



# Decolonial efforts to undo education's racism

Glen Jankowski

School of Social Sciences

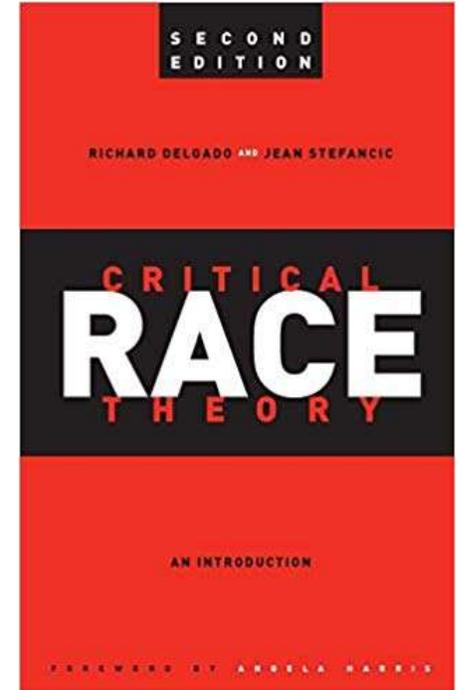
[g.Jankowski@leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:g.Jankowski@leedsbeckett.ac.uk)

# Overview

- Context & learning outcomes
- Education: The great equalizer?
- Racism in US & UK education
- Racism in US & UK curriculums
- Decolonial efforts: Some examples
- Summary, quiz & resources/readings

# Context: Critical Race Theory

- My limited standpoint: White male psychology
- My limited lecture: brief overview only
- **CRT** (Delgado & Stefanic, 2001; Harris, 2012) **emphasises:**
  - Race is a social construction
  - Racism can only be undone by forgoing colour blindness
  - Racism is endemic & structural



# Learning outcomes

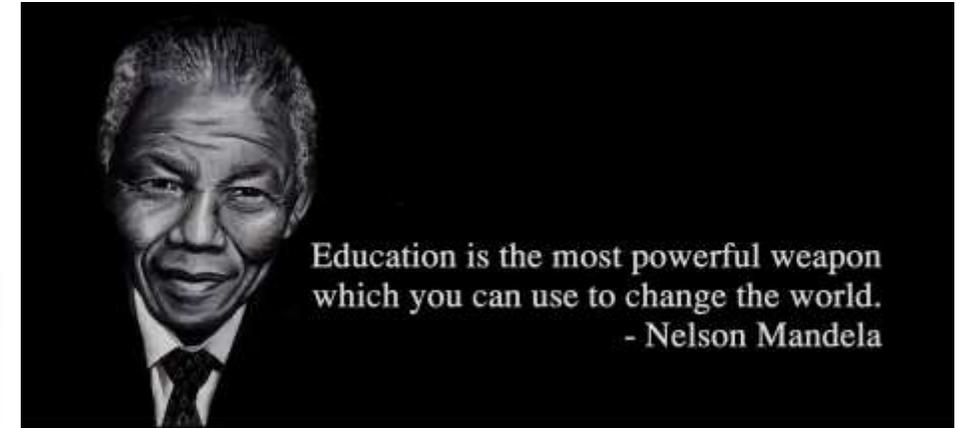
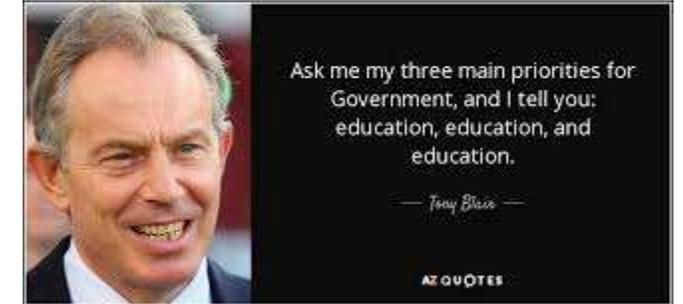
- Consider the goal of education as a means to undo racism/inequalities
- Critically evaluate how contemporary British HE fulfils this goal with regards to existing institutional racism

# Overview

- Context & learning outcomes
- Education: The great equalizer?
- Racism in US & UK education
- Racism in US & UK curriculums
- Decolonial efforts: Some examples
- Summary, quiz & resources/readings

# Education: The great equalizer?

- Education is supposed to be the great equalizer in society
- Education is a way to intervene in racism
- But like any other institution it can be racist



Any questions/ comments you want to ask anonymously?

Respond at [PollEv.com/glenjankowsk073](https://www.poll-ev.com/glenjankowsk073)  
Text 348392 and your message to 020 3322 5822

# Education: The great equalizer?

## The Racial Wealth Gap

Why Policy Matters

*“Attaining a college education has never been more important to a household’s ability to thrive in the labour market, attain financial stability, and build wealth”*

BY *Laura Sullivan, Tatjana Meschede,  
Lars Dietrich, & Thomas Shapiro*  
INSTITUTE FOR ASSETS & SOCIAL  
POLICY, BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY

*Amy Traub, Catherine Ruetschlin  
& Tamara Draut*

# Overview

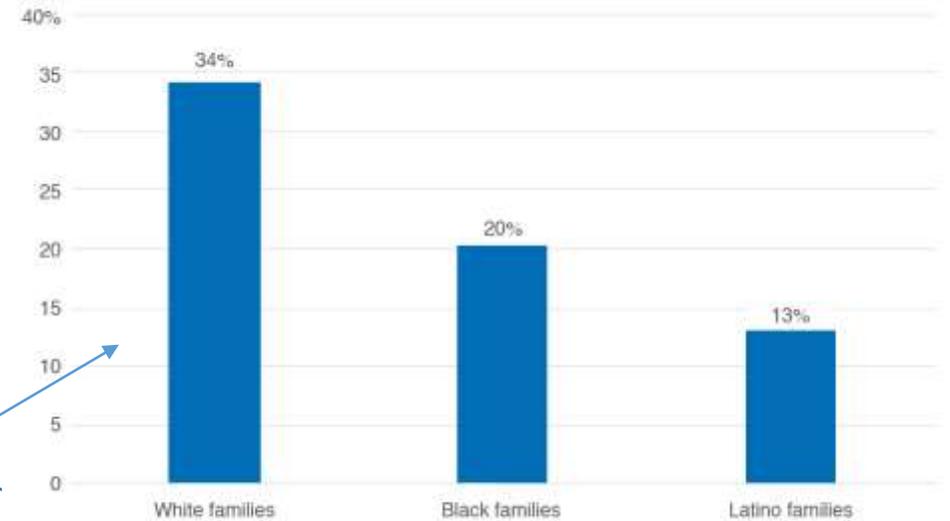
- Context & learning outcomes
- Education: The great equalizer?
- Racism in US & UK education
- Racism in US & UK curriculums
- Decolonial efforts: Some examples
- Summary, quiz & resources/readings

# Racism: in US education

“More college graduates from white families than Black families.  
And when they do the return (payback) is:

- White family’s return: \$55,869
- Black family’s return: \$4,846

Figure 8. Rates of College Graduation



Source: Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP), 2008 Panel Wave 10, 2011

Why Policy Matters

BY Laura Sullivan, Tatjana Meschede,  
Lars Dietrich, & Thomas Shapiro  
INSTITUTE FOR ASSETS & SOCIAL  
POLICY, BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY

Amy Traub, Catherine Ruetschlin  
& Tamara Draut

# Racism: In UK education

- Nationally 2017-18: 13% gap between White & BAME students (23% White & Black; NUS and Universities UK [1]).



"We have these really bright students coming to a place such as Manchester where the standard offer is AAB, yet (they) are coming out with worse outcomes than their white colleagues" said Professor Aneez Esmail (University of Manchester).

"The 23 per cent chasm revealed between the earnings of black and white graduates represents a difference of £4.30 an hour"

Labour market disadvantage of ethnic minority British graduates: university choice, parental background or neighbourhood?



# Racism: In UK education

NUS 2012 report

Survey data (N = 938 Black students)

- 42% - curriculum doesn't reflect diversity, equality & discrimination
- 34% stated they felt unable to bring their perspective as a Black student to lectures and tutor meetings. ”

Qual data (Focus groups with NUS Black students delegates) :

- “Respondents regularly cited racial and cultural bias among lecturers
- Some believed they were ‘condemned to fail’

Recommendation: 8.1 “Universities and colleges should embed race equality in their curricula”.

**NUS Racism in HE report (2012):**

[www.nus.org.uk/PageFiles/12238/NUS\\_Race\\_for\\_Equality\\_web.pdf](http://www.nus.org.uk/PageFiles/12238/NUS_Race_for_Equality_web.pdf)

# Racism in education today:

- #WhyIsn'tMyProfessorBlack
- Lack of BAME professors (particularly Black women)
- Perhaps due to a lack of mentorship



Neil Lewis, Jr.  
@NeilLewisJr

Follow

"Just 47% of alumni of color said they'd had a mentor on the faculty, compared with 72% of white graduates...the stubbornly slow growth in underrepresented minorities in the professoriate probably contributes to the disparity." h/t @scottcowley



Professors Are the Likeliest Mentors for Students, Except Those Who Aren't ...  
Students have racially disparate access to sources of advice crucial to their success, a new report says.  
chronicle.com

10:29 AM - 2 Jan 2019

16 Retweets 21 Likes



16 21

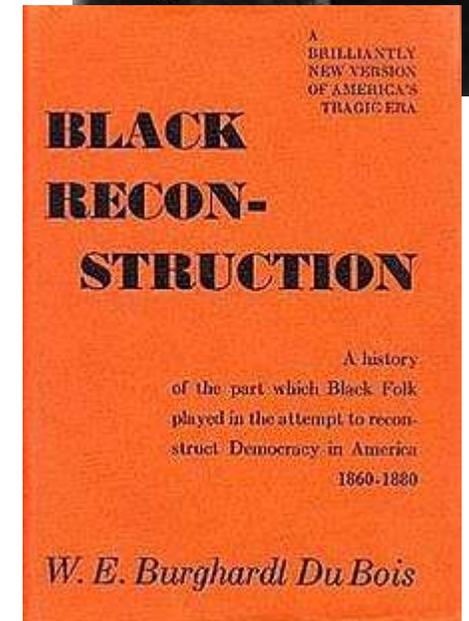
# Overview

- Context & learning outcomes
- Education: The great equalizer?
- Racism in US & UK education
- Racism in US & UK curriculums
- Decolonial efforts: Some examples
- Summary, quiz & resources/readings

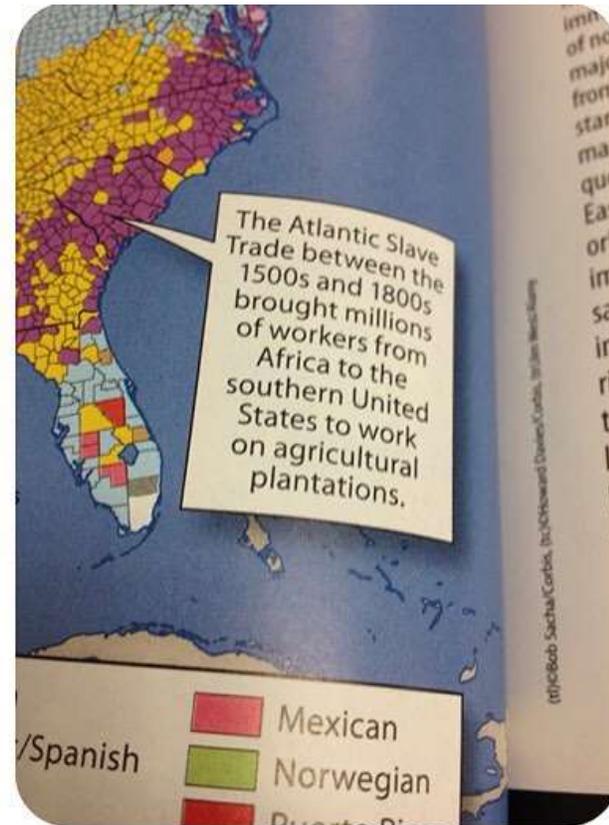
# Racism in the curriculum: W E Du Bois

- Du Bois: 1935 analysis of US history curriculums
- He notes Black people were depicted as:
  - Ignorant
  - Extravagant
  - Responsible for bad government during reconstruction

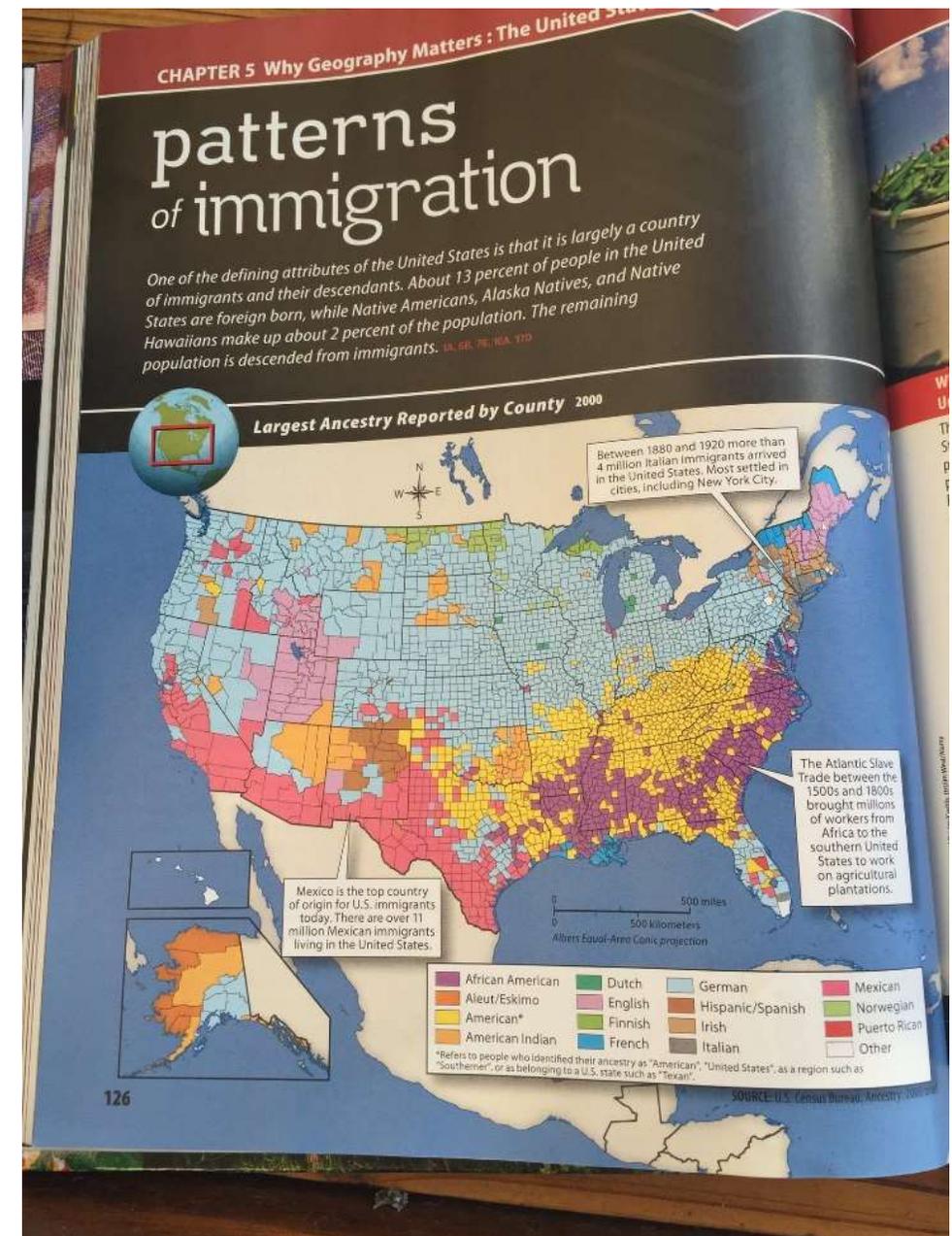
This would lead children believing “*that reconstruction was a disgraceful attempt to subject white people to ignorant Negro [sic] rule....*” (pg. 713)



# Racism in the curriculum



we was real hard workers  
wasn't we 😞



# Racism in the curriculum

Two examples of slavery depictions:

1. Finger [1] analysis of Texan school textbooks' found that slavery was depicted as
  - bad but had some good aspects too
  - & that some slave owners treated their slaves well
2. Depictions of Sally Hemmings
  - Daily Mail [2] British tabloid extolling 'love affair'
  - Film on similar theme (& book)

## The slave who stole a President's heart: As US elects its first black President, a new book reveals a sex scandal that shows how much America has changed

By CHARLES FORSYTH  
UPDATED: 01:47, 9 November 2008



View comments

When Barack Obama was swept to the presidency this week, it marked the end of a long journey for black America.

Just how far the nation had travelled - from the first slave ship of 1619, through early calls for emancipation, to Abraham Lincoln and Martin Luther King - can be revealed in the fascinating story of the country's third President, Thomas Jefferson and his black slave



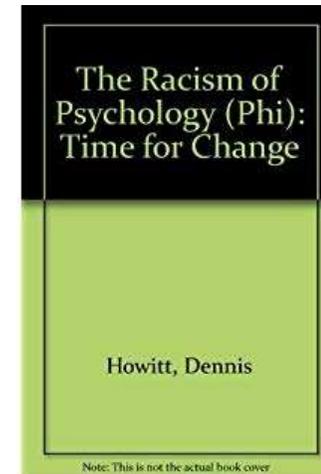
Source: [1] Finger (2015) analysis of Texan school textbooks' treatment of slavery <http://jezebel.com/heres-how-new-texas-public-school-textbooks-write-about-1726786557>

[2] <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1084002/The-slave-stole-Presidents-heart-As-US-elects-black-President-new-book-reveals-sex-scandal-shows-America-changed.html>

# Racism in the psychology curriculum: Owusu-Bempah & Howitt (1994)

Analysed a popular  
introducing psychology  
textbook: *Atkinson, Atkinson, Smith & Bem (1993).*  
*Introduction to Psychology (11<sup>th</sup> Edition).*

Found there was a consistent  
othering of BAME people.



# Racism in the psychology curriculum: Content analysis

**Materials analysed:** Every module handbook from 2015-2016 in our BSc Psychology undergraduate programme including elective and core modules across 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> years.

In total 215 materials for reading were set and these were written by 380 authors.

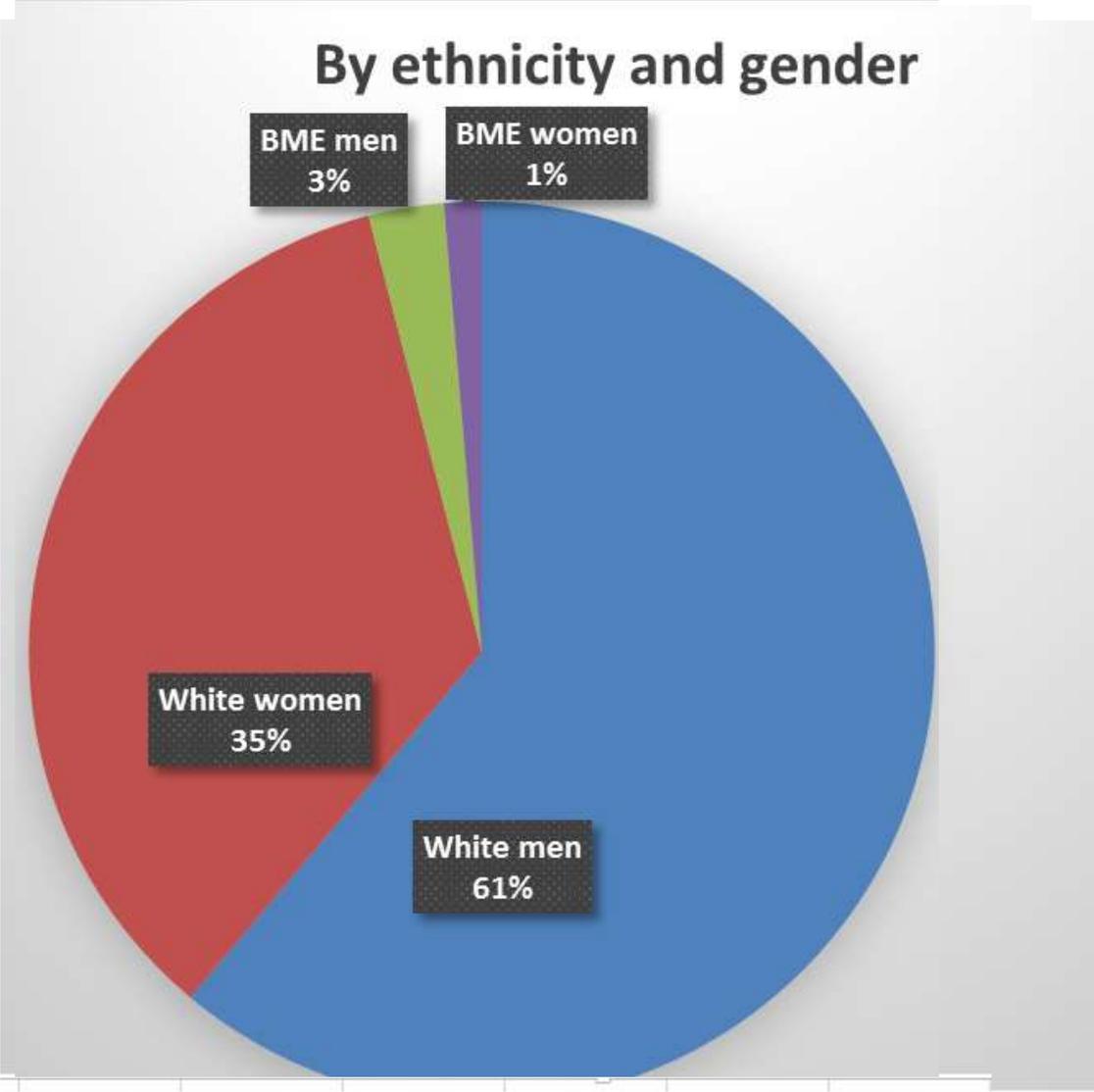
## **Codes:**

How many authors are:

- White/ BME?
- Western/ non – Western?
- Female/male?

Note: These are proxies only

# Racism in the psychology curriculum: Content analysis



White men	228
White women	130
BME men	10
BME women	5

# Overview

- Context & learning outcomes
- Education: The great equalizer?
- Racism in US & UK education
- Racism in US & UK curriculums
- Decolonial efforts: Some examples
- Summary, quiz & resources/readings

# Leeds Beckett University: Decolonizing Psychology project

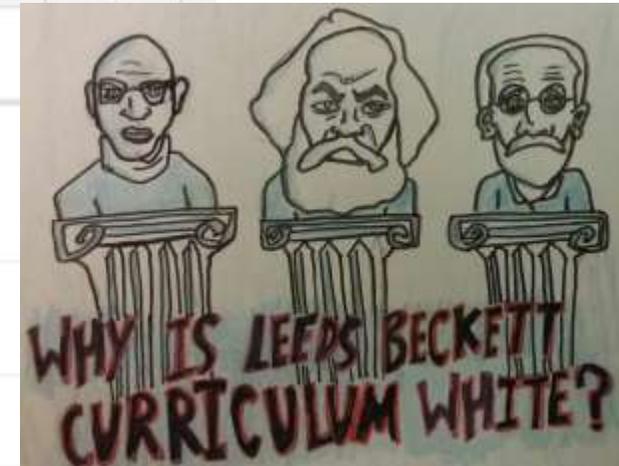
Diverse(r) psych curriculum database

File Edit View Insert Format Data Tools Add-ons Help Last edit was 3 days ago

g.jankowski@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

Comments Share

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
	Surname	First name	birth-death	Ethnicity	Subtopic	Potential modules	Discipline (if not psych)	Examples of teaching	Intersections (women, disabled, LGBT)	Notable work (type)	Why is this work notable?	Source	Notes	
1														
2	Thomas	Veronica G.		African American	Psychology of Black women		Psych	Critical realism	Woman	Thomas, V. G. (1997) Black women in psychology: Old issues and new challenges. Invited address presented at the 105th Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association, Chicago, IL.	Interviews 8 Black women psychologists			
3	Thomas	Veronica G.		African American	Psychology of Black women		Psych	Critical realism	Woman	Thomas, V. G. (2004) The Psychology of Black Women; Studying Women's Lives in Context Journal of Black Psychology, 30, 3, 286 - 306.	Outlines what a psychology of black women is, traces history of racism in psychology and omission of black women from feminist and Black psychology.			
4	Wyatt	G E			Psychology of Black women		Psych		Woman	Wyatt, G. E. (1997) Stolen women: Reclaiming our sexuality, taking back our lives. New York: John Wiley	Argues that slavery and racism have enduring psychological effects on Black women today including in their sexualities.			
5	Sues	S			Highlighting Western/White bias of psychology		Psych			Science, ethnicity and bias	Evidence bias			
6	Prosser	Inez Beverly			Highlighting psychological impact of school segregation/integration		Psych		Woman			<a href="http://www.ap">http://www.ap</a>	1st Black woman to earn a doctorate (1933)	
7	Holiday	B G			Psychology of Black people		Psych		?	Holiday, B.G. (2009) The History and vision of African American Psychology: Multiple pathways to place, space, and authority. Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology, 15, 317-337.				



# Decolonial efforts

- *“**Decolonizing the curriculum means** creating spaces and resources for a dialogue among all members of the university on how to imagine and envision all cultures and knowledge systems in the **curriculum**, and with respect to **what is** being taught and how it frames the world.’*

(Keele University NUS)

# Decolonial efforts

Open University staff have 3 key priorities

1. Apply a critical lens towards institution/discipline/knowledge production
2. Decentre the white, European 'canon'
3. Support a broad range of student backgrounds/abilities/learning styles.

# Overview

- Context & learning outcomes
- Education: The great equalizer?
- Racism in US & UK education
- Racism in US & UK curriculums
- Decolonial efforts: Some examples
- Summary, quiz & resources/readings

# Summary

- Education can be a way to undo oppression and create social mobility
- But only if it is anti-racist
- One way of doing this in psychology is to critically examine the curriculum we teach – and diversify it

Mini quiz - 7 questions:

<https://play.kahoot.it/#/k/fa0f094c-589e-43d5-a093-b8261f84bfa3>

# Readings

SOAS (2018) Decolonising teaching and learning Toolkit [Report]. Retrieved from:

<https://blogs.soas.ac.uk/decolonisingsoas/files/2018/10/Decolonising-SOAS-Learning-and-Teaching-Toolkit-AB.pdf>

Tate, S (2019) Tackling the 'BPOC' Attainment Gap in UK Universities. [Online video] retrieved from:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UPMuuJrfawQ>

# Resources

- Curriculum diversification project: [www.bmepsychology.com](http://www.bmepsychology.com)
- NUS Racism in HE report (2012)  
[http://www.nus.org.uk/PageFiles/12238/NUS\\_Race\\_for\\_Equality\\_web.pdf](http://www.nus.org.uk/PageFiles/12238/NUS_Race_for_Equality_web.pdf)
- 'Why is my curriculum white' Facebook group: (Adam Elliott-Cooper)
- #RhodesMUstFall #WhylsntMyProfessorBlack  
#WhylsMyCurriculumWhite #DecolinizeTheAcademy
- #ITooAmOxford campaign <http://itooamoxford.tumblr.com/>

Decolonising SOAS  
Learning and Teaching Toolkit  
for  
Programme and Module Convenors

May 2018

Decolonising SOAS Working Group  
[decolonisation@soas.ac.uk](mailto:decolonisation@soas.ac.uk)

This toolkit is intended to act as a briefing for programme and module convenors, on what 'decolonising' learning and teaching might entail. At its root it is about making what we teach and how we teach it more responsive to the problems of colonial and racialised privilege and discrimination within our teaching practice.

This is not a set of prescriptions but a set of suggestions and ideas for colleagues and students to think through, individually and collectively. It is animated by a spirit of critical dialogue within education, and is also connected to wider institutional questions about the principles and practices of good teaching – in particular work on racialised attainment and inclusive pedagogy. Its aim is to stimulate reflection, dialogue and changes in teaching practice that reflect our values as an intellectual community and as an institution.

# Resources – Jigsaw classroom technique

Step 1: Divide students into 3 'expert' groups and ask students to study a particular subtopic that they can become experts on

1. Group A - A1 A2 A3 – Topic A
2. Group B - B1 B2 B3 – Topic B
3. Group C - C1 C2 C3 – Topic C

Step 2: Form 3 new groups incorporating 1 expert of each topic together to create a new task whose completion relies on expertise from each of the topics from each: of the original groups

1. All 1s together (A1 B1 C1)
2. All 2s together (A2 B2 C2)
3. All 3s together (A3 B3 C3)



# Resources –critical questions

## Classroom questions to consider

- How do/might we assess abilities/comfort/confidence levels in the classroom? (Lecture, seminar, one to one)
- How do racialised dynamics manifest within the classroom? Discuss potential strategies for planning/managing this? (E.g. discussion of particular topics? Comments from white students?)
- How might student's lived experiences be brought into the classroom in ways that facilitate critical thinking/learning?

## Curriculum questions to consider

- Does the module content make assumptions about the students background, level of knowledge, mindset, prior learning etc. Who is presented as the normative group within/who is presented as the other/the 'studied'?
- Are there any topics on the module that could cause discomfort/trauma to BPOC students? What are they? What can be introduced into module content to manage/mitigate harm?
- Who are the key authors on the reading list? Does the reading list offer a diverse range of perspectives? Do students have the opportunity to be critical of perceived authoritative knowledge?