Developing & Advancing Anti-Racist Scholarly Practice

Amanda L. Sullivan
https://z.umn.edu/alsullivan
@DrSullivanAL

Goal
To provide a frame and related activities to inform or change your scholarship

Agenda
About me
Concepts and context
Shifting perspective
Preparing for behavior change

“I love America more than any other country in the world and, exactly for this reason, I insist on the right to criticize her perpetually.”

—James Baldwin

Notes of a Native Son – Autobiographical Notes (p. 30)
“I think all theories are suspect, that the finest principles may have to be modified, or may even be pulverized by the demands of life, and that one must find, therefore, one’s own moral center and move though the world hoping that this center will guide one aright.”

—James Baldwin

Notes of a Native Son – Autobiographical Notes (p. 30)

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All scholarship is political.

“All scholarship is political.

“Identity as a social scientist is not distinct from identity as a citizen. A citizen’s duty is to respond with all available talents to injustices.”


Interrogate your ‘moral center’—apply it consistently, articulate it precisely.
“...is not merely a political or racialized stance but an epistemological grounding that recognizes that the structures, systems and processes of society at every level are established on a belief that non-whites are inferior. Anti-racism work battles the 500-year appropriation of every intellectual strategy, political ideology, artistic expression, spiritual tenet, and philosophical treatise molded to form a reality that often goes unquestioned and violently punishes those that do question it...Anti-racist [scholarship] questions the very fabric of knowledge and knowledge production and challenges the very givens of the known world.” (Yearwood, 2021)

Citing a few scholars from racially minoritized backgrounds

Recruiting from research participants or students minoritized groups or communities

Reporting group differences or adding race as a covariate

Adding a minoritized scholar to your research team

Applying qualitative or mixed methods to existing work.

Splicing study with racially diverse sample into separate group specific reports
“theories of decolonization bring together critiques of settler colonialism, borders, and conceptualizations of antiblackness. [...] decolonization from settler colonialism in the US will require a repatriation of Indigenous land and abolition of slavery in all its forms” (p. xii)

Smith et al. (2018, p. 1): There is no decolonization without Indigenous presence on Indigenous land and waters

Tuck & Yang (2012, p. 1): Decolonization brings about the repatriation of Indigenous land and life; it is not a metaphor for other things we want to do to improve our societies and schools.

"When metaphor invades decolonization, it kills the very possibility of decolonization; it recenters whiteness, it resettles theory, it extends innocence to the settler, it entertains a settler future. Decolonize (a verb) and decolonization (a noun) cannot easily be grafted onto pre-existing discourses/frameworks, even if they are critical, even if they are anti-racist, even if they are justice frameworks. The easy absorption, adoption, and transposing of decolonization is yet another form of settler appropriation." (Tuck & Yang, 2012, p. 3)
Precision of meaning and language are critical when we speak of these efforts.

Thus, I will be primarily speaking about antiracist scholarship, not decolonizing scholarship.

* = currently

- All research = scholarship
- But, all scholarship ≠ research

**Scholarship** includes:
- discovery/generation
- theorization
- integration
- synthesis
- translation
- application
- engagement…
Anti-racism (or decolonization) cannot be additive or adjunctive to our current work. They must be foundational, if not transformational.

“Racism is so universal in this country, so widespread, and deep-seated, that it is invisible because it is so normal.”
—Shirley Chisholm (1970) Unbought and Unbossed (p. 133)
In what **visible** and **invisible** ways are white supremacy/systemic racism present in psychology research?

*Comment in the chat.*
Sample Reflection Questions

- How has/is (American) psychology been shaped by racism and colonialism?
- How does (American) psychology reproduce, support, and advance racism and colonialism?
- How did the racist and colonial beliefs, values, and goals of early scholars shape their contributions and the continued effects in how we conceptualize various dimensions of psychology and research?
- How does psychology scholarship un/intentionally impede justice?
- How is race implicitly and explicitly treated within my scholarship?
- How does my scholarly practice impede or support justice?

“...Ours is a society where white culture is normalized and universalized, while cultures of color are demonized, exotified, or erased.” (p. 12)
In this pejorative:

- Whiteness = Objectivity
- Minoritized = Subjective
  - Subtext: can’t/won’t study it as a cishet white man would

The effects: marginalization of knowledge and methods
- and denial of admission, advancement, publication, hiring, promotion, tenure, funding, awards...

Case in point: “Me-search”

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All scholarship is subjective.

- Certain scholarship is positioned as objective because it centers certain—white—perspectives so completely as to assume they represent truth and objectivity
• Reflexivity generally refers to the examination of one’s own beliefs, judgments and practices during the research process and how these may have influenced the research.

• “means turning of the researcher lens back onto oneself to recognize and take responsibility for one’s own situatedness within the research and the effect that it may have on the setting and people being studied, questions being asked, data being collected and its interpretation” (Berger, 2015, p. 220). 

Reflexivity Matters
*Regardless of Methodology*

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Reflexivity isn’t just for qualitative scholars.

Numbers / Data Don’t Lie?

QuantCrit: education, policy, ‘Big Data’ and principles for a critical race theory of statistics

David Gilborn*, Paul Warington* and Sean Demack*

*Centre for Research in Race and Education (CRR), University of Birmingham, Birmingham, UK; Centre for Education Studies, University of Warwick, Coventry, UK; Centre for Educational Inclusion Research, Sheffield Hallam University, Sheffield, UK.

ABSTRACT
Quantitative research enjoys heightened esteem among policy-makers, media, and the general public. Whereas qualitative research is frequently dismissed as qualitative and unscientific, statistics are often assumed to be objective and factual. We argue that those distinctions are wholly false; quantitative data is no less socially constructed than any other form of research material. The first isn’t.

Given that scholarship is political and subjective:
Your scholarship is indivisible from your positionality.

How has (your) scholarship centered whiteness as the standard for wellness? Development? Health? Education?

How does (your) scholarship treat whiteness as race neutral? As normative?
• Psychology has been slower to take up intersectionality than other fields and has tended to flatten it to personal identity.
• Yet, intersectionality is multidimensional and structural.
• See *Journal of Social Issues* (2020), Issue 76

"The experience of oppressed people is that the living of one's life is confined and shaped by forces and barriers which are not accidental or occasional and hence avoidable, but are systematically related to each other in such a way as to catch one between and among them and restrict or penalize motion in any direction."

Marilyn Frye (1983, p. 4)
"It is the experience of being caged... If your conception of what is before you is determined by this myopic focus, you could look at that one wire, up and down the length of it, and be unable to see why a bird would not just fly around the wire any time it wanted to go somewhere."

It is only when you step back, stop looking at the wires one by one, microscopically, and take a macroscopic view of the whole cage, that you can see why the bird does not go anywhere.
"I believe that to dismantle oppression we need to first intimately know how it is assembled. One link in this chain is language."

Use System Centered Language

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Unpack (and Change) How We Use Language and Frame Problems

- How are problems understood?
- Whose voices have been privileged?
  - What worldviews, values, and aims informed their work?
  - How has this continued to shape ours?
- What knowledge is considered meaningful?
- What methods are considered valuable?
- What findings matter?

WHY?

Be undisciplined.
“For we have, built into all of us, old blueprints of expectation and response, old structures of oppression, and these must be altered at the same time as we alter the living conditions which are a result of those structures.

—Audre Lorde
Sister Outsider - Age, Race, Class, Gender: Women Redefining Difference

“The true focus of revolutionary change is never merely the oppressive situations that we seek to escape, but that piece of the oppressor which is planted deep within each of us. … Change means growth, and growth can be painful. But we sharpen self-definition by exposing the self in work and struggle with those whom we define as different from ourselves, sharing the same goals.”

—Audre Lorde
Sister Outsider - Age, Race, Class, Gender: Women Redefining Difference
Anti-racism and decolonization require un/learning.

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Ten Simple Rules for Building an Anti-Racist Lab

Rule 1: Lead informed discussions about anti-racism in your lab regularly
Rule 2: Address racism in your lab and field safety guidelines
Rule 3: Publish papers and write grants with BIPOC colleagues
Rule 4: Evaluate your lab’s mentoring practices
Rule 5: Amplify voices of BIPOC scientists in your field
Rule 6: Support POC in their efforts to organize
Rule 7: Intentionally recruit BIPOC students and staff
Rule 8: Adopt a dynamic research agenda
Rule 9: Advocate for racially diverse leadership in science
Rule 10: Hold the powerful accountable and don’t expect gratitude


White Supremacist Culture | Toward Anti-racism
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**Urgency** – rushed decision making, focus on deadlines or completion not process/quality, always ‘on’ | Realistic and inclusive planning, rest, boundaries Emphasizing engagement and participation

**Quantity over Quality** – ‘productivity’ valued more than process, quality, or depth | Centering values, attending/measuring process, encouraging depth and substance

**Perfectionism** – focus on errors, inadequacies, one right answer/way; internalizing as own worst critic | Continuous improvement and appreciation for growth, reflection; many good ways; mistakes as learning opportunity

https://www.showingupforracialjustice.org/white-supremacy-culture-characteristics.html
### Characteristics of White Supremacist Culture at Work

#### White Supremacist Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Toward Anti-racism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Paternalism</strong> – hierarchies and inscrutable/ noncommunicative decision making</td>
<td>Shared decision making</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Power Hoarding</strong> – little value for shared power; threatened by change</td>
<td>Shared power; mission focused; servant or transformational leadership</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Binary Thinking</strong> – only one right way, value/belief system; us/them thinking; oversimplification</td>
<td>Appreciate multiple pathways to goal; seek to learn from/about others; never assume own way is best; allowing for both/and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Worship of the Written Word</strong> – value emails over interaction, writing skills, academic language, articles*</td>
<td>Multiple means of documentation, clarity and accessibility of language, value for relational skills and others</td>
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<td><strong>Individualism</strong> – focus on recognition and competitiveness, top-down (if any) accountability, isolation</td>
<td>Team work as essential; shared goals; credit based on contribution; accountability and problem-solving</td>
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<td><strong>Progress is Bigger/More</strong> – expansion as goal, not quality or contribution</td>
<td>7th generation thinking, cost-benefit analysis of non-$; process goals</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Objectivity</strong> – emotions as bad; linear thinking, impatience; focus on logic and ‘neutrality’</td>
<td>Multiple paradigms, subjectivity; engage discomfort</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Defensiveness</strong> – criticism as threatening, rude, or inappropriate; resistance to new ideas; comfort prioritized over justice</td>
<td>Confronting fear; naming defensiveness; engaging directly with resistance</td>
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Tanya Golesh-Boza @tanyaboza - 23h
Three of the reasons I have published 75 books, journal articles, and book chapters since 2005:

1) I sleep 8 hours a night.
2) I write for 1-2 hours every weekday.
3) I don’t get in my own way.

Which of these 3 strategies is the hardest for you? 225 462 1.0K

Dr. Susana L. Gallardo @SusanaGallardo - 16h
I love your work, Tanya. But... bite me.

Beck @fictionalbook
Replying to @tanyaboza

the hardest for me is probably living in an ableist productivity death cult
8:00 AM - Apr 12, 2021 - Twitter for iPhone

42 Retweets 5 Quote Tweets 975 Likes

Dr. Kate J Strom @katajstrom
Replying to @StevenSurrey and @tanyaboza

That’s sweet of you but there are thousands of academics who have these qualities and are constrained by institutional and societal barriers, have more life commitments, and/or are healthier and so wouldn’t be considered as ‘productive’. That’s my point.

11:17 AM - Apr 12, 2021 - Twitter for iPhone

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White Supremacy Culture Takes No Days Off
from Joanna Gattuso @joeybird
www.joannagattuso.com/wsc

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White Supremacy Culture, but make it rational.

Perfectionism: Expecting people to be ok right now. Expecting people to maintain a high quality of work in the midst of rampant, brain-melting anxiety.

Sense of urgency: expecting quicker, immediate response just because everyone is home. As if work is their #1 priority during a social and economic emergency.

Quantity over quality: pushing existing metrics/goals. Centering productivity, powering thru an agenda. Without care for what emerging needs/priorities exist for clients, community, employees.

Power hoarding: resistance to leadership of those closest to the pain: queer/trans folks, indigenous folks, chronically ill folks, working class folks, etc.

Individualism: social isolation, lack of meaningful connection, looking out for ourselves. Remote work means working alone.
“Caring for myself is not self-indulgence; it is self-preservation and that is an act of political warfare.”
—Audre Lorde

A Burst of Light [1988, p. 131]

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### Summary Recommendations

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<tr>
<th>Scholars</th>
<th>Consumers</th>
<th>Gatekeepers</th>
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<tr>
<td>Be guided by your moral center.</td>
<td>Expect more – transparency, integration,</td>
<td>Get out of the way.</td>
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<td>Be consistent and precise.</td>
<td>precision, reflexivity, and contextualization</td>
<td>Elevate others.</td>
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<td>Treat antiracism/decolonization as foundational.</td>
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<td>Listen and learn.</td>
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<td>Reflexivity.</td>
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<td>Apply reflexivity to your role as an advisor,</td>
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<td>Name and decenter whiteness.</td>
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<td>reviewer, editor, instructor, etc.</td>
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<td>Take an intersectional, macroscopic view.</td>
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<td>Be undisciplined.</td>
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<td>Prepare for unlearning and new learning.</td>
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<td>Reject white supremacy culture at work.</td>
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• What are you prepared to change? To give up? To give away?

• What will you modify, pulverize, and replace in psychology?

Expect Discomfort

White folk, may you not stay in shock, guilt, or performative activism. May you make right what your ancestors started by doing the work to unlearn, dismantle & divest from the colonial capitalist patriarchy.

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Homework – To Watch

4/10/21 SNL Opening Skit – https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5H_ZdnvMjnE

James Baldwin on policing - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WwwOi17WHpE

James Baldwin on progress - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OCUIE5IdPvM

Maya Angelou Iconoclast ~20:00 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=okc6COsgzoE

Thank you! Questions?

Contact:

Amanda L. Sullivan
University of Minnesota
asulliva@umn.edu

HOW TO HELP:

Minnesota Specific Organizations to Support:
- mb裴鸣翻正新春.JPG
- mb裴鸣翻正新春.JPG
- "mb裴鸣翻正新春.JPG"
- "mb裴鸣翻正新春.JPG"
- "mb裴鸣翻正新春.JPG"
- "mb裴鸣翻正新春.JPG"

To Support Black:
- Minnesota Freedom Fund
- "mb裴鸣翻正新春.JPG"
- "mb裴鸣翻正新春.JPG"
- "mb裴鸣翻正新春.JPG"

Legal Help:
- Legal Rights Center: 612-346-6000
- Lawyers Guild: 612-444-2064

If you are protesting:

PROTESTING SAFELY

JusticeForDaunteBright
BLACK LIVES MATTER.