning-making institutions have this kind of power: religious institutions, educational institutions, the media, television, mass consumer culture, popular ideas about government, major political parties, and so on. The ability to shape how people understand and think about race and identity, about family and gender, about the economy and the market, and about the government—is a dimension of power that conservatives have harnessed much better than we have.
  - **Marginalization:** Marginalization is both a condition and a process that prevents individuals and groups from full participation in social, economic, and political life enjoyed by the wider society. (Defining Marginalization: An Assessment Tool, p2, 2015, Alakhunova, Diallo, et al.)

## Anti-Racist

- Anti-racism is an active way of seeing and being in the world, in order to transform it. Because racism occurs at all levels and spheres of society (and can function to produce and maintain exclusionary “levels” and “spheres”), anti-racism education/activism is necessary in all aspects of society. In other words, it does not happen exclusively in the workplace, in the classroom, or in selected aspects of our lives. A person who practices anti-racism is someone who works to become aware of:
  - How racism affects the lived experience of people of color and Indigenous people;
  - How racism is systemic, and has been part of many foundational aspects of society throughout history, and can be manifested in both individual attitudes and behaviors, as well as formal (and “unspoken”) policies and practices within institutions;
  - How white people participate, often unknowingly, in racism.

### **What is Critical Race Theory/Critical Race Studies (CRT)?**

Critical Race Theory, or CRT, is a theoretical and interpretive mode that examines the appearance of race and racism across dominant cultural modes of expression. In adopting this approach, CRT scholars attempt to understand how victims of systemic racism are affected by cultural perceptions of race and how they are able to represent themselves to counter prejudice.

### **What is empowerment practice?**

Empowerment is the degree of autonomy and self-determination in people and in communities. This enables them to represent their interests in a responsible and self-determined way, acting on their own authority. Empowerment as action refers both to the process of self-empowerment and to professional support of people, which enables them to overcome their sense of powerlessness and lack of influence, and to recognize and use their resources. Empowerment practice forms a practical approach of resource-oriented intervention.

### **Reading List:**

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