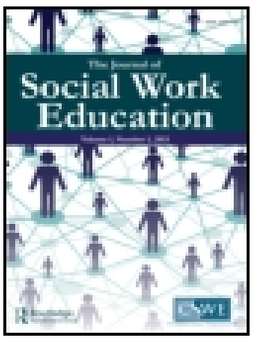

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ABSTRACT

Racial attitudes can be shaped by personal attributes and social network properties. Literature on White social work students' racial attitudes remains scarce. The purposes of this study are to explore racial attitudes among social work students and identify personal and social network correlates of such attitudes. One hundred and sixty-three White social work students in a major Midwest public university were recruited via social work electronic mailing list to complete an anonymous online survey measuring personal-level characteristics (e.g., demographic information and racial attitudes as measured by the color-blind racial attitude scale) and social network composition (e.g., information regarding network diversity). Descriptive analysis and linear regression models were conducted for the study. Social work students demonstrated moderately low levels of color-blind racial attitudes. Age was positively associated with unawareness of institutional and blatant racism. Identifying as politically liberal was associated with lower unawareness of racial privilege, institutional racism, and blatant racism. Having more social network members to talk to about topics related to race and ethnicity was associated with lower unawareness of blatant racism. Being familiar with a campus antidiscrimination protest was negatively associated with unawareness of racial privilege and blatant racism. Implications for social work educators are discussed.

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Social workers (85% of whom are White) (National Association of Social Workers [NASW], 2015) are expected to challenge racial and ethnic prejudice and discrimination on individual and systemic levels (Loya, 2012). However, White social workers may possess *color-blind racial attitudes* (Neville, Lilly, Lee, & Browne, 2000), a modern form of racism that involves power evasion, or denying that racism exists by emphasizing the belief that everyone has the same opportunities. Individuals exhibit color-blind racial attitudes by engaging in power-evasion in three major ways: denying or minimizing blatant forms of racism (e.g., "racism is not a major issue in American society"), denying or minimizing institutional racism (e.g., "everyone has an equal chance to succeed in society"), and denying or minimizing racial privilege (e.g., "racism against Whites is a major problem in society") (Neville, Awad, Brooks, Flores, & Bluemel, 2013, p. 457). For Whites specifically, elements of color-blind racial attitudes include racial anger and fear, belief in a just world, White social dominance, lower cultural empathy toward people of color, and lower levels of multicultural competency (Neville et al., 2013). These types of attitudes provide a framework from which White social workers may be able to ignore racism, resulting in the internalized belief that race does not affect individuals' lived experiences (Neville et al., 2013; Neville, Worthington, & Spanierman, 2001). Maintaining color-blind racial attitudes impairs White social workers' relationships with racially marginalized clients and undermines client well-being, as such power-evasive attitudes are linked to sustained racial prejudice and endorsement of racially discriminatory behavior (Banks, 1972; Carr, 1997; Neville et al., 2013). It is critical to ensure that social work students possess positive racial attitudes, as they

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are expected to competently work with individuals with diverse racial backgrounds upon entering the field. However, the potential intra- and interpersonal factors associated with social work students' color-blind racial attitudes remain unclear.

Literature review

Racial/ethnic attitudes among social work students

Studies have found that social work students generally possess positive perceptions of racial minorities and are more racially tolerant than students in other majors (Davis & Proctor, 1984; Lo, Cheng, & Smith, 2016). These findings are not surprising, as social work students are expected to fare better on these measures than students in other disciplines (Loya, 2011), namely because social work training emphasizes social justice, culturally sensitive practice, and cultural competence (Council on Social Work Education [CSWE], 2015a). However, color-blind racial attitudes may still exist among social work students. For example, despite students reporting overall positive attitudes toward African Americans, Lo et al. (2016) found that some social work students assume this group is less intelligent and less industrious than White individuals, specifically demonstrating continued racial stereotyping (an element of color-blind racism). Davis and Proctor (1984) also identified such a phenomena, as White students reported that poor outcomes for Black individuals were caused by factors within their personal control (i.e., their own behavior) rather than external factors (i.e., harsh environment or institutional discrimination).

Although previous studies have explored racial attitudes among White social work students, correlates associated with such attitudes (particularly color-blind racial attitudes) remain understudied. For example, despite Lo et al. (2016) collecting demographic information about participants (e.g., age, gender, parents' education levels), whether these demographics affected students' racial attitudes was not explored. Davis and Proctor (1984) conducted a preliminary investigation to determine if personal-level correlates (e.g., age, gender, and race) influenced racial attitudes, but they only conducted a bivariate analysis, which does not consider the multiple factors that potentially affect racial attitudes simultaneously. Further, neither of these studies explored how students' social network composition might influence racial attitudes and neither focused on *White* social work students, exclusively.

Although it is not the focus of this study, it is important to note that color-blind racial attitudes can result in prejudicial expressions of social workers when interacting with non-White clients. For instance, research indicates that child welfare social workers are more likely to refer, investigate, and substantiate claims of child maltreatment for non-White families when compared to White families, even though child maltreatment occurs at similar rates across racial groups (Bay Area Social Services Consortium, 2005; Cross, 2008; Detlaff, 2014; McRoy, 2004), and that these disproportionalities can be attributed in part to possible prejudicial or biased racial attitudes of child welfare workers (Detlaff, 2014). Further, at least one other study exploring empathy levels of White social workers demonstrates that while workers report they are empathetic to people of color, their actions in the field suggest otherwise (Fitzgerald, 2018). It is possible that higher levels of color-blind racial attitudes toward non-White populations influence how clients of color are treated, as one study demonstrates that child welfare workers who have higher levels of color-blind racial attitudes are more likely to blame children and their families for racial disproportionalities in said systems, while those who have lower levels of color-blind racial attitudes are more likely to identify systemic, macrolevel factors (i.e., maintain low levels of unawareness of institutional racism) in their understanding of overrepresentation in said systems (Marshall & Haight, 2014). Although prejudicial attitudes (or correlates of such attitudes) of these workers were not explored exhaustively in these studies, it is important to note that race, gender, and additional personal-level correlates of child welfare workers

may affect how they treat non-White clients, especially considering 85% of social workers are White females (Courtney, Barth, Berrick, & Park, 1996).

Correlates of racial and ethnic attitudes

The Social Ecological Model (SEM; Stokols, 1996) provides a promising theoretical framework to explore correlates of racial or ethnic attitudes among social work students. Specifically, SEM states that individuals' behaviors and attitudes (Taylor & Mateyka, 2011) are shaped by individual-level characteristics (e.g., age, gender) as well as the social environment surrounding them. Social networks that individuals are embedded within are considered one's immediate social environment and therefore may influence their racial attitudes. Adopting the SEM framework to investigate malleable factors of White social work students' racial attitudes, including personal-level correlates and social network–level correlates, has implications for future social work curriculum development, as correlates that negatively affect racial attitudes can possibly be adjusted using strategies that promote behavior and social change.

Personal-level correlates of racial/ethnic attitudes

Enrollment status

Social work program enrollment status (e.g., MSW vs. BSW; online vs. in-seat; part time vs. full time) may be associated with color-blind racial attitudes (i.e., engaging in power evasion to emphasize equal opportunity and deny blatant and institutional racism and racial privilege) among social work students. For example, although Lo et al. (2016) found that White BSWs were less accepting of outside groups and reported more social distance based on race than White MSWs, authors also found that there were very few differences between White BSWs and MSWs regarding their awareness of institutional discrimination, as both groups possessed an understanding of the role that social structures play in racial inequality. Yet respondents' support for governmental interference to improve social and economic positions of racial minorities did not achieve statistical significance, leaving mixed results regarding how enrollment status may affect color-blind racial attitudes. In addition, in two separate studies by Loya (2011, 2012), it was found that BSW-level professionals exhibit higher levels of racial color-blindness than MSW-level professionals, particularly surrounding unawareness of their own racial privilege as well as awareness of blatant racial issues. Results from Loya's second study (2012) indicated that, when compared to White MSW-level professionals, White BSW-level professionals felt less prepared to work with racially marginalized clients, were more likely to believe that equal opportunities already exist in the United States, and that programs aiming to create equal opportunity (e.g., affirmative action or busing) disadvantaged Whites. BSWs were also more likely to subscribe to negative stereotypes about racial minorities when compared to MSWs, all of which are elements of racial color-blindness (Neville et al., 2013).

Age

There are few studies that examine how age affects racial attitudes of White social work students or professionals. Although not specifically investigated, Loya (2011) suggested that increase in age may result in increased awareness of institutional racism, potentially due to older participants' presence during civil rights–era battles against Jim Crow laws. Conversely, Davis and Proctor (1984) did *not* find age to be a significant predictor of social work students' awareness of systemic or structural factors' (i.e., institutional racism) influence on outcomes of racial minorities (a significant component of color-blind racism). Although there is literature suggesting that later-born (younger) Whites are more likely to attribute racial inequity to lack of motivation rather than institutional discrimination than older or earlier-born (older) Whites (Hunt, 2007), literature also indicates that older individuals exhibit more pronounced symbolic racial prejudice (e.g., believing that disparate outcomes for racial minorities is due to laziness) than younger adults (Weigel & Howes, 1985). Results from these studies may indicate that

while older individuals may have a greater awareness of institutional racism, younger social work students may be more in tune with blatant racial issues and demonstrate greater awareness of racial privilege. However, inconsistencies in findings call for further exploration.

Political ideology

Political ideology tends to directly influence racial attitudes (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999; Sniderman, Crosby, & Howell, 2000). While political liberalism prioritizes egalitarianism and radical change, political conservatism endorses rugged individualism, opposes extreme social, economic, legal, religious, or political change and resists modification of existing cultural order (Jost, Glaser, Kruglanski, & Sulloway, 2003). Political conservatism also has a core dimension of acceptance of inequality, as individuals on the right often see society as unavoidably tiered (Bobbio, 1996). Identifying as politically conservative is associated with increased racial prejudice, lower support for racial equality (Feldman & Huddy, 2005; Glaser, 1994; Kinder & Sears, 1981; Weigel & Howes, 1985), and increased levels of social dominance orientation (e.g., general support for domination of one group over another; Worthington, Navarro, Loewy, & Hart, 2008), a major correlate of power-evasive color-blind racial attitudes.

Sexual orientation

At least one study demonstrates that lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) individuals possess more progressive racial attitudes than heterosexual individuals (Flores, 2017), possibly due to a shared experience of social marginalization with people of color. However, other studies highlight significant racial discrimination and prejudice within LGB bars and organizations (e.g., denying entry to African Americans in clubs; exclusion from LGB community events; Diaz, Ayala, Bein, Henne, & Marin, 2001; Han, 2007) as well as racial discrimination or objectification in LGB relationships (Balsam, Molina, Beadnell, Simoni, & Walters, 2011; Mays, Cochran, & Rhue, 1993; Wilson et al., 2009). Moreover, there are within-group differences of racial attitudes within the LGB community, as lesbians and gay men of color report higher occurrences of racial micro-aggressions and experiences of color-blind racial attitudes (e.g., being told by White LGB individuals that race does not matter or that people of all races have the same opportunities) from romantic partners than their bisexual counterparts (Balsam et al., 2011). Other studies have demonstrated that sexual orientation, specifically, may not play an important role in determining racial attitudes, as other important variables (e.g., childhood socialization, political party affiliation, religious beliefs, or educational attainment) supersede sexuality in attitudinal influence regarding colorblindness (Miller & Glass, 1989; Schnaber, 2018)

Social network–level correlates and racial/ethnic attitudes

Social network diversity

Individuals embedded within a racially diverse social network interact with people who share different racial backgrounds and gain exposure to various cultures and perspectives (Amir, 1969; Cote & Erickson, 2009; Pettigrew, Tropp, Wagner, & Christ, 2011; Sigelman & Welch, 1993). With such exposure, individuals are less likely to view others as "different" or hold presumed stereotypes against others (Cote & Erickson, 2009). Therefore, having a more racially diverse network may be associated with increased positive attitudes toward people who may not share the same race or ethnicity. In fact, according to generalized contact hypothesis, individuals with more diversified social networks may develop more positive attitudes toward diverse populations (Cote & Erickson, 2009). Although authors did not investigate social network composition directly, Pauker, Carpinella, Meyers, Young, and Sanchez (2017) suggested that existing within a racially diverse context may help reduce negative racial attitudes among White individuals.

Norms among social network

In addition to having social ties with people who are of a different racial or ethnic status, individuals' perceived norms (subjective norms) and behaviors within their social network (e.g., perceived racial attitudes or stereotypes held by social network peers) may influence their racial attitude development. Subjective norms have been identified as a strong predictor of individuals' value, beliefs, attitudes, and even behaviors across different age groups and populations (Paluck, 2011; Rutland, Cameron, Milne, & McGeorge, 2005). Individuals may subscribe to the norms that they perceived as a consensus or approved by their social network members. For example, Blachard, Crandall, Brigham, and Vaughn (1994) found that White undergraduate female students in their study demonstrated increased tolerance of racism when their peers expressed negative racial views, while also showing less tolerance to racism when observing peers condemning racism. Therefore, how individuals perceive their social network members' attitudes toward racial minorities may shape their own.

Communication with social network members

Finally, less is known about the relationship between communication with social network members on issues regarding racism and individuals' personal racial attitudes. Previous literature on health promotion suggests that discussion of health issues (e.g., HIV prevention) may promote positive health behaviors and attitudes (e.g., safe sex practices) in individuals (Latkin, Forman, Knowlton, & Sherman, 2003.) Discussions with social network members regarding racism or discrimination are likely to affect individuals' racial attitudes. For example, discussing racism with social network members who are of a different racial or ethnic status may provide exposure to their peers' life experiences and thus help foster more tolerance and positive racial attitudes (Lopez, 2004). Furthermore, communication with peers in general (no matter their race) may also help individuals increase awareness about racial injustice and develop positive attitudes toward people of other racial or ethnic backgrounds (Milem, 1994, 1998).

As previously mentioned, there is limited understanding of White students' racial attitudes and potential factors associated with them. Therefore, the purpose of the current study is to: (a) explore White social work BSW and MSW students' racial attitudes and (b) identify personal and social network correlates of said attitudes. Specifically, this study aims to understand malleable factors influencing racial attitudes in White social work students. Doing so will allow social work educators to develop specific curricula that will decrease color-blind racism among social work students.

Method

Sampling and data collection procedure

The present research used data from a pilot study investigating social network influences on social work students' attitudes toward diversity and inclusion. Data were collected from students enrolled in the BSW and MSW programs provided in a major public university in 2017. Considering the pilot nature of the original study, to maintain external validity, no further eligibility criteria other than enrolling in the social work programs were required. During the study period, a total of 274 students enrolled in the social work program and were eligible for the pilot study. E-mails briefly explaining the study were sent to eligible students through an internal social work program collective electronic mailing list (i.e., the researchers would not be able to identify any e-mail addresses of any specific student). To promote response rate, this study adopted strategies used in previous literature (Crawford et al., 2001; Kittleson, 1997) to send out multiple e-mail reminders highlighting the brevity and anonymity of the survey (i.e., the length of the survey would not exceed 20 minutes and that no identifiable information would be collected in the survey). In the original recruitment and reminder e-mails, a link to the anonymous online survey was attached. After clicking the attached link, participants were first directed to a consent page that detailed the study contents and allowed potential participants to provide their consent and

proceed to the survey. In the consent form, it was highlighted again that the survey was anonymous and that there were no "right" or "wrong" answers. Such a design was used to avoid social desirability bias and allow students to respond honestly. Furthermore, the anonymous design of the study also prevents the researchers or others from connecting survey responses to a specific participant, hence preventing the break of confidentiality. Among the 266 social work students included in the electronic mailing list, a total of 192 students participated in this study (70% response rate); however, six participants did not fully complete the survey, so their data were removed. This yielded a final valid sample size of 186. Considering the purpose of the present study was to explore correlates of White students' attitudes toward race and ethnicity, only respondents who self-identified as White (n=163) were included. The average survey completion time was 19.45 minutes. To compensate for their time, at the end of the survey participants were directed to a separate webpage (not connected with the survey) where they could provide their e-mail address to receive a $15 electronic gift card.

The online anonymous survey involved two major components: The first component focused on demographic characteristics (e.g., age, race/ethnicity, and political view) and attitudes toward racially marginalized populations. The second component covered participants' social network compositions. Following established procedures (Campbell & Lee, 1991), a series of name generators were used to elicit social network properties. Specifically, participants were first asked to nominate seven individuals who were 18 years old or older and with whom they had interacted in the past 3 months. Prompts were also provided in the survey to help participants with social network members (i.e., alter) nomination. Such network name generation methods have been widely applied to different populations (e.g., homeless youths, substance users, and individuals residing in suburban areas) and in different countries (e.g., the United States, Canada, and Russia) via different formats (e.g., online and offline) to collect personal network data (Barman-Adhikari et al., 2016; Espinoza, 2018; Wellman & Hampton, 1999; Lee & Campbell, 2018; Yakubovich, 2005). For each nominated alter, information regarding alter type (e.g., relative, program colleague, homebased peer), perceived alter characteristics (e.g., alter's attitude toward race/ethnicity), and respondents' interactions with each alter was collected. All respondents in this study were able to nominate seven alters with whom they had interacted in the past three months. This study was exempt by the Institution Review Board at the research university. All collected data were stored in a secure server in the university where the study was conducted.

Measures

Outcome variables

Racial attitudes were measured using the color-blind racial attitudes scale (CoBRAs; Neville et al., 2000). CoBRAs is a 20-item 6-point Likert scale measurement composed of three subscales that measure three domains of power-evasive color-blind racial attitudes: unawareness of racial privilege (RP; seven items), unawareness of institutional discrimination (ID; seven items), and unawareness of blatant racial issues (BRI; six items). These three racial attitude domains serve as the three outcomes of interest in this study. CoBRAs demonstrates high reliability (alpha coefficients range from 0.84 to 0.91) and construct validity (Neville et al., 2000). In the current study, a total score for each of the subscales was calculated (unawareness of RP and ID both range from 7 to 42, and unawareness of BRI ranges from 6 to 36), with lower scores indicating *lower* levels of color-blind racial attitudes.

Independent variables

As previously stated, the present study draws from SEM to investigate both individual and social network–level correlates of racial attitudes among White social work students.

Individual characteristics

Personal-level correlates of White social work students' racial attitudes included in the present study are: enrollment status, age, political ideology, and sexual orientation. Gender identification is not included as a potential racial attitude correlate due to the majority of respondents identifying as

female. In fact, only six respondents (3.68%) self-identified as male and zero identified as other gender. However, male students were not excluded from the current study sample. Age is a continuous variable representing respondents' age.

For participants' social work program enrollment status (e.g., full time vs. part time, traditional in-seat vs. online, and MSW vs. BSW), there was high correlation between full-time status and traditional in-seat enrollment. To avoid multicollinearity, a dichotomous variable was created with 1 representing participants enrolled as full-time or traditional in-seat students and 0 representing other. A separate dichotomous variable was also derived, with current MSW students coded as 1 and BSW students coded as 0. Political ideology was measured using a categorical variable including conservative, moderate, and liberal derived from respondents' answers to "How would you describe your political views?" (Response options included very conservative, conservative, moderate, liberal, and very liberal.) Sexual orientation is a dichotomous variable with 1 representing respondents' self-identification as heterosexual, while 0 represents other. Other than aforementioned individual-level correlates, the present study also included a dichotomous variable measuring participants' familiarity of a prominent on-campus, antiracial discrimination protest that took place in late 2015 (1=familiar with the protest; 0=not familiar with the protest). Many participants in the study were current or incoming students during the protest. Therefore, their familiarity with the protest likely has influence on their current racial attitudes.

Social network properties

As previously stated, participants were asked to nominate seven individuals aged 18 or above with whom they have interacted in the past 3 months. These nominated individuals constituted each participant's social network. Informed by previous literature on formation of racial attitudes (Cote & Erickson, 2009; Pauker et al., 2017; Rutland et al., 2005), the present study focused on White social work students' social network diversity (i.e., racial and ethnic composition of their social networks), perceived norms regarding racial and ethnic minorities within the networks, and discussions with their network members regarding race and ethnicity-related topics.

To understand network racial and ethnic composition, respondents were asked to list each of their nominated alters' perceived race or ethnicity. A continuous variable representing the total number of nominated alters who were perceived by the participants as racial or ethnic minorities was derived. The higher the number (i.e., higher diversity within one's network), the more intergroup contact or exposure the respondents may have within their social network. To explore the perceived social norms regarding race and ethnicity, participants were asked to identify alters whom they perceived might hold negative attitudes toward people who may not share the same race or ethnicity background with said alters. A continuous variable representing the total number of alters who may hold negative attitudes toward individuals from different racial or ethnic backgrounds than their own was then derived (higher numbers indicate more prevalent norms of negative racial attitudes within the network in which a respondent is embedded). Finally, to investigate participants' discussion of race- and ethnicity-related issues with social network members, participants were asked to identify alters with whom they have talked about issues related to race and ethnicity. A continuous variable documenting the total number of alters with whom participants had discussed race- and ethnicity-related issues was derived.

Analysis

Linear regression models were conducted to investigate the association of personal and social network characteristics with each of the outcomes of interest (i.e., unawareness of racial privilege, unawareness of institutional racism, and unawareness of blatant racism) separately. Bivariate linear regression analyses were first conducted. Independent variables significantly associated with each of the outcomes of interest in bivariate analyses were then included in the final multivariate linear regression model of corresponding outcomes.

Table 1. White Social Work Student Personal-Level Characteristics and Social Network Composition (n=163)

Variables	n	%	mean	SD
Personal-level characteristics				
Age			27.47	(7.36)
Gender				
Female	157	96.32		
Male	6	3.68		
Sexual orientation				
Heterosexual	139	85.28		
LGBTQ	24	14.72		
Political view				
Conservative	15	9.20		
Moderate	54	33.13		
Liberal	94	57.67		
Social work program enrollment status				
Full-time or traditional in-seat	105	64.42		
Part-time or online	58	35.58		
MSW	129	79.14		
BSW	34	20.86		
Familiar with recent on campus anti-discrimination protest	96	58.90		
Racial attitudes				
Unawareness of racial privilege			17.49	7.04
Unawareness of institutional racism			16.41	6.65
Unawareness of blatant racism			10.08	3.51
Social network composition				
Number of network members who are racial/ethnic minority			0.72	0.96
Number of network members who may hold negative attitudes toward racial/ethnic minority			1.51	1.34
Number of social network members with whom talked about racism and discrimination			5.18	2.01

Results

Table 1 illustrates the demographics of participants. Consistent with previous literature, social work students who participated in the current study were predominantly in their 20s (73% were under 30 years old; result not shown in the table) and predominately self-identified as female (96%). Over 85% of the participants self-identified as heterosexual. Approximately 58% were full-time students or pursuing a social work degree in a traditional in-seat mechanism and 58% were familiar with the antidiscrimination protest in 2015. Over 57% of the participants identify their political view as liberal. Finally, consistent with previous literature exploring racial attitudes among social work students (Davis & Proctor, 1984), students in the present study demonstrated overall low levels of color-blind racial attitudes based on moderately low scores observed in the outcome measurements.

The bivariate analysis suggests that a consistent set of individual-level characteristics, including age, sexual orientation, enrolled as a full-time or in-seat student in the program, political ideology, and familiarity with the recent on-campus protest against discrimination, were found to be significantly associated with all three outcomes of interest. In terms of social network properties, having social network members with whom participants talked about topics related to race and ethnicity was found to be negatively associated with all outcomes. All the aforementioned significant variables were then included in the final models for each outcome separately.

Table 2 presents the final multivariate linear regression results. For personal-level characteristics, holding a liberal political view compared to a conservative view was found to be negatively associated with all three outcomes, namely unawareness of racial privilege ($\beta = -6.90$; $t = -4.13$; $p < .001$), unawareness of institutional discrimination ($\beta = -8.70$; $t = -5.73$; $p < .001$), and unawareness of blatant racism ($\beta = -3.14$; $t = -3.73$; $p < .001$). Self-identified as moderate in political view, compared to conservative, was found to be significantly associated with lower unawareness of institutional discrimination ($\beta = -3.53$; $t = -2.25$; $p = .026$). Being familiar with the on-campus

Table 2. Multivariate Linear Regression Analyses of White Social Work Students' Racial Attitudes

	Unaware of Racial Privilege			Unaware of Institutional Racism			Unaware of Blatant Racism		
	B	*SE B*	*p*	*B*	*SE B*	*p*	*B*	*SE B*	*p*
Personal-level characteristics									
Age	0.07	.07	0.30	0.17	0.06	<0.01**	0.08	0.04	0.04*
Heterosexual	1.02	1.38	0.46	2.02	1.23	0.10	0.77	0.67	0.25
Full time or in-seat	−0.87	1.27	0.49	−0.19	1.17	0.87	0.03	0.64	0.96
Political view (Ref: Conservative)									
Moderate	−1.00	1.74	0.57	−3.53	1.57	0.03*	−1.34	0.86	0.12
Liberal	−6.90	1.67	<0.001***	−8.70	1.52	<0.001***	−3.14	0.84	<0.001***
Familiar with recent on-campus antidiscrimination protest	−3.40	1.28	<0.01**	−1.78	1.18	0.13	−1.62	0.64	0.01
Social network composition									
Number of social network members with who talked about racism and discrimination	−0.44	0.24	0.07	−0.35	0.22	0.12	−0.35	0.12**	<0.01**

Note. *p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001

antidiscrimination protest held in 2015 was negatively associated with unawareness of racial privilege (β = −3.40; t = −2.66; p = .009) and unawareness of blatant racism (β = −1.62; t = −2.56; p = .011). Finally, increase in age was found to be associated with moderate increase in unawareness of institutional discrimination and blatant racism (β = 0.17; t = 2.72; p = .007; β = 0.08; t = 2.11; p = .037). Program enrollment status (i.e., full time, part time, MSW, or BSW status) and sexual orientation were not related to racial attitudes. As for social network properties, having more social network members with whom participants talked about topics related to race and ethnicity was associated with lower unawareness of blatant racism (β = −0.35; t = −2.85; p = .005) but not with the other two outcomes.

Discussion and implications

Students had overall positive racial attitudes

Our findings suggest that, when compared to the general population of college students, our students demonstrate moderately low levels of color-blind racial attitudes (Brigham, 1993; Lo et al., 2016). However, this finding was somewhat expected since we examined views of students who desire to be professional social workers. Average scores for each of the three subscales indicate that participants were moderately aware of all three domains of color-blind racism, as students scored an average of 17.49 out of 42 on the unawareness of racial privilege subscale, 16.41 out of 42 on unawareness of institutional discrimination, and a 10.08 out of 36 on unawareness of blatant racism, with lower scores indicating lower levels of *un*awareness (i.e., higher levels of awareness) of these constructs. Although the CoBRAs scale does not have specific thresholds of precise scores indicating low, moderate, and high levels of colorblind racial attitudes, higher scores indicate higher unawareness. These findings are particularly relevant for future social workers, as understanding the multidimensional types of racism (rather than viewing it as individual acts of prejudice; Bonilla-Silva & Dietrich, 2011) is essential for quality social work practice (Loya, 2012).

Students who self-identified as liberal had more positive racial attitudes than those who self-identified as conservative

Consistent with previous studies (Feldman & Huddy, 2005; Kinder & Sears, 1981; Weigel & Howes, 1985), participants who self-identified as liberal had more positive racial attitudes than those who consider themselves conservative. Because social work is a profession that tends to attract people who hold liberal viewpoints (Hodge, 2004; Ressler & Hodge, 2006), it was also not surprising that

over half of the participants (n=94) identified as liberal. To facilitate student learning about issues related to race and ethnicity (e.g., institutional discrimination and racial privilege) while simultaneously respecting differing political ideologies that could influence racial attitudes, social work educators should utilize a combined set of approaches that encourage students to "critically reflect and think independently" (Rosenwald, Weiner, Simth-Osborne, & Smith, 2012, p. 151) about their own political ideologies and how they affect the lived experiences of themselves and others rather than separating these ideologies from social work practice. These approaches could involve assignments or discussions that help students do the following: gain self-awareness about their own political ideologies; understand how to manage these ideologies when working with diverse groups; "recognize how political ideologies may oppress, marginalize, or alienate" racial minorities as well as "create or enhance power and privilege" for White individuals; and understand how policies that affect racial minorities are influenced by political ideology (Rosenwald et al., 2012, p. 154).

Older students more likely to be unaware of institutional discrimination and blatant racial issues

Older participants were less aware of institutional discrimination when compared to younger students. One possible reason for this is that older participants (i.e., Generation X and Baby Boomers) may understand institutional discrimination as relic Jim Crow laws that have long been eradicated (e.g., separate but equal regulations) rather than the continued subjugation of non-White people through voter suppression, mass deportation of immigrants, mass incarceration, or police brutality (e.g., Laquan McDonald, a 17-year-old African American child who was fatally shot 16 times by police while walking away from an officer; Walter Scott, a 50-year-old African American man who was fatally shot in the back by police while fleeing a routine traffic stop) (Ali, Silva, & Chuck, 2018; Vann & Ortiz, 2017). Younger participants (i.e., Millennials and Generation Z) may have a greater awareness of institutional discrimination, as their demographic has been increasingly involved in social justice movements and civil resistance surrounding racial oppression as well as increased willingness to share examples of this oppression (and resistance to it) on social media (Alexander, 2016; Khan-Cullors, Garza & Tometi, 2018). Moreover, younger participants may see institutional discrimination as the covert institutional practices disguised as egalitarianism and impartiality (e.g., racial disparity in mortgage lending), which allows them to be more aware and critical of the existing system.

Older participants were also less aware of blatant racial issues than younger students. This also may be connected to age and what older participants consider to be blatant racism. For example, older participants who may have witnessed traditional forms of blatant racism (i.e., Ku Klux Klan marches or lynchings of racial minorities) may perceive that pervasive racial discrimination is now over. Younger participants, however, may be more in tune with current examples of blatant racism (e.g., the arrest of two Black men in Starbucks for merely waiting for their party), resulting in increased awareness that blatant racial issues still occur and are an important problem that society is facing currently.

Social work educators must be sure to thoroughly cover all three components of color-blind racism in courses, focusing specifically on the creation and effects of institutional discrimination and the continued prevalence of blatant racism, particularly with older students, while at the same time taking their life experiences into consideration. This may involve explicitly discussing the development of policies that may disproportionately affect people of color (e.g., mass incarceration; the opportunity gap in K–12 and higher education, and decreasing amount of funding for the Office of Civil Rights).

Students with diversity experiences more aware of racial privilege and blatant racism

Although not a major independent variable of interest, students who were familiar with an on-campus social justice movement regarding diversity and inclusivity demonstrated more awareness of blatant racial issues and racial privilege than students who were not familiar with this movement.

College environment directly influences students' racial attitudes (Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pederson, & Allen, 1998; Neville, Poteat, Lewis, & Spanierman, 2014), and advocacy events that call attention to the importance of diversity and inclusivity can serve as opportunities for students' diversity experiences. At least two studies demonstrate that those who engage in diversity experiences (i.e., lectures, events, and movements on campus revolving around social justice) report lower levels of color-blind racism than students who do not (Lopez, 2004; Neville et al., 2014). Moreover, such diversity experiences improve White students' personal growth and social development during college, enhances their science and technology skills, and increases their diversity competence (e.g., their knowledge about other cultures and ways of thinking; their ability to get along with different types of people; their ability to function as a member of a diverse team; Hu & Kuh, 2003). It has also been found that students who have higher interest in and awareness of social justice issues report lower color-blind racial attitudes than those who do not—a particularly important finding for social workers (Neville et al., 2014).

Although on-campus advocacy events may be controversial to some students, encouraging and expecting social work students to familiarize themselves with social advocacy movements regarding inclusivity and diversity is critical. For example, social work educators can organize and publicize community and campus-wide events that increase awareness of social justice movements and promote meaningful dialog outside of courses.

Sexual orientation and enrollment status did not affect racial attitudes

Enrollment status and sexual orientation may not have reached statistical significance because other variables (e.g., participants' age, political views, diversity experiences, and social network compositions) may have more influence on racial attitudes than these two factors, exclusively. This is especially true since participants' age, political views, and so on are likely extremely diverse across enrollment status. Further, as stated in the literature review, sexual orientation may not be an important factor in determining racial attitudes. It is possible that other variables such as family socialization (which influence political views, social network composition, etc.) influence attitudes more than sexual orientation, exclusively. It is also possible that due to a low percentage of our sample whom identified as a sexual minority (14%), it would be difficult to identify whether or not this variable truly influences attitudes of participants. Increasing the sample size and diversity related to sexual orientation of participants to determine a potential connection between sexual orientation and racial attitudes would be prudent.

Influence of social networks

Although discussions of race and ethnicity are often seen as "taboo" for White students (Tatum, 1992, p. 5), participants who have more social network members with whom they talked about these topics demonstrated increased awareness of blatant racial issues. This indicates that discussion within one's social network regarding topics surrounding race and ethnicity could potentially broaden exposure to race-related topics or increase individual reflections about race. As indicated by this finding, social work programs should facilitate communicative ties among students, staff, and faculty and foster opportunities for students to discuss race-related issues, both in and out of class. For example, social work educators could supplement class discussions with out-of-class activities or events that directly expose students to issues surrounding racial oppression. Rather than be silent observers, educators could require that students engage in conversation about these events (e.g., speak with someone who is involved in a community organization, coalition, or network combating racial oppression and find out more about their work) and strategies that promote racial justice (e.g., ask a coalition leader how they build organizational capacity for change) (National Gender and Equity Campaign, 2009).

There was not a significant association between having social network members that participants could speak with about such issues and their awareness of racial privilege or institutional discrimination. Because discussing these topics is often considered risky or taboo among college educators as well as students (Harper & Hurtado, 2007; Pollock, 2004), it is possible that participants' conversations about race or ethnicity-related matters revolve around easily identifiable, blatant, or overt racial issues rather than more covert or nebulous topics surrounding systemic oppression or racial privilege, as these topics are usually not emphasized within college classrooms (Dyson, 2017; West, 1994). This finding is supported by Racial Identity Development theory (Helms, 1990), as White individuals attempting to explore the effect of racism on racial minorities (and themselves) at times lack awareness of institutional discrimination and racial privilege and often see racism as "individual acts of meanness," rather than larger oppressive systems (Mcintosh, 1989, p. 10).

Contradictory to exposure theory (Cote & Erickson, 2009), the current study failed to identify significant association between racial diversity within participants' social networks and their own racial attitudes. This may be due to the racial homogeneity within said social networks, as participants reported, on average, that there was less than one person of color (mean=0.72; *SD*=0.96) within each of their networks. Although there was no significant association between having more diverse social network members and participants' racial attitudes, it would be remiss of researchers to fail to recognize that other studies demonstrate that increased exposure to racial minorities results in more positive racial attitudes for White students (Hu & Kuh, 2003; Lopez, 2004; Neville et al., 2014).

Although not the focus of this study, it is important to acknowledge the lack of racial diversity within participants' social networks as well as how social work educators may unwittingly be responsible for the lack of exposure to racial and ethnic minorities that students receive. In many social work programs in the United States, it is possible for students to complete their entire program of study, be it BSW, MSW, or PhD, without taking any courses from a faculty member of color. From a macro perspective, social work can help alleviate this problem by continuing to find creative ways to increase the number of racially and ethnically diverse faculty who can teach and lead programs. Recruiting and retaining students of color in social work programs, especially in predominately White institutions, could also be prioritized.

Finally, there was no significant association between *perceived* social network members' racial attitudes and participants' personal racial attitudes. It is possible that participants' actual *interactions* with their social network members (e.g., discussion regarding racial and ethnic issues) shape their own racial attitudes rather than their perceived network members' racial attitudes. Future research should focus on investigating subjective network norms and how various modes of interactions with social network members may affect White social work students' racial attitudes.

Strengths and limitations

The ability to better understand multivariate relationships between different personal level and social network correlates is a definite strength of the study. However, the overall positive response rate from students may indicate social desirability affects (Davis & Proctor, 1984). In addition, this study was cross-sectional in design and thus temporal order (or what factors changed attitudes over time) could not be determined. For example, although it was determined that White students who discuss issues surrounding race and ethnicity with their social network have higher awareness of blatant racial issues, researchers are not aware if this correlate affected racial attitudes over time. In addition, as compared to other independent variables (e.g., political views), the association between discussion with social network members and racial attitudes is not as prominent. Such findings might be the result of us limiting the number of social network members each participant could nominate, which prevented us from capturing the variance of their network members. Further research that allows social work students to nominate a larger number of their social network peers may be warranted.

Specific individual- and social network–level correlates explored in this study were identified based on what previous literature stated about their effects on racial attitudes. However, there are likely other

individual and social network correlates that may influence racial attitudes, yet are currently understudied and have not yet been identified. For example, although previous literature demonstrates that gender identification is a potential racial attitude correlate (Craig, DeHart, Richeson, & Fiedorowicz, 2012; Denson, Iyer, & Lickel, 2010; Garcia & Van Soest, 2000; Hunt, 2007), it was not investigated due to limited number of male students in the social work program explored within the study. Considering social work students are likely to be female, future research on racial attitudes involving multiple social work programs so that a meaningful number of male or gender minority students are included may be warranted. Furthermore, other higher-level factors (e.g., program level and geographical level) may also be associated with social work students' racial attitudes, but were not explored in the current study. Nonetheless, this pilot study establishes a critical initial step for future research efforts in understanding social work students' racial attitudes. Finally, due to the pilot nature and small scale of this study, generalizability of the findings may be limited.

Future research could improve on this limitation by collecting data concerning racial attitudes (and correlates of this) using a longitudinal design that collects data at several points, perhaps at the beginning of each year in college to increase knowledge about how racial attitudes are shaped over time as well as what individual- and social network–level correlates shape them at different points in their lives.

Conclusion

Informed by SEM, the purpose of the study was to examine how personal- and social network–level correlates distinctively affect White social work students' racial attitudes. Specific findings suggesting that having social network members with whom participants talked to about race and ethnicity is only associated with lower unawareness of blatant racism (and not unawareness of racial privilege or institutional discrimination) may indicate that White social work students are only discussing obvious or overt forms of racism (i.e., using a racial epithet) while ignoring or limiting their own understanding of covert racism (e.g., institutional discrimination) and its contributing factors (i.e., racial privilege).

It is imperative that social work students familiarize themselves with how racism is manifested within laws and policies and further their understanding of racial privilege, as this knowledge contributes to positive racial attitudes (CSWE, 2015a; Neville et al., 2001; Yuen & Pardeck, 1998). This is particularly important for White social work students (who comprise 53% of the social work student body), as the percentage of racial minorities in the United States is increasing (CSWE, 2015b; NASW, 2015).

In closing, social work educators should clearly address, discuss, and unpack how institutional discrimination benefits White individuals as well as how blatant racism is manifested today, particularly with students who are older. Social work researchers should also critically examine implicit and explicit biases of educators in our own field that perhaps influence our discussions on racism in the classroom.

These findings highlight the need for additional research, both qualitative and quantitative, examining the frequency and topics of student discussions on race, the racial attitudes of older social work students and professionals, and how social work educators and supervisors can ensure that they are appropriately preparing antiracist, competent social workers.

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Institutional Racism &

THE SOCIAL WORK PROFESSION:

A CALL TO ACTION

National Association of Social Workers

NASW
National Association of Social Workers

President's Initiative
Weaving the Fabrics of Diversity

INSTITUTIONAL RACISM &
THE SOCIAL WORK PROFESSION:
A CALL TO ACTION

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Introduction

Social work as a profession aims to address the impact of social problems on the lives of individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities. To achieve this, the members of the profession, the organizations through which they work, and the schools of social work must have the knowledge base, theories, and values to understand relevant social issues, especially for the purpose of creating positive change.

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to address one key and significant social issue, institutional (also known as structural) racism. Throughout this document these terms will be used interchangeably. This document will provide definitions of institutional/structural racism, clarify how it is relevant to the social work profession, and detail how it is manifested in the social systems within which social workers engage. Most importantly, this document will offer a vision for how the social work profession can address structural racism, in terms of both limiting its negative influence and creating conditions for effectuating realistic, achievable positive outcomes.

The Charge

Although acknowledging the existence and pervasiveness of the forms racism may take, the emphasis here is not on whether individual social workers are engaging in biased or racist practices. The assumption is that people enter the profession with good intentions and the desire to help. Rather, the focus is on the societal, institutional, structural maintenance of racism and the social worker's role in reference to this macro-level issue. What is key is that the social work profession and the systems through which the profession has evolved historically, into the present, is part of a larger society in which policies, resources, and practices are designed to benefit some groups significantly more than others, while simultaneously denying the existence of racism as a variable, except in its most extreme forms. The responsibility of individual social workers is to recognize that structural racism plays out in their personal and professional lives and to use that awareness to ameliorate its influence in all aspects of social work practice, inclusive of direct practice, community organizing, supervision, consultation, administration, advocacy, social and political action, policy development and implementation, education, and research and evaluation. Furthermore, individual social workers have a responsibility to promote change within and among organizations, and at the societal level.

Background

Although institutional racism as a social issue is not new to social work, its significance and centrality to the profession needs to be clarified and underscored. The need to address racism through social work education and social work practice was identified at the 2005 Social Work Congress convened by the National Association of Social Workers, the Council on Social Work Education, the National Association of Deans and Directors, and other cosponsoring organizations. The purpose of the congress was to choose 12 imperatives that a unified profession would dedicate itself to over the following 10 years. The 400 leaders of the profession who participated included addressing racism through education and practice in two of the imperatives:

> - Address the effect of racism, other forms of oppression, social injustice, and other human rights violations through social work education and practice.
> - Continuously acknowledge, recognize, confront, and address pervasive racism within social work practice at the individual, agency, and institutional levels.
>
> (Clark et al., 2006, p.4)

Another significant basis for addressing racism is detailed in the NASW social policy statement Racism that was updated at NASW's 2005 Delegate Assembly. The fundamental point of the policy is that racism must not be tolerated. The policy specifically calls upon all social workers to continuously acknowledge, recognize and confront all forms of racism, within all of the institutions that are relevant to social work (NASW, 2006).

The immediate impetus for this document, however, came from the NASW President's Initiative Task Force on *Weaving the Fabrics of Diversity*, which NASW President Elvira Craig de Silva first convened in August 2006. The Task Force identified the decisions of the 2005 Social Work Congress and the NASW Racism policy statement **(NASW, 2006)** as giving the impetus for calling on the entire social work profession in the United States to take responsibility for addressing institutional racism, as it is manifested within the profession's own domain as well as in the broader society.

Institutional/Structural Racism Within a Context

A Historical Glimpse at the Concept of "Race"

Institutional or structural racism, defined as the social, economic, educational, and political forces or policies that operate to foster discriminatory outcomes or give preferences to members of one group over others, derives its genesis from the origins of race as a concept (Barker, 2003; Soto, 2004). *Race* as a biological fact has been invalidated by biologists and geneticists, but race as a social construct is very real. Physical traits still have meaning as markers of social race identity. It is this social race identity that confers placement in the social hierarchy of society, and thereby access to or denial of privileges, power, and wealth (Smedley & Smedley, 2005). "The status assignment based on skin color identity has evolved into complex social structures that promote a power differential between Whites and various people-of-color" (Pinderhughes, 1989, p. 71). The emphasis on the use of physical features to classify and group people has its history from

> the extended encounter between European and non-European peoples that began in the late 15th and early 16th centuries. Discovering human beings in Asia, Africa, and the Americas who looked- and often acted- very different from themselves, Europeans concluded that these superficial differences were surely indicators of much more fundamental differences as well. This conclusion helped them to colonize, enslave, and even exterminate certain of those peoples. Europeans came to believe that races are in fact distinct and identifiable human groups; that there are systematic, inherited, biological differences among races; and that the non-White races are innately inferior to Whites-that is, to Europeans. (Cornell & Hartmann, 1998. p. 22)

In the United States, the cognitive dissonance between the values and beliefs of the Protestant founders for human rights, liberty, justice, democracy, brotherhood, and equality alongside the practice of enslavement of Africans, the making of Mexican/Mexican Americans a foreign minority in the land of their birth, and genocide of Native Americans was resolved by classifying groups of people by virtue of their physical characteristics as being not only different, but innately inferior and thereby unworthy of rights and entitlements. From the very origins of this nation, the concept of race was used to institutionalize the benefits of one group of people while denying them to other groups of people (Acuna, 1988; Gonzales, 2000; Kivel, 1995; Novas,2003; Pinderhughes, 1989; Potapchuk, Leiderman, Bivens, & Major, 2005; Smedley & Smedley, 2005).

The determination of who is or is not white in America has fluctuated over time. There have been times and places in which the Irish, Jews, Italians, and Latinos have been considered white or non-white. The changes in the U.S. Census Bureau nomenclature system over time demonstrate the fluidness in the U.S. society's perceptions of how

people should be clustered. The categorization that had been "White/Non-White" is now a set of five major groups along with notation of national origin. Furthermore, the individual determines his or her own race and can choose more than one. The census also makes a clear demarcation between racial categories and the ethnic category of Latino/Hispanic who can be of any race (Cornell & Hartmann, 1998; U.S. Census Bureau, 2001).

Contemporary United States continues to struggle with the cognitive dissonance between the espoused virtuous beliefs of this nation and its actual practices in relationship to those who are "different," meaning "not white." These struggles are captured in several of the terms often associated with a discussion of racism and related concepts.

Overt Racism

Racism is the practice of discrimination and prejudice based on racial classification supported by the power to enforce that prejudice (Barndt, 1991; Garcia & Van Soest, 2006). ***Ethnocentrism*** is the view that one's own group is the center of everything and that all things are judged based on one's own group. ***Prejudice*** is the negative (or positive/idealized) attitudes, thoughts, and beliefs about an entire category of people formed without full knowledge or examination of the facts. And ***discrimination*** is acting on the basis of prejudice. Discrimination is often codified by laws, regulations, and rules. People experience ***oppression*** when they are deprived of human rights or dignity and are (or feel) powerless to do anything about it. Sometimes the negative act is in the form of ***exclusion,*** in which people are denied the opportunity to participate in a certain right, benefit, or privilege. Sometimes the negative act is in the form of ***marginalization,*** in which people find that they are on the fringe of political, social, or economic consciousness. That sense of invisibility results in decisions being made by those in power that may be harmful simply because the needs were not considered. ***Assimilation*** means being absorbed into the cultural tradition of the dominant society and consequently losing one's historical identity. This is in contrast to ***acculturation*** in which there is an adaptation to a different culture but retention of original identity (Garcia & Van Soest, 2006; Pinderhughes, 1989; Potapchuk et al., 2005; Robbins, Chatterjee, & Canda, 1998; Soto, 2004; Thompson & Neville, 1999).

Social Work Response

These concepts are relatively familiar to most social workers, and many view their work as addressing various aspects of these problems. As a profession, social work "has traditionally been looked to for leadership and support in altering conditions that impede human potential and dignity" (White,1982, p. ix). Social work organizations can easily point to work that is being done to address the needs of the dispossessed, many of whom are people of color. The social work profession can look back on its history as a force for social change in our society in which the beneficiaries were and are predominantly people of color.

Institutional Racism

Institutional racism is the manifestation of racism in social systems and institutions. It is the social, economic, educational, and political forces or policies that operate to foster discriminatory outcomes. It is the combination of polices, practices, or procedures embedded in bureaucratic structure that systematically lead to unequal outcomes for groups of people. (Barker, 2003; Brandt, 1991). In this environment disparities are often tolerated as normal rather than investigated and challenged. "These power-assigning social structures in the form of institutional racism affect the life opportunities, life-styles, and quality of life for both Whites and people-of-color. In so doing they compound, exaggerate, and distort biological and behavioral differences and reinforce misconceptions, myths, and distortions on the part of both groups about one another" (Pinderhughes, 1989, p.71). In the United States, the ethnocentric focus is still primarily a white, Anglo-Saxon protestant orientation. The standards by which things are considered valued emanate from a Eurocentric perspective. Kivel (1995) noted the following examples of institutional racism over the history of this country:

- exclusions from unions, organizations, social clubs
- seniority systems (last hired, first fired)
- income differentials
- predatory lending practices
- inferior municipal services
- admissions based on test scores
- differential education based on preconceived potential or ability
- monocultural school curricula

In each of these situations, people of color experience disadvantages that flow from one generation to another in reference to income, decision making, health status, knowledge and skill development, and quality of life. The greater loss is to the country as a whole of the talents and perspectives of a significant proportion of the population.

The Silent Obstacle

Structural inequities have been solidified over time. The multigenerational effect of the privileges of free white people as compared with the effect of slavery, "Jim Crow" segregation, along with prejudicial immigration rules[1] has resulted in a set of social structures that maintain and reinforce the barriers to the attainment of maximal human potential and dignity. A strong social movement will be the most powerful approach to change. On the surface, this is a natural challenge for the social work profession to address. However, these social structures are maintained by individuals, many of whom are just trying to make a living. Their participation

[1] Prejudicial immigration rules include the repatriation of Mexicans in the 1930s and 1940s that resulted in the deportation of 500,000 to 600,000 Mexicans (many of whom were American citizens) and their U.S. born children to Mexico (Acuna, 1988; Balderrama &Rodriquez, 2004; Gonzalez, 2000)

in these systems is not fueled by intention to do harm, and many are oblivious to the fact that anyone has been harmed. Some, including many social workers, believe that they are "doing good."

The new challenge for the profession is to tackle forms of racism that are more subtle than slavery or segregation. To a large degree, the social traditions and values within the helping professions preclude active promotion of the types of racism that are overt or blatant. Many in this society, including the helping professions, denounce intentional discrimination or prejudice against a person because of that person's membership in a certain racial group. The press for political correctness suppresses some behaviors or comments, and most people, including social workers or others in the helping professions, would not describe themselves as "racist." Nor do they engage in forms of overt racism. However, even if every person in the world currently conducted themselves in a non-racist manner, institutional racism would still exist.

These structures are maintained, in part, by individuals who exhibit some of the more subtle forms of racism that even they would not necessarily believe in themselves. The challenge for social workers committed to change is to address both overt forms of racism and these subtle forms as they are expressed by others and themselves.

Subtle Types of Racism

Three subtle types of racism are captured in the concepts of *symbolic racism, aversive racism, and micro-inequities*. **S*ymbolic racism*** is expressed by those who may or may not perceive themselves as racist, but justify their negative judgment of others by asserting that the others do not abide by traditional values of the dominant group. People can perceive themselves as being fair and practicing equality by holding forth certain values, such as "individualism" or "work ethic" or "self-reliance," and take negative action because the focal group does not share those values. So they perceive themselves as operating based on certain "objective" standards or "universal truths" rather than in opposition to the group based on their race (Durrheim & Dixon, 2004). ***Aversive racism*** is another subtle form of prejudice. People who engage in the practice see themselves as non-racists, but they will do racist things, sometimes unintentionally, or they will avoid people without overt racist intent. What they believe about themselves and will attest to is the importance of fairness, equality, and justice, but because they have been exposed to the ever-present societal racism just by living in the United States, they will reflect it in their conduct (Durrheim & Dixon, 2004; Tatum, 1997). Finally, good people can do bad things to others in ways for which there is no formal grievance, but still have negative (sometimes unintentionally) effect. This refers to *micro- aggressions* or *micro-inequities.* ***Micro-inequities*** are "those tiny, damaging characteristics of an environment, as these characteristics affect a person not of that environment. They are the comments, the work assignments, the tone of voice, the failure of acknowledgement in meetings or social

gatherings. These are not actionable violations of law or policies, but they are clear, subtle indicators of lack of respect by virtue of membership in a group" (Rowe, 1990). These are forms of racism that as members of this society we all commit. People of color may commit these acts or maintain these attitudes against other people of color. The charge is to become able to recognize them and move ourselves and others beyond them to facilitate systemic change.

Looking into the Mirror

Two other issues must be confronted as a precondition to releasing the energy required to successfully challenge institutional racism. One is ***white privilege*** and the second is ***internalized racism***. *White privilege* is the collection of benefits based on belonging to a group perceived to be white, when the same or similar benefits are denied to members of other groups. It is the benefit of access to resources and social rewards and the power to shape the norms and values of society that white people receive, unconsciously or consciously, by virtue of their skin color (Kivel, 2002; McIntosh,1988; Potapchuk et al., 2005;) In contrast, *internalized racism* is the development of ideas, beliefs, actions, and behaviors that support or collude with racism against oneself. It is the support of the supremacy and dominance of the dominant group through participation in the set of attitudes, behaviors, social structures, and ideologies that undergirds the dominating group's power and privilege and limits the oppressed group's own advantages (Potapchuk et al, 2005; Tatum, 1997).The challenge for white social workers and social workers of color is to confront these inhibiting forces to the work required to successfully confront institutional racism. Individuals are called upon to acknowledge that by the accident of history, they are in positions that give them advantages over others. And then, they are being asked to advocate for changes that may disadvantage themselves or their family members. Others are called upon to dare to recognize their own potential power, mourn the loss of what might have been, and marshal their energies to seek correction in society's processes. Even those within the social work profession can be paralyzed against change because of benefits of white privilege or the blindness of internalized racism.

Racism and the Other Isms

Some people discount the effect of race on the outcomes for people of color. Many would argue that the issues for people of color are more a consequence of socioeconomic status than race. What they fail to recognize is that the overrepresentation of people of color in lower socioeconomic strata is due to institutional racism that has constrained them to life circumstances that kept them in that strata. Others equate the prejudice, discrimination, and bias based on age, gender, sexual orientation, or physical ability to the negative experiences due to race. Prejudice and discrimination based on these factors do in fact cause much strife in our society. Also, issues of privilege based on these factors must be confronted as seriously as privilege by racial identification. However, the experience of people of color in each of these categories is significantly worse compared with those who are white and in these categories. Furthermore, the intolerance that was first established on the basis of race provided the template to treat in a discriminatory manner those who do not "fit." If our society can successfully tackle its treatment of people who are "different" by virtue of the social category of race, it will have changed the manner in which it views, understands, and responds to "differentness" in other forms.

Manifestations of Institutional Racism in Social Work

Social work as a profession historically has had to confront two sometimes complementary and sometimes competing mandates. The preamble to the NASW *Code of Ethics* begins by stating:

> The primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty…. Social workers are sensitive to cultural and ethnic diversity and strive to end discrimination, oppression, poverty, and other forms of social injustice. (NASW, 2000, p. 1)

The profession is expected to "enhance human well-being" and also "strive to end social injustice." The irony is that by being a "helping" profession, social work reduces the pressure on the larger society for social change. The continued marginalization of those who should or could be mobilized to act for social justice could be an unintended consequence of the profession's "helpfulness." The other dilemma is that success in changing the forces that promote discrimination, oppression, and poverty also changes the forces that support white privilege. NASW as a predominantly white association must acknowledge and commit to taking action against white privilege, if it is to be successful in achieving social justice for people of color.

A Self-Assessment of the Profession

A thoughtful examination of the practice in the association, in social work organizations, in institutions, in agencies, and by individual social work practitioners would probably reveal examples of different subtle forms of racism. If the profession can understand the manifestation of the different forms of racism within the profession, it can gain a better understanding of the issues, discover strategies that work for change, and become authentic social change leaders against structural racism in a variety of societal institutions. Consider the following familiar scenarios:

- Support is given to policies and practices without analysis of the racial effect or worse.

  Scenario A. *A program designed to reduce disproportionate confinement of youths of color in juvenile detention settings reviewed its decision-making policies. It discovered that one assessment question was sending children of color into detention with greater frequency than white children. The question was "Is there a parent available for supervision immediately after school?" In this community, most of the families of color were single-family units, in which the parent was at work immediately after school. When the question was changed to "Is there a responsible adult available for supervision immediately after school?", the disposition patterns of that community changed.*

Scenario B. *A senior social worker of color, employed by a state agency to monitor mental health programs, finds that assessments of black families and children do not adequately consider the social context and family strengths. When she raises such concerns with white program leaders, she is frequently told that she is missing the clinical aspects of what is involved, even though she is an experienced clinician, herself.*

- Board leadership and membership and executive leadership and management positions are occupied predominantly by white people, even in institutions that serve predominantly populations of color.

  Scenario C. *City X's population is 40% multicultural. The service community is 80% African American or Caribbean American. The three primary social service agencies providing services in this community have boards that are 100% white. The executive directors are white. The senior management positions are white. The front line service staff is 30% multicultural. The administrative clerks and housekeeping staff are 80% multicultural.*

  Scenario D. *A Vietnamese social work administrator is recruited into a large family service agency to help the organization move toward becoming more diverse and multicultural. She soon finds that she is expected to address issues of diversity without the executive leadership and board members assuming greater responsibility, themselves. She finds it very difficult to express her concerns about this out of a realistic fear of being told that she is too sensitive.*

- Organizations that are led by people of color are marginalized by organizations led by members of the dominant society.

  Scenario E. *In community Y, four social service agencies provide most of the services. A consortium of African American, Cuban, Haitian, and Puerto Rican–led community-based social service agencies wants to expand their services. The leaders of the four dominant social service agencies refuse to engage in dialogue with the consortium about partnerships. The state agency promulgates rules in the request for proposal that advantage the established agencies and disadvantages the consortium. Unless there is change these agencies will not have the opportunity to demonstrate whether they can effectively provide the appropriate services to the community. And in the current fiscal environment, they may not be able to survive as service providers.*

- Investment in the development of knowledge about people and communities of color is limited.

  Scenario F. *State Z mandates that child welfare agencies engage in cultural and linguistic competence training. The agencies in this particular city conduct annual cultural competence training consisting of an eight-hour training session providing an overview of cultural competence and stories from four members of the community about their culture. Staff members who have been there for several years are bored after hearing the same presentation year after year. No other training is*

provided. Staff members are not expected to develop a personal professional development plan in relationship to cultural competence. There is no programmatic effort to link with the various cultural communities on an ongoing basis.

Scenario G. *A coalition of agencies approaches a school of social work to urge that curriculum better reflect the needs of the Latino community. The school's dean says that she agrees with the request but the faculty has a great deal of discretion in determining the curriculum. She did not feel she was in a position to insist on implementation of the requested changes.*

Scenario H. *A social worker of color who runs a program for children in foster care shared an experience in which a white clinician reported to him that an African American child's grandmother, who was the primary caregiver, was resistant to working with the agency after she had missed several appointments. The program director said that when he looked more closely at the situation, he found that the grandmother was caring for three of the child's siblings, including one who had recently required hospitalization. Instead of seeing her as resistant, he found her to be a significant asset to the child, but overextended and stressed. He concluded that the clinician did not understand the commitment of many African American families in assuming responsibility for children even when they are not the biological parents.*

- There is limited investment in creating partnerships with communities of color for program or service design, implementation, and evaluation.

Scenario I. *In response to the need to provide better aging services in rural communities, this social service agency has decided to expand services from its base in the major city in this southern community to satellite offices in the rural communities contiguous to the city. The executive director and management staff of the agency developed a service delivery structure after consultation with a well-respected consultant in the field. Like other social service agencies, the service population in both the city and the rural communities are predominantly African American, along with an influx of immigrants from Mexico, El Salvador and Guatemala but the board and executive directors are white. Part of the process included meetings with physicians and religious leaders in the rural area. Prospective consumers of the services or their families were not involved in the planning, design, or implementation. They were asked to complete a satisfaction survey at the end of service, but they had no input into the questions or analysis of the results.*

Scenario J. *In an effort to make family and children's services neighborhood based, a public child welfare agency awarded contracts to several established white-run nonprofit organizations with little history in the communities they were coming into. Whereas one community-based agency had a long-standing reputation for its involvement with the public schools, hospitals, police precinct, and cultural institutions in its neighborhood, the other contracted providers made little effort to develop such relationships.*

- There is preference to soften racist language so that one sees euphemisms such as, “culturally deprived” and “economically disadvantaged” rather than “culturally dispossessed” and “economically exploited” (Thompson & Neville, 1999).

  Scenario K. *In a study being developed as background for a state legislative committee, this policy analysis group notes significant racial disparities in mental health services for the African Americans in one particular region of the state. It is a community that has received numerous complaints regarding racial profiling by police, predatory lending practices, and cross burnings. Rather than explore and discuss racism as a potential factor, they focus on the cultural orientation of the residents to use faith communities as a source of healing. They shift the focus to the residents rather than the institutions and policies.*

- Social workers of color experience micro-inequities promulgated by their white social work colleagues.

  Scenario L. *In recent interviews with social workers of color in a major city about their experiencing bias among colleagues toward them, several reported, independently of one another, having their perspectives and concerns treated as unimportant. Significantly, all of them said that they also experienced having the same perspectives and concerns valued when expressed by a white person. One black program director said that he repeatedly reported that an air conditioning unit in a room where groups were run was broken during a hot summer, but it was not repaired until another administrator, who was white, made the report.*

- Employment criteria and credentialing requirements often create barriers for employment of social workers of color and generally do not require demonstration of the knowledge and skills required to effectively serve a culturally and linguistically diverse service population.

  Scenario M. *Native American social workers in County A have consistently found it difficult to meet the criteria of the social work regulatory body in their state. As they pursue tutoring in preparation for the test, they are amazed at how few test items seem to relate to the issues and needs of tribal communities or best practices with this population. They despair that they are having a hard time meeting the formal criteria of the state and of obtaining social work positions to serve their community, while at the same time, the state credentialing body is not setting forth an expectation that those who are credentialed are prepared to serve their tribal community.*

  Scenario N. *A hospital social work director terminated the employment of four social workers because they did not comply with a policy requiring all staff to pass the state’s licensing exam within one year of being hired. Each social worker had been highly evaluated. For three social workers, Spanish, Hmong, and Vietnamese were their primary languages and English was their second language. The fourth social worker, an African American, grew up in an inner-city neighborhood where*

the quality of education was inferior to that of more affluent areas. This resulted in lower test scores throughout her life. The director said that this was a significant loss to the department and hospital, which was in a low-income and immigrant community.

Each of these examples demonstrates the ripple effect of institutional or structural racism in our society into social work practice. The correction in each of these circumstances requires authentic efforts to name "racism" as a factor for exploration and action. The journey to effective transformation is not straightforward. The following section maps out strategies to address these issues within the profession.

Institutional Racism in the Social Work Profession
A CALL TO ACTION

The approaches to address institutional racism in the social work profession discussed here are not necessarily comprehensive in scope but identify some significant dimensions, including short- and long-term approaches. Strategies geared toward different levels of social organization are also needed, starting at the level of the individual professional social worker, moving to the level of social work organizations and then to social institutions that impinge on the profession and on clients and their communities. Addressing these levels are not mutually exclusive but are intertwined; they are separated out here to bring attention to the importance of each level. In the final section of this paper, the question "What can be done now?" will be addressed.

Long-Term Approaches

Personal Growth and Professional Development

All social workers need to dedicate time to their personal growth and professional development to become and remain effective in addressing institutional racism. Whereas social workers are likely to fall along a continuum from having little professional development to being knowledgeable and effective in this area, growth and development is an ongoing process of continuous learning throughout one's career.

Multiple elements contribute to personal growth and professional development, beginning with the recognition of the importance of institutional racism as a variable in social work and the lives of clients and the communities in which they live. Coupled with this awareness is the need to make a commitment to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to be both competent and effective.

Interpersonal Capacity and Collaboration

Social workers have limited capacity to address institutional racism on their own. Although individuals must assume responsibility for their own growth and development, it is essential for professional social workers to initiate discussions, both formal and informal, about the issues discussed here, with colleagues and members of the organizations within which they work. The conversations need to take place both as general discussions and in response to specific policies, practices, behaviors, and attitudes observed or planned in their professional context. This is often easier said than done, given the nature of institutional racism and that discussion is often experienced as threatening. Becoming skilled in initiating and maintaining discussions about institutional racism requires critical judgment, skill, and self-awareness that evolve over time.

Social Work Organizations Becoming Antiracist Entities

Social work and social work–related organizations include agencies, programs, and departments that provide social work services; schools of social work; and associations such as the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) and the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE). Organizations need to move from remaining silent about, or ignoring, the manifestations of institutional racism to recognizing their existence and making a commitment to promote change.

This movement begins with the individual members of the organization engaging in their own professional development and growth while entering into interpersonal collaborations with colleagues and other members of the organization. It is essential, however, for organizational decision makers to assume leadership for addressing institutional racism and developing official goals, policies, and procedures that will enable the organization to evolve. In organizations engaged in service delivery this effort will include a commitment by boards of directors and ongoing analysis of how institutional racism can be ameliorated or reversed through programming, hiring, training, supervision, and other forms of institutional processes.

In educational institutions, effectiveness in addressing institutional racism will involve making a commitment to the incorporation of content related to institutional racism into curriculum and all forms of education. The goal is to graduate social workers who are on the road toward competency in addressing institutional racism throughout their careers. It also means examining ways in which the current curriculum promotes and supports values, beliefs, and practices that foster institutional racism and then engaging in change process as indicated. Leadership is needed from deans and directors, chairs of educational committees, as well as from admissions and field work departments and field work supervisors.

Associations such as NASW and CSWE have a special leadership role to play in assuring that the social work profession embraces a commitment to address institutional racism. NASW, CSWE and other social work organizations that sponsored the 2005 Social Work Congress have already taken an important step by adopting decade-long racism imperatives. These organizations can play a decisive role in using this document and similar tools as vehicles for encouraging recognition and commitment among their constituents on a broad scale.

Focus on Client, Community, and Social Policy

Fundamental to addressing institutional racism is the need for professional social workers and social work–related organizations to understand the effect of racism on their clients and their communities. There is a need to better understand the relationship between the problems a client needs help with and the role of racism in the genesis of those problems, regardless of the race or socioeconomic status of the client. Social workers need to adapt

their own practice approach in consideration of these factors. Social workers also need to be attuned to the differential effect of social policies that disadvantage communities of color while benefiting others, and advocate for fairness and equity in policy decision and resource distribution.

What Needs To Be Done Now?

Society cannot be changed overnight. However,

- Social workers can assume responsibility for taking action to reverse the effect of racism on services to people and communities of color.
- Social workers can take action to engage their own organizations to become antiracist organizations.
- Social workers can partake in actions large and small to challenge the institutional or structural racism in their communities and the nation at large.

Both individual initiatives and collective organized efforts officially endorsed by social work organizations are required to make this happen. NASW and its local chapters have a unique opportunity to take leadership. Opportunities for leadership also reside with schools of social work and social work service delivery organizations. Social work leaders, from CEOs and program directors to members of boards of directors, have a special obligation to address institutional racism and can do so, given their sphere of influence and ability to influence organizational decisions and structures.

The following opportunities can be taken immediately while building toward longer term and ongoing efforts:

Recognition/Create awareness. Efforts to address institutional racism begin with recognition of the dimensions of the problem and how it is manifested within the social work profession. It is especially critical to recognize how institutional racism is ignored through a process of denial. Only through recognition and building awareness can a commitment be made to create short- and long-term plans for institutionalizing positive change.

Action Steps

1. Study NASW policies relating to institutional racism, including the policy statement in *Social Work Speaks* on "Racism" and in this document, "Institutional Racism and the Social Work Profession: A Call to Action."
2. Become knowledgeable about the history and context of institutional racism, the relevant concepts that have been developed, and the manifestation of institutional racism in social work, both generally and locally, including within one's own organizational setting. (See resources and references at the end of this document.)
3. Encourage colleagues, staff, and the institutions with which you are affiliated to take action steps 1 and 2 above.

Education and Training/Build knowledge. Participate in organized learning experiences that deepen one's understanding of institutionalized racism. Studying the dimensions of institutional racism is a beginning, but is usually insufficient to fully appreciate the nature of racism and its manifestations. Educational opportunities led by seasoned trainers in addressing racism are especially useful in understanding the dynamics of racism. As individuals and organizations acquire greater understanding, effective and sustainable activities can be developed. Educational opportunities include participation in forums, workshops, classes, discussion groups, as well as relevant readings.

Action Steps

1. Identify opportunities for classes and workshops that address racism.
2. Organize forums on institutional racism, its manifestations within social work, the nature of white privilege, and other relevant aspects of racism.
3. Allocate time for reading about institutional racism.

Dialogue and Inclusion/Become partners and allies. Practitioners and organizations must create opportunities for discussions between social workers of color who have experienced firsthand the effect of institutional racism and white social workers. White social workers need to listen to what their colleagues have to say about their experiences in the field and to their suggestions for practice based on their knowledge of working with clients of color. In addition, initiatives to address institutional racism need to include social workers of color in the decision-making process. Affirmative efforts must be taken to ensure that as many social workers of color as possible are participating in discussions about institutional racism and in planning activities to produce longer-term change.

White social workers can take leadership in helping other white colleagues understand the implications of white racial identity, white privilege, and the effect of racism on white people. It is important to realize that everyone is affected by racism. This is work that can more effectively be conducted by those who share the same racial identity.

Action Steps

1. Provide meaningful opportunities for social workers of color to share their perspectives on how institutional racism is manifested in social work and identify opportunities to create positive change. Issues of safety, trust, and commitment may need to be addressed to enable participation.
2. Use the opportunities provided in action step 1 above to enhance understanding among all social workers.
3. White social workers need to create opportunities for dialogue with social workers of color, based on action steps 1 and 2 above.

4. White social workers need to create opportunities for dialogue with other white social workers to explore the effect of racism and white privilege on white social workers.

Planning/Plan for internal change. Social work–related organizations can engage in longer-term strategic planning, identifying progressive steps that can be taken over a period of time, whether one, two, or three years, as well as envisioning what the organization would like to achieve in the longer term.

Action Steps

1. Engage in a visioning process, identifying how an organization can become a multicultural, antiracist organization.
2. Create expectations for the organization's CEO and board of directors to lead the organization in addressing institutional racism.
3. Identify methods of accountability to ensure that planning is implemented and evaluated on a regular basis. In addressing the question "accountability to whom?" accountability should include social workers of color as well as clients and communities of color.

Organizing for Social Change/Challenge the status quo. Social workers and social work organizations can embark on the planned strategies to promote change at the individual, agency, community, and societal levels. The specific tasks are governed by the focus for intervention and the unique circumstances of that entity.

Action Steps

1. Prepare a racial effect analysis of policies and practices of the agency or community, so that specific polices and practices can be identified for change.
2. Identify and support champions for change within the organization and the community, by establishing partnerships with consumers, families, and leaders selected by communities as their representatives, and social work colleagues of color.
3. Establish an atmosphere of intolerance for racist conduct within the organization, system, and community.
4. Use the available resources to challenge racist policies, practices, and behavior. Invoke legal strategies such as civil rights laws and engage official monitoring and enforcement agencies to fulfill their mandates.

Special Message to NASW Chapters

As leaders of the profession in our communities, NASW chapters and units are in a unique position to be at the forefront as role models and guides to social workers and social service agencies and organizations in this mission. NASW chapters and units should utilize this "call to action" and the long-term and immediate approaches as a guide. The specific tasks should be tailored to the circumstances of the chapter and the racial demographic and issues within the state**.**

Action Steps

Assessment

1. Assess the diversity of chapter membership compared with the diversity of the state.
2. Assess the diversity of chapter membership compared with the diversity of social workers in the state.
3. Examine the program agenda of the chapter in terms of relevance to diverse populations in the state.

Planning

1. Based on the assessment, engage in self-awareness, information gathering, study, and dialogue as indicated in the previous section.
2. If necessary, engage in strategies to increase the diversity of the membership.
3. If necessary, engage in strategies to increase the voice of members of color in decision-making roles within the chapter.
4. If necessary, engage in strategies to adjust the programming to address issues of relevance to communities of color.
5. Establish a plan to transform the chapter into an antiracist organization.

Implementation

1. Establish programming to assist members and other social services providers to raise awareness regarding institutional racism.
2. Develop social justice strategies on behalf of and in partnership with communities of color to address structural and institutional racism.

Evaluation

1. Examine the degree to which the membership has become more diverse.
2. Examine the degree to which social workers of color are active participants in the chapter—committee participation, leadership roles, attendance and presentation in continuing education activities.
3. Examine the degree to which policy, practice, and behavioral changes have occurred within social service agencies.
4. Examine the degree to which social policies have changed.

Closing Comments

> *Conventional wisdom and, more recently, neoconservative ideology state that sufficient progress has been made in improving the iniquitous situation of people of color in the United States. The implementation of affirmative action policies, for example, has led a large number of Americans to believe that more than enough has been accomplished. Yet, the striking antithesis of such perceptions is that many Americans continue to exist in a social chasm, the formal causes of which are not great secret to anyone—hunger, housing, crime, illness, and lingering patterns of political and economic oppression. Without exception, this chasm is disproportionately inhabited by people of color…Racism, in its personal, professional, and institutional forms permeates the life situations of ethnic minorities—as citizens seeking to preserve their rights and as clients of social service agencies.* (White, 1982, p. ix)

More than 25 years ago, NASW embarked upon an initiative to challenge racism at the individual, organizational, and societal levels, "Color in a White Society." The voices of social workers of color were lifted up and the association became more invested in the issues of people and communities of color. Twenty-five years later, it is clear that issues of that day continue into this day. Although there have been some changes in our society, racism in its many forms still persists. The work of the association is truly incomplete.

The association is again called on to take a leadership role in challenging the structures and practices within our society that perpetuate the systematic exclusion of people of color from vigorous participation in the potential richness of this country. The work of this day is even more challenging, because it is more subtle compared with the overt racism of segregation. However, the continued debate over affirmative action and immigration reflect the same issues with different words. The challenge for the profession is to have the courage to label racism as racism even though it is not comfortable. The challenge for the white members of the association is to acknowledge the benefits received by virtue of white privilege and still challenge the structural misalignments that have developed over time because of white privilege. The partnerships that can be developed with social workers of color and the communities of color can forge significant changes in this society. As such, we as social workers can claim our mission to help the oppressed population and achieve social justice. Let us open our eyes and ears and engage in self-study and conversation, and then let us act.

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RESOURCES

Books

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Organizations

This list is a sampling of organizations that are engaged in antiracist work. The presence or absence of an organization on this list is neither an endorsement nor an indictment of the work of a group by the association. Please use this list to explore options and perspectives on advancing an antiracist agenda.

Antiracism Team
Archdioceses of Chicago
Office for Racial Justice
P.O. Box 1979
Chicago, IL 60690-1979

ERASE Racism (Education, Research and Advocacy to Eliminate Racism)
6800 Jericho Turnpike, Suite 109W
Syosset, NY 11791-4401
Website: www.eraseracismny.org
Email: info@eraseracismny.org
Tel: (516) 921-4863
Fax: (516) 921-4866

National Coalition Building Institute
1120 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 450
Washington, DC 30036
Website: www.ncbi.org
Tel: (202) 785-9400
Fax: (202) 785-3385

National Multicultural Institute
3000 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20008-2556
Website: www.nmci.org
Tel: (202) 483-0700
Fax: (202) 483-5233

Network of Alliances Bridging Race and Ethnicity
Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies
1090 Vermont Avenue, NW, Suite 1100
Washington, DC 20005-4928
Tel: (202) 789-3500
Fax: (202) 789-6390

The Applied Research Center
New York - Executive Office
Public Affairs, Journalism
32 Broadway, Suite 1801
New York, NY 10004
Email: arcny@arc.org
Tel: (212) 513-7925
Fax: (212) 513-1367

Oakland - Administrative Office
Public Policy, Research, ColorLines
900 Alice St., Suite 400
Oakland, CA 94607
Email: arc@arc.org
Tel: (510) 653-3415
Fax: (510) 986-1062

Chicago – Midwest Office
Advocacy Leadership
203 N. Wabash Avenue, Suite 1006
Chicago, IL 60601
Email: jmorita@arc.org
Tel: (312) 376-8234/8235
Fax: (312) 727-0411

The National Resource Center for the Healing of Racism
Three Riverwalk Centre
34 West Jackson Street
Battle Creek, MI 49017
Email: info@nrchr.org
Tel: (269) 963-9450
Fax: (269) 963-9427

The People's Institute for Survival and Beyond
P.O. Box 770175
New Orleans, LA 70177
Website: www.pisab.org
Email: tiphanie@pisab.org
Tel: (504) 301-9292
Fax: (504) 301-9291

Web Links

This list directs you to projects, documents, and interactive resources, databases, etc. The list does not imply NASW's endorsement of, or responsibility for the content.

***Building a Multi-Ethnic, Inclusive & Antiracist Organization: Tools for Liberation packet. 2005* (companion document for SPAN's antiracism training sessions)**
Safehouse progressive alliance for nonviolence (SPAN)
835 North Street
Boulder, CO 80304
http://www.safehousealliance.org

Expanding the Circle: People Who Care about Ending Racism
Center for Social Justice
489 College Street
Toronto, Ontario
http://www.socialjustice.org

I Care's Crosspoint Antiracism
http://www.magenta.nl/crosspoint/us.html

Project Implicit
http://projectimplicit.net
https://implicit.harvard.edu

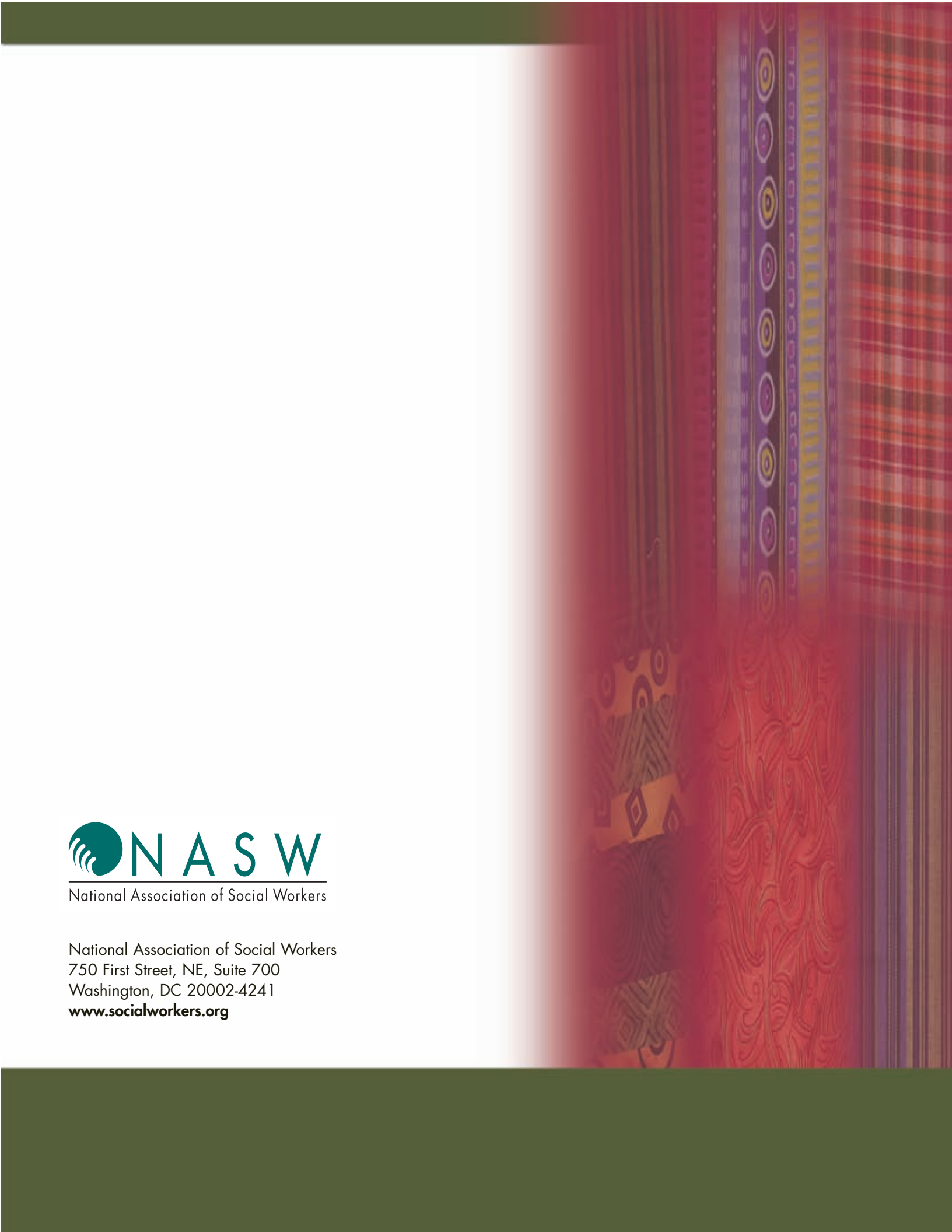
Race – The Power of an Illusion
Public Broadcasting System
http://www.pbs.org/race

Racism and Psychology
American Psychological Association
Public Interest Directorate
750 First St. NE
Washington, DC 20002
http://www.apa.org/pi/oema/racism/homepage.html

The Aspen Institute
One Dupont Circle Suite 700
Washington, DC 20036
Roundtable on Community Change
Project on Structural Racism and Community Change
http://www.aspeninstitute.org

The Race Matters Consortium
Westat
2925 S. Wabash
Chicago, IL 60616
http://www.racemattersconsortium.org

The Race Matters Toolkit
The Annie E. Casey Foundation
Race Matters Toolkit
701 St. Paul Street
Baltimore, MD 21202
http://www.aecf.org/publications/racematters.htm



NASW
National Association of Social Workers

National Association of Social Workers
750 First Street, NE, Suite 700
Washington, DC 20002-4241
www.socialworkers.org

Guidelines for Being Strong White Allies

Adapted from ***Uprooting Racism: How White People Can Work for Social Justice***

by **Paul Kivel**

WHAT KIND OF ACTIVE SUPPORT does a strong white ally provide to a person of color? Over the years, people of color that I have talked with have been remarkably consistent in describing the kinds of support they need from white allies.

What People of Color Want from White Allies

"Respect us"	"Listen to us"
"Find out about us"	"Don't make assumptions"
"Don't take over"	"Stand by my side"
"Provide information"	"Don't assume you know what's best for me"
"Resources"	"Money"
"Take risks"	"Make mistakes"
"Don't take it personally"	"Honesty"
"Understanding"	"Talk to other white people"
"Teach your children about racism"	"Interrupt jokes and comments"
"Speak up"	"Don't ask me to speak for my people"
"Your body on the line"	"Persevere daily"

Basic Tactics

Every situation is different and calls for critical thinking about how to make a difference. Taking the statements above into account, I have compiled some general guidelines.

1. **Assume racism is everywhere, every day.** Just as economics influences everything we do, just as gender and gender politics influence everything we do, assume that racism is affecting

your daily life. We assume this because it's true, and because a privilege of being white is the freedom to not deal with racism all the time. We have to learn to see the effect that racism has. Notice who speaks, what is said, how things are done and described. Notice who isn't present when racist talk occurs. Notice code words for race, and the implications of the policies, patterns, and comments that are being expressed. You already notice the skin color of everyone you meet—now notice what difference it makes.

2. **Notice who is the center of attention and who is the center of power.** Racism works by directing violence and blame toward people of color and consolidating power and privilege for white people.

3. **Notice how racism is denied, minimized, and justified.**

4. **Understand and learn from the history of whiteness and racism.** Notice how racism has changed over time and how it has subverted or resisted challenges. Study the tactics that have worked effectively against it.

5. **Understand the connections between racism, economic issues, sexism, and other forms of injustice.**

6. **Take a stand against injustice.** Take risks. It is scary, difficult, and may bring up feelings of inadequacy, lack of self-confidence, indecision, or fear of making mistakes, but ultimately it is the only healthy and moral human thing to do. Intervene in situations where racism is being passed on.

7. **Be strategic.** Decide what is important to challenge and what's not. Think about strategy in particular situations. Attack the source of power.

8. **Don't confuse a battle with the war.** Behind particular incidents and interactions are larger patterns. Racism is flexible and adaptable. There will be gains and losses in the struggle for justice and equality.

9. **Don't call names or be personally abusive.** Since power is often defined as power over others—the ability to abuse or control people—it is easy to become abusive ourselves. However, we usually end up abusing people who have less power than we do because it is less dangerous. Attacking people doesn't address the systemic nature of racism and inequality.

10. **Support the leadership of people of color.** Do this consistently, but not uncritically.

11. **Learn something about the history of white people who have worked for racial justice.** There is a long history of

white people who have fought for racial justice. Their stories can inspire and sustain you.

12. **Don't do it alone.** You will not end racism by yourself. We can do it if we work together. Build support, establish networks, and work with already established groups.

13. **Talk with your children and other young people about racism.**

Please send comments, feedback, resources, and suggestions for distribution to paul@paulkivel.com. Further resources are available at www.paulkivel.com.

RACISM: WHAT CAN I DO? | WHITE PEOPLE

The following information is adapted from a "Now Art" project by damali ayo. The full version is available at www.fixracism.com.

1 RECOGNIZE IT

Recognize white is a color and a race.
Acknowledge racism exists . . . Understand that it is not all about slavery. It is important that white people understand the benefits reaped from historical and current racial practices. Notice where those practices continue, and question if you participate in them. Understand race and racism present complexities and contradictions. Do not try to reduce or simplify.
Take notice . . . Observe how others are treated. Getting in the habit of notices who is around you (and who isn't).

2 LISTEN

Listen . . . Listen to people of color. Just listen. When a person of color is sharing their experiences, resist any urge to jump in and minimize or excuse their feelings. Understand that when a person of color talks to you about racism, they are trusting you. Treat that trust with the utmost respect. **If you offend someone (we all do), instead of saying, "I don't know why you're upset," ask, "Help me understand why you're upset."**
Honor experience . . . Remember people of color are sharing their experiences, not merely voicing opinion. Experience trumps opinion. Remember people of color have experiences you don't. being defensive gets in the way of listening.
Honor emotions . . . When people mislabel outrage as anger, is scares other people away from doing anti-racism work and gives ammunition to racists.
Not everyone is either white or a person of color . . . Let people self-define and respect their identities.
Don't impose . . . Think about what you say before you say it. Don't bring up racism just because you're talking to a person of color. If you do have a racial consciousness, seek to deepen understanding instead of getting to a "finished" place.

3 EDUCATE YOURSELF

Know our history . . . And make sure that your kids know the facts. Make sure your kids' teachers know the facts, too.
Do it right . . . Fight the urge to immediately tell a person of color that you have learned something new. Learn about people of color because they are part of your country and society, not because they are "exotic." Do not view people of color as "different," as if white people are the "norm." Study the differences between racism, prejudice and discrimination.
Acknowledge and examine our society's stereotypes . . . Assume you've been influenced by them (we all have). Work on stereotypes of, or prejudices toward, others you may have. Deconstruct your view and see where they have been influenced by internalized racism and strive to overcome those views.

4 BROADEN EXPERIENCES — CAUTION: COMPLETE STEPS 1 – 3 FIRST

Learn about other cultures . . . Not by asking questions, but by spending time with people.
Get out there . . . Put yourself into environments predominantly attended by people of color. Make a commitment to participate in an activity that helps you to shift your awareness.
Make new friends . . . Diversify your circle of friends. Stereotypes have power when we don't know people as individuals.
Raise smart kids . . . Expose them to differences early on. Actively encourage your children and all children to develop relationships with people of color, both adults and children.

5 TAKE ACTION

Consider racism a problem you can help solve . . . Always confront racism and inappropriate behavior/language when you see, hear, read, or experience it. Encourage others to talk about racism. Learning "what not to say" is not the goal.
In the media . . . When a racist incident occurs in the public eye, consider writing a letter to the editor of your local paper.
At work . . . Whatever your place of profession, eliminate institutionalized practices that are discriminatory toward people of color. Maintain a wide range of employees.
In the community . . . Become involved in an organization that is involved with communities of color.
With your kids . . . Since people often live in mostly segregated parts of any city/town, integrate the books and toys in your children's school, and at home. Promoting a racially integrated educational environment is best for white kids as well as kids of color.

RACISM: WHAT CAN I DO?

PEOPLE OF COLOR

The following information is adapted from a "Now Art" project by damali ayo. The full version is available at www.fixracism.com.

1 BE REAL

Be yourself . . . The best way to eliminate negative images and create positive images is to be who you REALLY are.

Don't play into negative stereotypes . . . You don't have to live down to negative expectations. Practice self-love. Teach your children to love themselves and others for who they are. Be who you are, not what you see on TV.

Love yourself and one another . . . You have too much in common to not support each other. Hold each other up.

2 SPEAK OUT

Remember that you are not powerless . . . Do not be fearful of speaking up if a person, regardless of age or status, says a racist comment or joke.

Share with white people . . . Provide resources and knowledge when they ask what they should do.

3 EDUCATE YOURSELF

Know our history . . . And make sure that your kids know the facts. Make sure your kids' teachers know the facts, too. Teach the children in your life from an early age to have pride in who they are and their race.

Create role models . . . So kids have someone to look up to and hold close to their heart when they face racism.

Acknowledge and examine our society's stereotypes . . . Assume you've been influenced by them (we all have). Work on stereotypes of, or prejudice toward, others you that you may have. Deconstruct your views and see where they have been influenced by internalized racism and strive to overcome those views.

4 BUILD TIES

Join together as people of color . . . Know the interconnected history of people of color in the United States. Put yourself into environments where you are likely to get to know more people of color that are of a race different than your own.

Do not talk about any other group the way you would not want others talking about you . . . Instead, make an effort to learn about all groups.

Not everyone is either white or a person of color . . . Let people self-define and respect their identities.

Make a commitment to recruit white people . . . Cultivate relationships with white people. Create a balanced friendship that includes real sharing about non-race issues as well as an alliance focused on fighting racism.

5 TAKE CARE

- Know that there are white people who care about eliminating racism.
- Train white friends to interrupt racism so when you are together the responsibility doesn't always fall to you.
- Appreciate progress as people are learning
- Walk away when you are too tired, too angry, or just don't feel like confronting racism. Make your health and sanity a priority. A good balance is to walk away but let people know why you are walking away. Then you've said something without getting into a long or frustrating discussion.
- Have a safe person/group where you can vent your anger, sadness, or rage over racism when emotions arise.
- Make sure you have a regular outlet to replenish your energy. Racism takes a toll on your body and mind.