



Decolonise the Curriculum – Through the Kaleidoscope- How to Be a Good Ally

Key Terms

Ally: Someone who makes the commitment and effort to recognize their privilege (based on gender, class, race, sexual identity, etc.) and work in solidarity with oppressed groups in the struggle for justice. Allies understand that it is in their own interest to end all forms of oppression, even those from which they may benefit in concrete ways.

Ally Cookies: Praise or other rewards for not being racist. Usually sought out by white privileged people who are more concerned with personal gain than justice.

Optical (Illusion) Allyship: The visual illusion of allyship without the actual work of allyship. Also known as performative allyship. E.g. Reposting anti-racism posts and virtue signalling so that everyone knows you're an ally, but not doing much more work beyond that; positioning yourself as an ally or activist leader, while continue to step over, talk over, speak for and take over the spaces of BIPOC.

BAME: Black, Asian and minority ethnic

Bigotry: Intolerant prejudice which glorifies one's own group and denigrates members of other groups¹

BIPOC: Black, Indigenous, People of Colour.

BIWOC: Black, Indigenous, Women of Colour.

Cultural Appropriation: A modern type of colonisation that involves the stealing, appropriation and sometimes commercialisation of cultural practices, spiritual traditions, hair and dress fashion styles, speaking styles and in the Internet age, forms of "digital blackface". Cultural appropriation happens when there is an imbalance of power and privilege - a dominant culture appropriates from a marginalised culture. Cultural appropriation does not work the other way around it is different from anti-white racism. BIPOC cannot appropriate from white people because BIPOC do not hold collective power and privilege over white people. E.g. Blackfishing²

Cultural Racism: Those aspects of society that overtly and covertly attribute value and normality to white people and whiteness, and devalue, stereotype and label People of Colour as "other", different, less than or render them invisible. *Examples* of these norms include defining white skin tones as nude or flesh coloured, having future time orientation, emphasising individualism as

¹ Source: National Conference for Community and Justice St. Louis Region — unpublished handout used in the Dismantling Racism Institute program.

² See Article: <https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/women/blackfishing-what-is-it-influencers-instagram-makeup-racism-black-white-social-media-a8667961.html>

opposed to a more collective ideology, defining one form of English as standard and identifying only whites as the great writers or composers³

Ethnic minority group: Usually, but not always, this phrase is used to refer to a non-white population. Alternatively, it may be used to describe a specific identifiable group, for example, gypsy travellers, and less commonly, Irish in the UK. Some people consider the phrase inaccurate and prefer minority ethnic group, but the two phrases are used synonymously.

Ethnocentrism: The tendency to perceive and interpret from the standpoint of one's own culture. In epidemiology the tendency is reflected in the practice of using the White population as the norm or standard

ISMS: A way of describing any attitude, action or institutional structure that subordinates (oppresses) a person or group because of their target group, color (racism), gender (sexism), economic status (classism), older age (ageism), religion (e.g., anti-Semitism), sexual orientation (heterosexism), language/immigrant status (xenophobia), etc.⁴

Microaggression: These are small common occurrences that demonstrate bias towards a certain group. They are insults, assaults or invalidations that presume one group is superior to another. While they seem small in isolation, overtime, microaggressions impact an individual's mental health and emotions. Examples: Asking someone from Asian decent where they are really from (implying they cannot actually be from the England). Stating that everyone can succeed if they try hard enough (this both implies that people of colour don't work as hard and invalidates the abundance of institution racism in our society).

POC: People of Colour

Racial Equity: Racial equity is the condition that would be achieved if one's racial identity no longer predicted, in a statistical sense, how one fares. When we use the term, we are thinking about racial equity as one part of racial justice, and thus we also include work to address root causes of inequities, not just their manifestation. This includes elimination of policies, practices, attitudes and cultural messages that reinforce differential outcomes by race or fail to eliminate them.

Spiritual Bypassing: A term introduced in the early 1980s by John Welwood, a Buddhist teacher and psychotherapist. Described as a "tendency to use spiritual ideas and practices to sidestep or avoid facing unresolved emotional issues, psychological wounds, and unfinished developmental tasks"⁵

The White Gaze: The white supremacist lens through which white privileged people see BIPOC. The white gaze also describes how BIPOC are defined, limited, stereotyped and judged in the white imagination - usually to the detriment of BIPOC.

Tokenism: When BIPOC are used as props to serve whiteness and white supremacy.

Tone Policing: A tactic used by those who have privilege to silence those who don't by focusing on the tone of what is being said, rather than the actual content. Tone policing doesn't only have to be

³ Source: Maurianne Adams, Lee Anne Bell and Pat Griffin, editors. Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice: A Sourcebook. New York: Routledge.

⁴ Source: Institute for Democratic Renewal and Project Change Anti-Racism Initiative. A Community Builder's Tool Kit. Claremont, Calif.: Claremont Graduate University.

⁵ Fossella, Tina; Welwood, John (Spring 2011). "Human nature, buddha nature: an interview with John Welwood"

spoken out loud publicly. People of white privilege often tone police BIPOC in their thoughts or behind closed doors.

White Apathy: A feeling of apathy, indifference, unconcern, detachment, dispassion and disregard about racism by white privileged people.⁶

White Centering: The centering of white people, white values, white norms and white feelings over everything and everyone else. The belief, whether conscious or not, that whiteness is “normal” and BIPOC are “other”. **White Exceptionalism** The belief that you as a white person are exempt from white supremacy. That you are “one of the good ones”. That this work doesn’t apply to you.

White Feminism: A feminism that focuses on the struggle of white women. It is feminism that is only concerned with disparities and oppression of gender (usually cis-gender), but does not take into account disparities and oppression of other intersections which are just as important including race, class, age, ability, sexual orientation, gender identity, etc.

White Fragility: White Fragility A phrase coined by author Dr. Robin DiAngelo, and is defined as “a state in which even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable, triggering a range of defensive moves.”⁷

White Privilege: A phrase coined by Peggy McIntosh her 1988 paper called White Privilege and Male Privilege: A Personal Account of Coming to See Correspondences Through Work in Women's Studies as follows: “I have come to see white privilege as an invisible package of unearned assets that I can count on cashing in each day, but about which I was "meant" to remain oblivious. White privilege is like an invisible weightless knapsack of special provisions, assurances, tools, maps, guides, codebooks, passports, visas, clothes, compass, emergency gear, and blank checks.”⁸

- **Check your Privilege:** Since we know that we all have privilege in different ways, being told to check your privilege is a way of saying take a step back and look at the privileges you have and how they impact your perspective. Reflect on how your social identities may have given you advantages and given others a disadvantage.

White Saviorism: A colonialist idea that assumes that BIPOC need white people to save them. That without white intervention, instruction and guidance, BIPOC will be left helpless. That without whiteness, BIPOC, who are seen as below and less than white in the white imagination, will not survive.

Whitesplaining: When a white person explains why something is offensive to a person of colour. It is interpreted as giving people of colour permission for how they feel when something offensive happens and is condescending to people of colour who do not need to be told about their own experience. White people cannot decide what is and what is not racism and do not know what it is like to be a person of colour. The same concept can apply for mansplaining when a man speaks on behalf of a woman’s experience. We can empathize without speaking for others.

⁶ See Article: <https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/martin-luther-king-colleges-racism-america-4-april-a8285986.html>

⁷ Source: Robin DiAngelo is the author of the book *White Fragility: Why It’s So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism*, Beacon Press [2018]

⁸ Source: 1988 Peggy McIntosh, Working Paper 189, Wellesley Centers for Women, Wellesley, MA

White Silence: Occurs when people with white privilege stay complicity silent when it comes to issues of race.

White Superiority: The erroneous, violent and racist idea that people with white/white-passing skin are more superior to, and therefore deserve to dominate, people with brown or black skin.

*Many of the key terms were adopted from the *“Me and White Supremacy Workbook: A 28-Day Challenge to Combat Racism, Change the World, and Become a Good Ancestor”* by Layla F. Saad (2018)