




Creating Spaces for Antiracist Education in Our Schools

DR. SHEELAH MCLEAN

Fathers of confederation






The Goal of Anti-racist Education:

To address the inequality Indigenous students and families face in public education.

What is the problem?

How we frame the problem will determine how we address inequality.





Anti-Racist Anti-Oppressive Education draws from several theories

Indigenous Theory

Anti-Colonial Theory

Critical Race Theory


Queer Theory

Feminist Theory

Ableism Theory




The purpose of these theories is to understand how inequality is created and maintained.

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- McLean Masters thesis “Beyond the Pale: Whiteness as innocence in Education”
 - 175 high school teachers




Myth: “Indigenous people do not value education”

- Anti-racism helps us understand how Individuals marked as outsiders are viewed as “different” from the dominant white settler society and therefore “deficient” and “inferior” (Valencia, 2010).
 - Its imperative for us as educators to understand how public schools continue to reproduce this in multiple ways, many times in spite of our intentions (Leonardo, 2009).
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Myth: “There is no racism here”


- Research studies in every colonial country have shown that racism is pervasive and systemic. Every institution will be affected by colonialism and racism, including our schools (Schick & McNinch, 2009; St. Denis, 2010; Smith, 2010).
- Schools that are predominantly white also hold stereotypical and racist discourses regarding Indigenous people and segregation in diverse schools is common (McLean, 2007) .

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- Research indicates that Indigenous students and teachers in Canada continue to face institutional and systemic racism on a daily basis (McLean, 2007; Leonardo, 2009; Schick & McNinch, 2009; St. Denis, 2010; Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2013).
 - Before we can address inequality, we must first learn to “see” and validate racism and oppression.



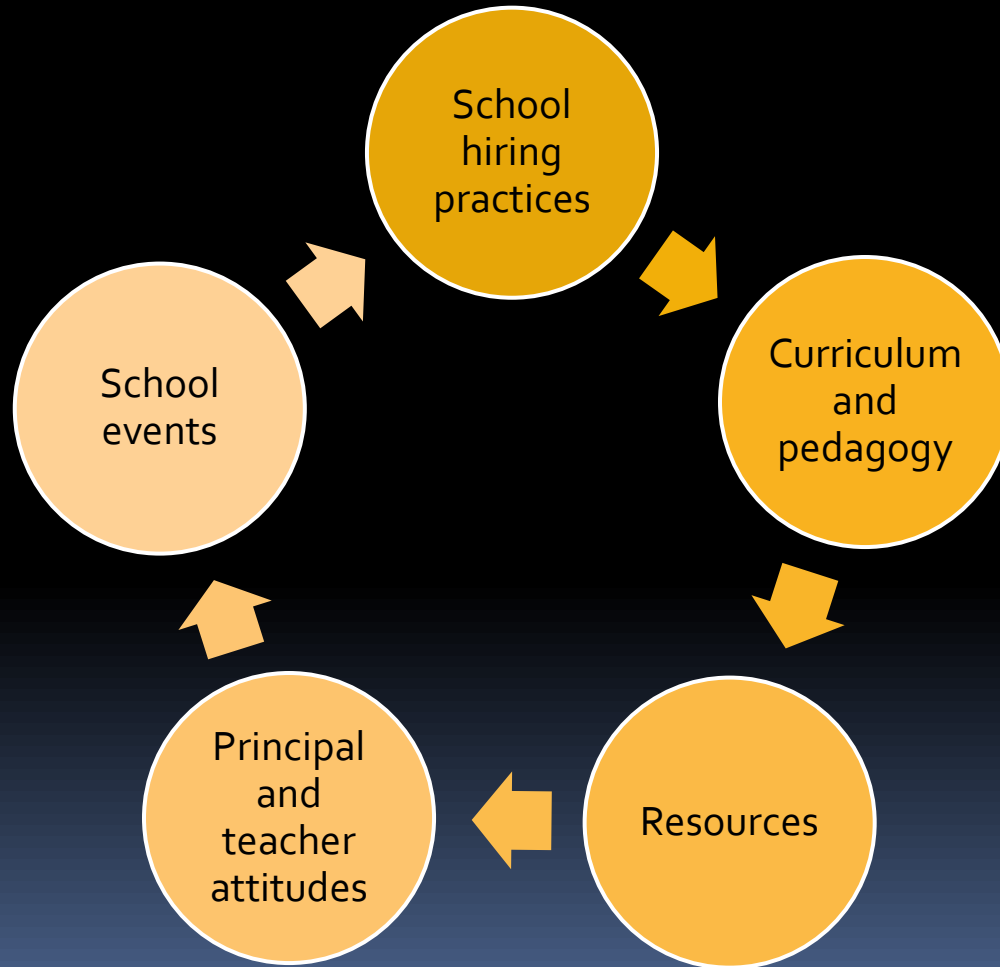
Strategies:

- Recognize that in a colonial context, race always matters (Schick & St. Denis, 2003).
 - Racialization continues to determine who has decision making power over land, resources, and the organization of all of our institutions.
 - Racism continues to justify an unequal relationship in colonial countries .
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She knows how to read him – so she never calls on him in class, or shares a smile. She knows to spend time on those worthy. And when he begins to miss a day or two each week she is vindicated because she knows if she stays silent long enough he will eventually just quit showing up. So she saves her voice to speak out at the injustice of his presence...this student must be removed from my class....she will say. And it is here that she will choose to spend her time on him. Time making sure that proper protocol is followed. Time filling out the forms. Time winning the principal. Time persuading the counselor. Time reasoning with the parents. She will choose to spend her time and energy convincing others that this student does not belong here because secretly she knows that he does not belong here with us.

What is happening in our schools? Settler colonial policies and practices






How is settler colonialism reproduced?

- Teacher attitudes/identity
 - curriculum, textbooks and books
 - pedagogy
 - school climate
 - set up of classroom
 - racialized spaces
 - access to resources
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Anti-racist school climate

- Recognize as a staff that racism is institutional and systemic (Pollock, 2008; St. Denis, 2010).
 - Critique school policy, teacher attitudes, textbooks, curriculum & resources, school climate (Chapman & Hobbel, 2010; Leonardo, 2009; Valencia, 2010).
 - Recognize the need for anti-racism in all schools including those that are predominantly white (McLean, 2007).
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Addressing teacher attitudes

- In every situation teachers should first rethink their own prejudices.
- We should always validate student experiences of racism, even in situations that appear ‘unconnected’ to race issues, because of systemic racism.
- Students who bring up race issues need a safe outlet to discuss their experiences (Chapman & Hobbel, 2010).



Performance of whiteness:


When you are discussing anti-racist issues, separate the ideologies and the discourses from the individual – we didn't create them.

Recognize the idea as common, but problematic:

“That is a common idea...”

“I have heard that before...”

“I used to think that as well but let's rethink this issue given new information...”



The daddies

