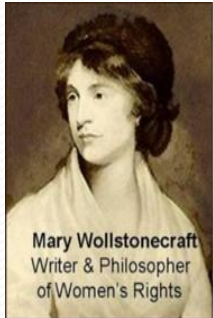


Creating an Anti-Racist Organization

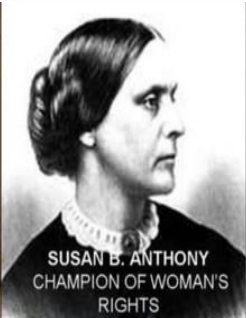
Portland Women's Crisis Line
Rebecca Nickels
PWCL.org



We are and have always been a Feminist Organization



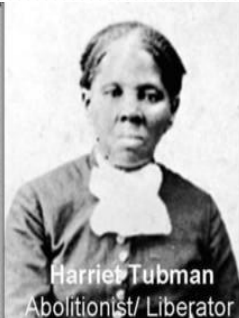
Mary Wollstonecraft
Writer & Philosopher
of Women's Rights



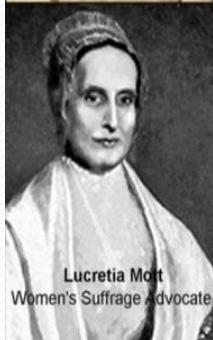
SUSAN B. ANTHONY
CHAMPION OF WOMAN'S
RIGHTS



Sojourner Truth
Abolitionist/Suffragist



Harriet Tubman
Abolitionist/ Liberator



Lucretia Mott
Women's Suffrage Advocate



Antoinette Brown Blackwell
First Organized Woman
Minister in America



Lucy Stone
Women's Rights Advocate



Elizabeth Cady Stanton
Women's Rights/Suffrage Leader



Workshop Objectives

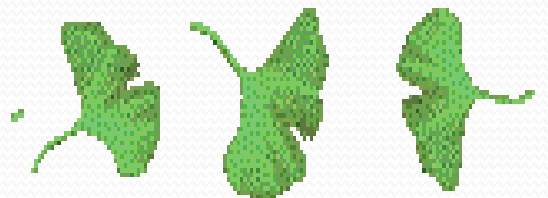


- To share PWCL's reasons and process for going past an anti-oppression framework towards an anti-racist framework;
- To give a starting place for why anti-racist work is crucial to ending sexual violence;
- To openly discuss the barriers, roadblocks and mistakes that come up for white allies who strive to be anti-racist;
- To suggest ways that an anti-racist framework can inform service delivery to survivors of sexual violence.
- To provide suggestions for those without decision-making power in their organizations on how they can prioritize anti-racist values into service delivery

Who are you?



- In the comments, tell me where you're located geographically
- In the comments, tell me are you an advocate, supervisor, a volunteer, etc...



Who am I?



Who does PWCL think it is?

Workshop Guidelines



- Understand the difference between intentions and impact
- Share from your own experience
- Use accepting and nonjudgmental language
- Listen to understand, not to respond
- Question your assumptions
- Acknowledge when you're feeling defensive
- Try not to assume other peoples personal identities

PWCL:

Providing Equitable Services

- Equity & Inclusion Committee
- Staff survey about the purpose and their concerns
- Organizational retreat with staff, board, volunteers
- Interview other organizations with a dedication to racial justice and/or goals around equity
- Survivor Led Evaluation Framework
- Community Partner Survey & Public Forum
- Build new relationships that are mutually beneficial
- Find another organization who will mentor us

Overview of the movement to end sexual violence and racial equity work

- Second wave feminism had the initial goal of overcoming difference by integration, based on idealism and universalism
- Activists of Color rejected the movement for ignoring, rather than acknowledging, differences



Antiracist Feminist Movement

- During the 1970s, social feminists divided themselves into racial, ethnic, and sexual categories the better to deal with difference
- By the end of the decade, they came together not in simple sisterhood but in interactions that acknowledged their differences.
- Recognition that it is extremely difficult for a social movement to overcome centuries of slavery, racism, and sexism



“...(Second wave feminists) learned that capitalism, racism and sexism were much more powerful than they were...They came face to face with enormous forces that were not only ‘out there’ but were, despite their best intentions, inside of them.”

The Trouble Between us; An Uneasy History of White and Black Women in the Feminist Movement, Winifred Breines, Oxford Press 2006

Third wave Feminists

- Define themselves less rigidly
- Have contact with those of other races and ethnicities
- Black and white are no longer the primary colors
- Popular culture is filled with images of youth of various races playing together
- Embrace and understand the fluidity of gender, race, class, and sexual preference are deeply interrelated
- Intersectionality exists



“This Bridge Called my Back” (1981) by Gloria Anzaldua

The original book presented the backs of feminists of color as bridges that others walk over, as unwilling links between white women and women of color. Women of color were tired of their bodies being used over and over again, “sick of being the damn bridge for everybody.”

Commonality within difference

“Twenty-one years ago we struggled with the recognition of difference within the context of commonality. Today we grapple with the recognition of commonality within the context of difference.”

This Bridge We Call Home (2002) Gloria Anzaldua



Racism is reflected in the structures and cultures of every institution and organization in the U.S.

- Social change groups are not exempt
- Groups reproduce the white privilege and racial oppression of the wider society.
- Their social change mission, is bound to fall short as long as racism continues to flourish and maintain the status quo.
- Fundamental evolution needed to become actively antiracist is a long, slow, deep process.
- Organizations, like individuals, can evolve to become anti-racist

Purpose of Organization: To Help Others

Organization:

Deny, ignore, blame, retaliate
Responsibility is put back onto
women of color to fix the
problem

People of color are pitted
against each other
Women of color are
targeted

Internal Practices:

White leadership
Tokenized hiring
Repetitive injury

Denial of racism
Criticism from communities of
color

Woman of Color
Enters
Organization

“Honeymoon”
Happy to be here
Welcomed
Needed

“Reality of
Racism”
Woman of color
points out
problems
Tries to work
within
Pushes for
accountability
here
Pushes against
system

Woman of Color
Exits
Organization

Role & Reality for Culturally Specific Organizations

- Smaller, less funded
- Expected to take on advocacy for mainstream organizations because of culture, language
- Often part of larger organizations that may not be focused on racial justice

Predominantly white organizations

- May think it's not their issue until more people of color join
- May think that the extent of their work is to get more people of color to join
- Can and should become anti-racist, even if their racial composition does not change

Common mistakes white folks make as allies

- Making it about us
- Waiting to be educated by People of Color
- Accountability
- Focusing on our intentions, ignoring the impact
- Not being willing to give up leadership roles
- Colorblindness

How Racism Affects Service Delivery in Organizations

- ❑ Support is given to policies and practices without analysis of the racial effect.
- ❑ Leadership positions are occupied predominantly by white people, even in institutions that serve predominantly populations of color.

Quick Poll:

How common do you think racism is experienced by survivors of color within our organizations and/or intervention systems?

1. Incredibly common
2. Somewhat common
3. Neither common or uncommon
4. Slightly common
5. Not at all common

How Racism Affects Service Delivery in Organizations

- ❑ Organizations that are led by people of color are marginalized, under resourced, expected to respond whenever asked
- ❑ Investment in the development of knowledge about people and communities of color is limited.

How Racism Affects Service Delivery in Organizations

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

How Racism Affects Service Delivery in Organizations

- ❑ Service providers of color experience micro-inequities from their white colleagues.
- ❑ Employment criteria often create barriers for employment of people of color and often don't acknowledge the strengths and skills of folks from within various communities.

Action Plan

- Conduct an organizational assessment to develop an understanding of how racism operates within your organization, as well as what's working well.
- Create a commitment and concrete plans for dismantling racism within the organization and in the larger society.
- Partner with communities of color and strive to be helpful allies.
- Plan and set a timeline for internal change.

Organizational Assessment

- Who makes decisions in your organization?
- Who has control and influence over financial resources?
- What kind of education about racism and oppression is provided through the organization?
- What is the culture of your organization?
- How does your organization work in alliance with people of color organizations?

Lessons Learned in Developing and Implementing Equity & Inclusion Plans

1. Acknowledge and build upon organization's history with racial justice
 - *Learn from past mistakes*
 - *Build on the work that has been done*
2. Balance work of team with the need to engage everyone
 - *Maintain transparency and momentum*
 - *Create multiple levels of engagement*
 - *Include immediate activities and successes*
 - *Strong staff communication*

Lessons Learned in Developing and Implementing Equity & Inclusion Plans

3. Acknowledge that individuals have different reactions to the process
 - *Understand different perspectives*
 - *Find common ground for moving ahead*

4. Don't let resisters set the pace for the process
 - *Hear resisters and address their concerns*
 - *Continue to move forward without expecting full agreement*
 - *Assume interest will grow as changes occur*

Lessons Learned in Developing and Implementing Equity & Inclusion Plans

5. Courageous conversations offer opportunities for learning and growth
 - *Proactively address issues*
 - *Enrich working relationships*
 - *Enhance effectiveness*
 - *Learn to see commonality in experiences*
 - *Reflect on how communication styles are different and can be perceived*



Please comment:

What do you already do to focus on racial justice as an individual advocate?

What do you do if you can't make decisions for your organization?

- As individuals, we can do a lot about racial equity
- You can do your own self assessment:
 - I educate myself about the culture and experience of other social identity groups by actively attending classes, workshops, cultural events, reading or talking to people.
 - I spend time reflecting on my life to analyze where and how I received racist messages.
 - I look at my own attitudes and behaviors to determine how I collude with racism.

What do you do if you can't make decisions for your organization?

- You can do your own self assessment:
 - I evaluate my own use of language to see if I am using terms or phrases that are subtly racist or reinforce unequal status.
 - I avoid stereotyping and generalizing about people based on their race.
 - I value cultural differences and avoid statements such as “I never think of you as black,” which discredits human differences and cultural heritage.
 - I am aware of and can explore and discuss with comfort diversity issues, including racism.
 - I am open to having others point out ways in which my behavior may be racist or colludes with racism.

What do you do if you can't make decisions for your organization?

- Find ways to incorporate anti-racist values into your own service delivery
- Speak up for survivors and advocates of color whenever possible, especially if you're white
- Find allies within your organization who you can mutually support and encourage; find out if those allies are within different levels of the organization
- Model being a good partner and collaborator with organizations that serve communities of color

Advocates hold the key for change



COURTESY TERESA ZABALA/NEW YORK TIMES