
**PSP LEADERSHIP WORKSHOP ON THE “HOLMES COMMISSION REPORT
ON RACIAL EQUALITY IN AMERICAN PSYCHOANALYSIS”**

AUGUST 11, 2023

AGENDA

Wally Fletcher, Facilitating

“Understanding how racism, on an individual and structural basis, impacts us developmentally is crucial to deconstructing the insidious way that racism remains embedded in our thinking on an individual level and in the collective cultural unconscious in the societal level. How we think and talk about race and racism is influenced by early, often traumatic, developmental experiences affected by parental attitudes, cultural socialization, and transgenerationally transmitted attitudes and trauma. Attention to racial identity and trauma is important in development, but it is only through a secure base of having our own solid sense of identity and self, facilitated by internalizing positive role models and critical thinking about structural racism, that we can approach those who are different from us with less conflict and with openness and flexibility. That the resistance to thinking critically about racism is culturally syntonetic and culturally sanctioned significantly influences how white subjectivity evolves. This stands in stark contrast to the dominating influence that racism and racialized social realities have on the construction of Black subjectivity. Attention to how this plays out in the therapeutic encounter is crucial. Mental health clinicians can play a critical role in making racialized attitudes and racism a subject of psychotherapeutic inquiry, educational discourse, and active intervention in our work, our professional organizations, our communities, and our world. --- Beverly J. Stoute, M.D. 2023

“It is not possible, of course, to become reflective about things that one does not see. Race in America may be usefully understood as an “adaptive challenge.” Adaptive challenges, according to leadership scholar Ronald Heifetz (1998), exist whenever there is a meaningful gap between bold aspirations and the challenging realities of everyday practice. These gaps appear because such aspirations (e.g., freedom, justice, or in our local psychoanalytic milieu, effective clinical practice) can look different to the different stakeholders who are party to them. Framing race as an adaptive challenge means acknowledging that racial conundrums—and thus, the solutions to them—look different to different people. Making progress on adaptive challenges, therefore, requires stakeholders to change their priorities, beliefs, habits, and loyalties.

This is one reason why race remains an enduringly difficult topic to discuss. America’s problems with race centers on disenfranchisement, and equal opportunity. Justice or economic empowerment often means vastly different things to different stakeholders. Catalyzing change on adaptive challenges means, according to Heifetz, that leaders who aim to be effective must also figure out “how to disappoint followers at a rate they can stand,” as all parties will be obliged to refashion their loyalties. - -Kimberlyn Leary, PhD. 2012

PART ONE 10am-11am

Creating the right 'holding environment' by sharing hopes and fears related to our task.

- What are the most important conditions for psychological safety needed for every person to participate fully in these challenging conversations on race, diversity, equity, and inclusion?

What psychological safety *is* and *is not*.

Paying attention to the difference between “*vulnerability*” and “*fragility*”.

- What are your hopes and fears upon entering this conversation [please come prepared to share]?

Why does this matter?

Discussion and key 'take-aways' re:

“The Holmes Commission’s Journey toward Racial Equity in American Psychoanalysis: Reflection and Hope.”

Takeaways:

PART TWO 11:00-11:50

Discussion and 'takeaways' from our collective reading and reflection of pages 1-50 of the attached Final Report--includes “Executive Summary” plus Chapters 1-2

Key definitions:

- “We considered “**race**” as a **social construct** invented and perpetuated to support systemic racism.

- “We recognized “**racialism**” as the exposure of all members of a society to ideas and narratives that influence individual thoughts and perceptions about members of racialized groups.

- “We defined **“racist acts” as behaviors** performed by individuals or small groups that reflect prejudice, discrimination, stereotyping, or antagonism directed against a person or people on the basis of their membership in a particular racial or ethnic group, particularly a minoritized or otherwise marginalized group.
- “We acknowledged **“racial enactments”** as how ideas around race and racism **unconsciously play out** in group processes and interpersonal processes.
- **““Systemic racism” was the main interest of the study, which we understood to be a system that produces advantages for some people in a dominant racial group through the oppression of people in a non-dominant racial group.** These structural elements of racism are embedded in individual psyches and institutional practices and can be ubiquitous, operating outside the conscious awareness of the individual or institution carrying or practicing systemic racism.
- **BIPOC** as acronym for “a minoritized people or Black, Indigenous, and People of Color” in relation to whom “racism is revealed, often within an enactment. [10 & 44]

Defining “adaptive leadership” and considering key adaptive leadership role assignments for moving forward focusing on ‘The Five Key Themes’ in Chapter 2

“At CCL, we define leadership in terms of outcomes — what leadership brings about. As a collective human process, leadership can best be described as what is done to set direction, achieve alignment and get commitment.” --The Center for Creative Leadership

“Drawing on our experience with managers from around the world, we offer six principles for leading adaptive work: “getting on the balcony,” identifying the adaptive challenge, regulating distress, maintaining disciplined attention, giving the work back to people, and protecting voices of leadership from below.

*“Adaptive work is required when our deeply held beliefs are challenged, when the values that made us successful become less relevant, and when legitimate yet competing perspectives emerge. Getting people to do adaptive work is the mark of leadership...”
Ronald Heifetz et.al*

**OVER VIEW OF COMMISSION STUDY RESULTS AND THEMES---"EXECUTIVE SUMMARY"
& CHAPTER 1 pp 1-43]**

1. Understanding and Addressing Racism---p. 12 & Chapter 3

Takeaways:

2. Recruitment through Mentoring in Psychoanalytic Training p. 13 & Chapter 4

Takeaways:

**3. Curriculum, Racism as an Analytic Lens, and Supervision in Psychoanalytic
Education—p. 14 & Chapter 5**

Takeaways:

4. The Experience of Race on the Couch p.16 & ---Chapter 6

Takeaways:

5. Enactments and Responses--- p. 15 & Chapter 7

Takeaways:

FIVE OVERARCHING THEMES: CHAPTER 2 & pp.44-50

1. Ubiquity of Systemic and Structural Racism

Takeaways:

2. Education

Takeaways:

3. Candidate and Faculty Experiences

Takeaways:

4. Enactments

Takeaways:

5. The Personal/Training Analyst

Takeaways:

BREAK 11:50 AM-Noon

PART THREE: Noon-1pm

Key Recommendations and Next Steps: pages 17-20 & Chapters 8-9

“In general, American psychoanalysis lacks local or national leaders who acknowledge the presence and deleterious effects of systemic racism in psychoanalytic institutions or who allay the massive resistance to grasping and resolving systemic racism within psychoanalysis. To address these lacks, American psychoanalysis needs:

- “Local and national leaders who strongly support meaningful initiatives to address and remediate systemic racism in psychoanalytic institutions.

- “Leaders who develop meaningful and comprehensive strategies to combat systemic racism at multiple administrative levels including mission statements, value statements, and policies and procedures, with means for regular monitoring and remediation of expressions of systemic racism at all levels of institutional life. Monitoring should include but not be limited to classes, supervision, curriculum, committees and boards, educational programming, publications, and the consultation room.
- “Local and national leaders who will obtain regular consultation from experts in racial equity and other aspects of intersectionality to increase the likelihood of their success in their efforts to enhance racial and other equities and promote inclusion.
- “Leaders who will form and join collective frameworks for support and to solidify their resolve to stay the long course required to achieve racial and other equities.

Next Steps:

- **Chapters 3-7 assigned to leadership board, committees and work groups for in-depth study and PSP specific recommendations.**
 - **Make DEI work [Diversity, Equity and Inclusion] a key priority in the new PSP strategic planning process**
 - **Consider “The Consultation -Liaison Network” proposed in Chap. 8 and other Chap. 9 recommendations.**
 - **Others to be discerned collectively in appropriate venues.**
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Anniversary of George Floyd's killing: Changes were made, but short of 'reckoning' on racial justice

By AARON MORRISON and STEVE KARNOWSKI May 25, 2023

[Anniversary of George Floyd's killing: Changes were made, but short of 'reckoning' on racial justice | AP News](#)

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — The murder of [George Floyd](#) at the hands of Minneapolis police, and the fervent protests that erupted around the world, looked to many observers like the catalyst needed for a nationwide reckoning on racism in policing.

For more than nine minutes, a white officer pressed his knee to the neck of Floyd, a Black man, who gasped, “I can’t breathe,” echoing Eric Garner’s last words in 2014. Video footage of Floyd’s **May 25, 2020**, murder was so agonizing to watch that demands for change came from across the country.

[Book Review: ‘Ordinary Notes,’ by Christina Sharpe - The New York Times \(nytimes.com\)](#)

By [Jennifer Szalai](#). “In ‘Ordinary Notes,’ a Radical Reading of Black Life” April 19, 2023

The scholar Christina Sharpe’s new book comprises memories, observations, artifacts and artworks — fragments attesting to the persistence of prejudice while allowing glimpses of something like hope.