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Center for Strategic Solutions

*Developing your critical consciousness as an anti-bias educator: The **how** and the **why** of transforming your classroom instruction*

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Metropolitan Center for Research on Equity and the Transformation of Schools

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NYU | STEINHARDT   *Who are we?*

The Metropolitan Center for Research on **Equity** and the **Transformation of Schools**

The NYU Metro Center, founded in 1978 and currently led by Dr. David Kirkland, has a long track record for working with schools to address educational problems that are particularly pronounced in communities where poverty is concentrated, where large numbers of recent immigrants are settled, and in large and small urban areas.

NYU | STEINHARDT — *Who are we?*

The Metropolitan Center for Research on **Equity** and the **Transformation of Schools**

Our mission is to promote an understanding of, and provide services and assistance to, under-served populations (and the educational, governmental and community agencies that serve them) in order to enhance educational equity and promote academic excellence in the educational experiences of children and youth.

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Center for Strategic Solutions (CSS)

Our team works to promote critical reflection by building the capacity of schools and districts to challenge assumptions and embedded bias, breaking down barriers to student success. Our focus is to draw from the local context in order to:

- Build intentional **relationships**;
- Leverage the **assets** of students in instruction;
- Deliver rigorous **instruction** that engages all students; and
- Develop students' **critical consciousness** to confront and challenge the existing social order of race, power and privilege in school and society.

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Objectives

1. Participants will understand what implicit bias is, how it infects teaching and learning, and what they can do to disrupt the impact of bias.
2. Participants will experience what it feels like as a student to participate in an anti-bias lesson.
3. Participants will analyze the anti-bias techniques employed in the lesson and identify the characteristics of a critically conscious teacher.

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What does it mean to develop students for racial justice?

- Know their racial identity and have a healthy relationship to it.
- Talk freely and ask questions about race/racism.
- Name racism and race.
- Recognize the links between their personal experience of racism and broader systemic issues.

(Taken and adapted from Border Crossers, April 9, 2016.)

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5 Core Concepts

1. All media messages are 'constructed.'
2. Media messages are constructed using a creative language with its own rules.
3. Different people experience the same media message differently.
4. Media messages have embedded values and points of view.
5. Most media messages are organized to gain profit and/or power.

(Center for Media Literacy)

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5 Key Questions of Media Literacy

1. Who created this message?
2. What creative techniques are used to attract my attention?
3. How might different people understand this message, differently from me?
4. What values, lifestyles, or points of view are represented in, or omitted from, this message?
5. Why is this message being sent?

(Taken and Adapted from Center for Media Literacy)

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Activity

- Split into pairs or groups.
- Read the excerpt.
- Answer the Five Key Questions in order to look at the text critically and think about the information presented in a different light.
- Then rewrite the narrative to reflect a perspective driven by facts and equity versus power and profit gains.

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Debrief

- How would you utilize this in your classroom?
- How did it feel to respond from a different lens?

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Media Literacy

- For centuries, literacy has referred to the ability to read and write. Today, we get most of our information through an interwoven system of media technologies.
- The ability to read many types of media has become an essential skill in the 21st Century.
- Media literacy is the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and create media. Media literate youth and adults are better able to understand the complex messages we receive from television, radio, Internet, newspapers, magazines, books, billboards, video games, music, and all other forms of media.

(Pelletier, Melissa. *The 2016 Primary Election: what is the media telling us?* www.nuskool.com. April 14, 2016.)

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Media Literacy

- Media literacy skills are included in the educational standards of every state—in language arts, social studies, health, science, and other subjects.
- Many educators have discovered that media literacy is an effective and engaging way to apply critical thinking skills to a wide range of issues.

(Pelletier, Melissa. *The 2016 Primary Election: what is the media telling us?* www.nuskool.com. April 14, 2016.)

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Definitions

KEY TERMS TO KEEP IN MIND

NYU | STEINHARDT   **Key Terms**

Critical Consciousness

- The ability to perceive social, political, and economic, oppression and to take action against the oppressive elements of society (Freire, 1968).
- A mindset that prompts the individual:
    - To disrupt existing narratives;
    - To confront the role of race, power, and privilege in society; and
    - Demands you to become an agent for change.

*Critical lens is the perspective critically conscious teachers employ in their everyday work.

NYU | STEINHARDT   **Key Terms**

Culturally Responsive Teaching

- Requires teachers design curriculum and instruction that honors the lived experiences of their students.
- Demands teachers consider to whose culture their curriculum is responding.
- Grounded in *culturally relevant pedagogy* which proposed teachers do these three things: "produce students who can achieve academically, produce students who demonstrate cultural competence, and develop students who can both understand and critique the existing social order."
- Demands teachers know their students well and that they have the skills to transform what they know about the students into appropriate classroom practices.

Ladson- Billings, G. (1995). Toward a theory of culturally relevant pedagogy. *American Educational Research Journal.* 32, 465-491.
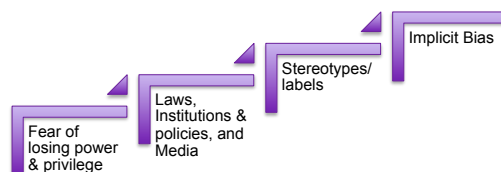Villegas, A. & Lucas, T. (2007). The Culturally Responsive Teacher. *Educational Leadership*. ASCD.

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Implicit Bias

- Stereotyping leads to the development of implicit bias.
- What is implicit bias?
  - "Implicit biases are deep-seated attitudes that operate outside conscious awareness- that may be in direct conflict with a person's stated beliefs and values." (Carter et. al, 2014)
  - Implicit bias is unconscious cognition that influences understanding, actions, and decisions. (Kirwan Institute, 2015)
  - Implicit biases are:
    - Automatically activated;
    - Often unintentional;
    - Particularly insidious because they can occur despite non-prejudiced intentions:
  - Implicit biases also lead people to be unknowingly complicit in perpetuating discrimination. (Devine & Forscher, 2012)

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Implicit Bias

- What factors have played a role in developing the stereotypes that have shaped our biases about different groups of people?
 - Media
  - Laws
  - Institutions & Policies

Implicit Bias

Stereotypes/ labels

Laws, Institutions & policies, and Media

Fear of losing power & privilege

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Laws, Institutions & Policies

"There was no wave of compassion when addicts were hooked on crack"

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Schools have always been *culturally responsive*. The question is to whom have they been most responsive to and, by default, least responsive to?
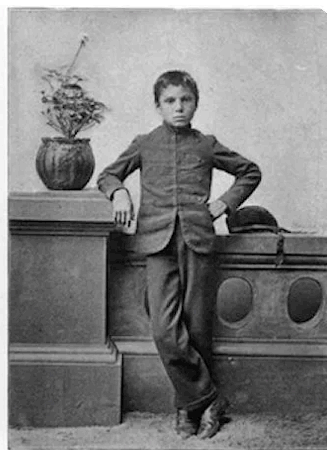
Thomas Moore before and after his entrance into the Regina Indian Residential School in Saskatchewan in 1874.
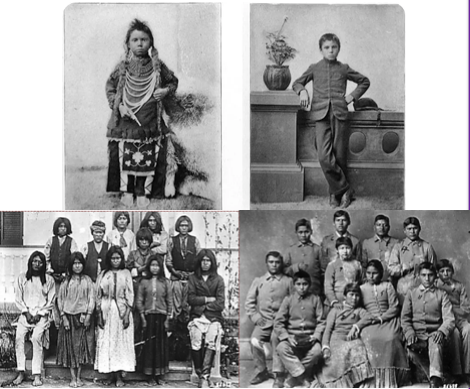Library and Archives Canada / NL-022474
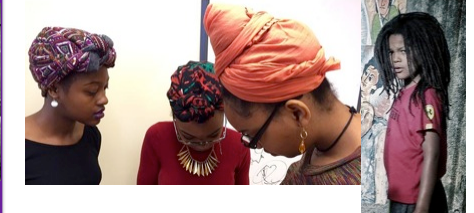
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Whiteness

Middle to upper class White, heteronormative, Judeo-Christian, physically-abled, English-speaking male "American" norm, to which everyone else is "Other-ed."

This standard applies to how we expect colleagues, students, and parents to communicate, behave, and engage with schools.

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When implicit bias and stereotypes center Whiteness as the norm, what impact does this have in schools?

- Policies
- Practices
- Communication/Language

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Policies

1800's

These students were threatened with physical punishment, torture or death for breaking dress code & other "Americanizing" polices.

2000's
All of these students have been suspended for breaking dress code in American schools.

1.
2.
3.
4.

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Policies

Outcomes (1800's)
- Isolation-family life was disrupted
- Loss of cultures and language
- Many Native American children were neither accepted into American society, nor able to comfortably settle into traditional Indian society.

Outcomes (**2000's)**
- **Isolation from peers and sometimes family**
- Loss of home culture and language
- Black and Brown folks are still not fully accepted into American society. When some attempt to "code switch" or fully "assimilate", they often do so at the risk of being ostracized by their community.

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So, how do we teach students to become critical about the messaging behind coded language in society so that they learn how to make informed, conscious decisions in life?

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The 2016 Primary Election: What is the Media Telling Us?

Where are you getting your information?

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Resource Guide

- Guidelines for Selecting Culturally Relevant Materials
- Suggested Reading Materials
- Weblink to access k-12 multicultural books
- Article: *Transforming Teaching and Learning Through Critical Media Literacy Pedagogy*

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Black History

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My Reflection Matters (MRM) serves as a hub for parents/educators in search of products, educational materials, and other resources that not only physically reflect their Black and Brown kids but also mirror and affirm their rich, lived experiences that are often left out or narrowly represented in mainstream curricula and media.

Check out our blog!

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Everydayraceblog.com

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