

# A Preliminary Report on the Development of the White Privilege Symposium Canada (WPSC) Event as an Educational Forum for Action and Change

July 11, 2016

WPSC, 2016 title "Academics & Activists: Advocating for Equity, Justice and Action"

## Keywords

Social Justice and Equity; Antiracism; Critical Race Theory and Action; Challenging White Supremacy; and Intersectionality.

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## Submitted to:

Bradley Clarke, Chair of the Racial Climate Task Force at Brock University, and Director, Student Life and Community Experience, Student Services – Brock University, and Dr. Eddie Moore Jr., White Privilege Conference (WPC), Founder.

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The Racial Climate Task Force (RCTF) at Brock University was constituted in the summer of 2015 by past Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President, Student Services, Kim Meade, in order to examine race at Brock University. In the fall of 2015, with the departure of the VP-AVPSS, Brad Clarke, Director, Student Life & Community Experience, Brock University was appointed as Chair (RCTF, Brock University).

During its initial meetings RCTF determined a number of immediate actions. One of which includes ongoing education and awareness raising among Brock students, staff, faculty and the Niagara community on race issues. The White Privilege Symposium Canada (WPSC) event is an action oriented step toward meeting the goal of education and awareness raising that has been identified by RCTF.

Committee membership on the Racial Climate Task Force represents: Graduate Students, Undergraduate Students, International Students, Aboriginal Students, Faculty and Staff; each of whom met with the Task Force since June 2015. We also extend a great deal of thanks for the conversations and contributions of Tamari Kitossa, BUFA Employment Equity Advisor and the Task Force members.

They represent:

Brock University Students' Union (BUSU)

Graduate Students' Association (GSA)

International Student Services

Aboriginal Student Services

Brock University Faculty Members

Office of Human Rights & Equity Services

Student Life and Community Experience

ESL Services

Task Force Administrative Assistant

Racial Climate Task Force, Chair

## SUMMARY

Brock University has had a number of BLACKFACE incidents over several years. These occurred on campus at events organized by the university to celebrate Halloween when students 'dressed up' as black in blackface. The most significant public display occurred in October of 2014 when a group of Brock students were nominated by fellow Brock students for their Halloween blackface depiction of the Jamaican Bobsled team featured in the Walt Disney movie "Coolrunnings."

Staff at Brock presented the students with 'a prize' for their comical depiction. The behaviors among students and staff alike, represented unexamined racial practices which demean black people not only at the university but in society-at-large. The event gained media attention and an outcry by labour and sociology professors led the university president to issue an open letter which identified students' behaviors as lacking historical consciousness on the history of racism in relation to blackface.

### **Racial Climate Task Force (RCTF)**

A Racial Climate Task Force (RCTF) at Brock University was constituted in the fall of 2015. RCTF determined a number of immediate actions. One of which includes educating Brock students, staff, Faculty and the Niagara community on race issues. RCTF believes that by hosting the White Privilege Canada Symposium (WPCS), it will proactively provide an educative opportunity for dialogue on critical race issues for Brock University students, staff, faculty members and community on how to redress racism and intersecting forms of oppression. As such, RCTF has been proactive in networking and collaborating with similar equity focused groups across campus, the larger Niagara Community and internationally with the White Privilege Institute (WPI).

### **White Privilege Symposium Canada (WPSC)**

The White Privilege Symposium Canada (WPSC) event will begin with an evening opening keynote, arts and cultural night on September 30. It will include: A welcome and Keynote from the White Privilege Conference (WPC) Founder, Dr. Eddie Moore Jr., (with Deby Irving on WP 101); Cayuga First Nations Opening ceremony by Taylor Gibson; a Keynote address from Professor Afua Cooper, James R. Johnston Chair in Black Canadian Studies, Dalhousie University Halifax; and Dr. Shauneen Pete, Regina University, Executive Lead: Indigenization.

The opening event will represent both an arts-based culturally rich exchange and academic knowledge exchange. It will consist of Caribbean dub poetry and spoken word that address the problem of how white privilege produces social relations that impact on the lives of marginalized people (those who are racialized and experience forms of discrimination as a result of their gender identity, sexuality and whose human rights are called into question because of islamophobia).

October 1 WPSC will focus on the following: Providing interactive workshop presentations that are both academic and community based; unpacking the meaning of white privilege and how it operates in both systemic (institutional) and social (person-to person) relations; examining how white privilege has an impact on the daily lives of individuals. These impacts are experienced in the form of discrimination, racism and oppression from intersecting social and institutional contexts.

WPSC benefits from the expertise of Dr. Moore Jr., a collaborator who is the founder of WPC (now in its 17th successful year) and the White Privilege Institute. Dr. Moore Jr.'s intellectual contributions are fully identifiable in the vision of WPSC. Further, the approach will assist TFRCC in the healing process as we have 'courageous conversations' on race and the implications of unexamined social practices that uphold white supremacy.

A scholarly outcome of WPSC will be the publication of 2 Open Access double special issues in: 1. Understanding and Dismantling Privilege Journal with the WPSC title Academics & Activists: Advocating for Equity, Justice and Action; 2. Brock Education Journal (BEJ): A Journal of Educational Research and Practice.

**Expected Outcomes** The symposium will provide academics, professionals (educators) and community groups concerned about the wellbeing of diverse groups of people who are living, working and studying in Niagara and the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) to network and coalition build around eradicating white supremacy, white privilege and racial oppression.

**Social Benefits.** We are proactively responding to racist incidents arising among our student body, communities in Niagara and Hamilton (often featured online on social media) as a means to engage with rigorous critical self-analytical examination about our role as educators. As Canada continues to become more global in its population there is a demand for greater understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity. We are building on the wisdom, extensive insight and experience that Dr. Moore Jr., brings to the theory and action (praxis) of self-examination as a vehicle to develop a set of tools to examine and re-examination race.

The symposium provides an opportunity for: Social justice leaders in educational institutions; (K-12) school settings; the postsecondary system and members of the larger community opportunities to network; to exchange knowledge and insights on how to support the growing diversity among our international student body and the many new immigrants among our student population. It will provide insights into supporting cosmopolitan members of society from diverse locations in the world. Workshop sessions are geared toward facing the truth about the problem of racism while supporting positive change through strategies that garner proactive movement forward toward unity and resolution.

**Scholarly Benefits.** Symposium participants are members of school boards, leaders in equity services (for youth and children), and curriculum lead teachers in schools. Drs. Mogadime and Rowsell examine key points of convergence between the White Privilege Institute and aims of social justice initiatives organized by Jennifer Rowsell, Director of the Centre for Research in Multiliteracies. One such salient and important example in setting the pace for new directions in curriculum development has been Mogadime's collaboration with the Centre for Research in Multiliteracies and the Centre for Pedagogical Innovation on promoting the Teaching Nelson Mandela Initiative. Its primary focus is related to the internationalization of the curriculum. Building students understanding across social economic differences and demanding that students examine all forms of oppression and domination.

The White Privilege Symposium Canada will provide an opportunity to build connections across individual efforts and consolidate insights that will then be featured in a special issue of the Understanding and Dismantling Privilege Journal. Mogadime and Rowsell will be co-editors with doctoral student Kim Radersma and Dr. Moore Jr., on this special issue that will feature scholarly writings based on our symposium: Academics and Activists: Advocating for Equity, Justice and Action.

**Audience:** Brock Undergraduate and Graduate students, Staff, Faculty members. Students and youth (located at universities through Canada and the US). Community leaders and community members in Niagara, Toronto and the USA. We have compiled several letters of support. They highlight the significance of WPCS for building supportive networks between grassroots organizations and the university The WPSC event will provide workshops that will both challenge and support youth (our undergraduate, graduate students and high school students) to think critically about race, the unexamined racial discourses that are part of North American popular cultural practices on one hand but represent the re-imposing of 19th racism in the 21st Century.

## DESCRIPTION:

Niagara Region has a First Nations presence which is often eclipsed by a predominant Western centric focus at Brock University (Indigenous Solidarity Collective, 2016). Named after the famous Sir Isaac Brock, a military milieu (Code, Landry, Reader & Taber, in press) honors a single story in the narrative of Ontario history that as a consequence signals the reproduction of White Supremacy. The Niagara Region has been predominately white, Euro-Canadian in its cultural population. At the same time, more recently Niagara is undergoing significant changes in its demographic population. Social problems related to racism have formed a backdrop on the Niagara experience. The White Privilege Symposium Canada (WPSC) event has an important role to play in terms of providing a forum for local community action groups to form solidarity with Brock University staff, Faculty members and students. The White Privilege Conference WPC and the White Privilege Institute brings examples of best practice with over 17 years' experience in forming meaningful solidarity between community action groups that serve diverse cultural groups of people.

### Intersectionality

Students will learn the concept of intersectionality (Shields, 2008). First articulated in the 1970s among racialized scholars in the women's movement (Collins, 2015). Intersectionality represents an epistemological experience of oppression that impacts on the quality of life among racialized women. Intersectionality has been embraced over the past decade in the humanities and social sciences (women's studies, critical sociology, education etc.) to explain how race, gender, class, ablist, sexuality are constructed as social identities along the axes of domination and power. In unpacking domination and power, intersectionality insists the historical connection to white supremacy and colonialism be identified for its continuities in today's society in terms of white privilege. White Privilege Symposium Canada (WPSC) will support Brock University staff, faculty and students to recognize how intersectionality operates in ways that exclude racialized communities. The larger aim is to identify strategies for inclusion.

### WPSC Program

**WPSC Opening Event.** The White Privilege Symposium Canada (WPSC) event will begin September 30 with a range of keynotes infused with arts and culture and that include: An opening Cayuga First Nations ceremony; Keynotes from White Privilege Conference (WPC) Founder, Dr. Eddie Moore Jr., (with Deby Irving); Dr. Afua Cooper, Dalhousie University; and Dr. Shauneen Pete, Regina University, Executive Lead: Indigenization. The opening night is an indicator of the organizers commitment to honoring an Aboriginal presence in the WPSC 2-day program.

The opening event will represent both an arts-based culturally rich exchange and academic knowledge exchange. It will consist of Caribbean dub poetry and spoken word that address the problem of how white privilege produces social relations that impact on the lives of marginalized people those who are racialized and experience forms of discrimination as a result of their gender identity, sexuality and whose human rights are called into question because of islamophobia (Al-Fartousi & Mo-

gadime, 2012; Henry & Tator, 2014; Mogadime, Ramrattan Smith, & Scott, 2011).

**WPSC Oct. 1.** The focus will be on: Providing interactive workshop presentations that are both academic and community based; unpacking the meaning of white privilege and how it operates in both systemic (institutional) and social (person-to-person) relations; examining how white privilege has an impact on the daily lives of individuals. These impacts are experienced in the form of discrimination, racism and oppression from intersecting social and institutional contexts.

**Solidarity and Alliance Building.** A conversational fireside lunch will be held at noon. The notion is to engage participants in Solidarity and Alliance Building for Social Justice and Equity. There will be several benefits for attendees of the symposium from both national and international contexts.

1. The White Privilege Canada Symposium is inaugural. The Founder, Dr. Eddie Moore Jr., and collaborator Bradley Clarke, have come to a mutual understanding that we would like to continue to hold a WPSC on a biannual basis to grow enhanced collaboration and to garner an equity based Consortium between Canada, the US and Internationally.
2. The role of indigenous community activists and leaders and academics in Canada (Chief Isadore Day, Dr. Shauneen Pete), will guide our understanding of both the impact of colonial narrative (oppression, trauma) and also the means for reconciliation and action through processes such as: indigenising the university; and increasing knowledge of Aboriginal history, contributions and presence.
3. Researchers will have direct connection with grassroots community groups, NGO's and educators (K-12) and Post secondary curriculum developers who are all committed to social justice.

School Boards (administrative leaders) accountable for the implementation of Equity Based Policy and curriculum will have exposure to leading curriculum developers in the field. We believe WPSC collaborations will lay the foundation for co-developing future projects with our educational partners in Niagara, the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) and beyond.

### **Student Engagement: Building Youth Leadership using the Youth Action Project (YAP) Approach.**

Using the Youth Action Project (YAP) approach developed for the White Privilege Conference (WPC) Jada Monica Drew will provide tools for building relationships and leadership skills among youth. Jada Monica Drew, leads Social Designs, LLC and Social Justice Consulting. She brings a combined understanding about youth leadership that has grown out of her many years contributing to Youth Action Project (YAP) at the White Privilege Conference (WPC) and her work leading Social Designs, LLC and Social Justice Consulting.

A focused youth track is built into the WPSC program for high school students from Niagara, the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) and Toronto. The YAP focus is to connect youth who are engaging in courageous conversations and action-oriented movements in their communities and schools. With Jada's leadership, youth will come together to learn more deeply about social justice with a focus on unpacking white supremacy, white privilege and other forms of oppression. YAP supports the development of students' potential to bring positive change and action to their schools and communities.

Jada provides opportunities for youth to: Present solutions that have worked in schools and communities; and create new action steps for change. YAP fosters a youth-teaching-youth focus and creates spaces for youth to understand the importance

of respect and connecting. Youth leadership skills developed include: Public Speaking; Networking; Effective Communication; Critical Thinking; Conflict Resolution; Dialogue Principles; Healing; and Forgiveness; and Courage. Jada Monica Drew will mentor high school students in a program focused on their development. Student engagement is a centerpiece of the WPSC initiative. We plan to continue to hold a WPSC on a biannual basis to grow enhanced collaboration and to garner an equity based Consortium between Canada, the US and Internationally.

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**White Privilege Canada (WPSC), Brock University  
Academics & Activists: Advocating for Equity, Justice and Action  
September 30 - October 1, 2016**

**Keynote Speakers**



**Dr. Eddie Moore, Jr.**  
Founder WPC, Community Activist and Scholar

Keynote title: “White Privilege 101: Getting in on the Conversations”  
Friday September 30, 2016 at 6pm

See more at: [www.eddiemoorej.com](http://www.eddiemoorej.com)



**Debby Irving**  
Racial Justice Educator and Writer

Keynote title: “White Privilege 101: Getting in on the Conversations”  
Friday September 30, 2016 at 6pm

See more at: [www.debbyirving.com](http://www.debbyirving.com)



**Dr. Afua Cooper**  
Community Activist, Scholar, Dub Poet and James R. Johnston Chair in Black Canadian Studies, Dalhousie University Halifax

Keynote title: “Diana Bastian: Enslaved African Canadian Teenager and White Male Privilege”  
Friday September 30, 2016 at 6:45pm

See more at: [www.dal.ca/faculty/arts/jrj-chair/about/CurrentChai.html](http://www.dal.ca/faculty/arts/jrj-chair/about/CurrentChai.html) or  
<http://blackcanadianpoetry.com/poet-bios/afua-cooper> or  
[www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/dalhousie-black-and-african-diaspora-studies-starts-fall-2016-1.3644910](http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/dalhousie-black-and-african-diaspora-studies-starts-fall-2016-1.3644910)



**Dr. Shuaneen Pete**  
Associate Professor, Regina University

Keynote title: “Acting Up: Activism and Action”  
Friday September 30, 2016 at 7:30pm

See more at: <http://www.uregina.ca/education/faculty-staff/faculty/pete-shauneen.html>



**Ritu Bhasin**  
Community Activists and Lawyer

Keynote title: “Breaking the Shackles of Oppression & Addressing Privilege: Rise through the Authenticity Principle”  
Saturday October 1, 2016 at 9:30am

See more at: [www.bhasinconsulting.com](http://www.bhasinconsulting.com)



**Jasiri X**  
Mentor, Educator and Community Leader

Keynote title: “America’s Most Wanted: Hip Hop, Media, and Mass Incarceration”  
Saturday October 1, 2016 at 1pm

See more at: [www.jasirix.com](http://www.jasirix.com)



**Jada Monica Drew**  
Leads Social Designs, LLC and *Social Justice Consulting*

Keynote title: “Building Youth Leadership using the Youth Action Project (YAP) Approach”  
Saturday October 1, 2016 at 4:00pm

See more at:  
[www.socialdesignsconsulting.com/consulting/](http://www.socialdesignsconsulting.com/consulting/)

White Privilege Symposium Canada (WPC): Schedule WPC: Day One

\*Please note that workshops are subject to change

Time	Presenter(s)	Topic
5:00 – 5:30	Taylor Gibson (Cayuga)	Cayuga First Nations Opening Ceremony
5:30 – 6:00	Dolana Mogadime, Jennifer Rowsell & Eddie Moore Jr., Founder, WPC	Welcome – The meaning of Praxis- Collaborations Between Brock University, The Privilege Institute (TPI), The White Privilege Conference (WPC) and Local Equity Leaders
6:00 – 6:45	Eddie Moore Jr., Founder, WPC & Debby Irving, Educator and Author: <b>KEYNOTE</b>	Title: White Privilege 101 Getting in on the Conversations
6:45 – 7:30	Afua Cooper: <b>KEYNOTE</b>	Title: Diana Bastian: Enslaved African Canadian Teenager and White Male Privilege
7:30 – 8:15	Shauneen Pete: <b>KEYNOTE</b>	Acting Up: Activism and Action
8:15 – 8:30	Eddie Moore Jr., & Bradley Clarke (Chair of the Task Force on the Racial Climate at Brock University)	Closing Remarks
8:30 – 9:00	Reception and Cultural Music	

**WPC: Day Two Morning**

Time	Presenter	Topic
9:00 – 9:15am	First Nations Welcome Taylor Gibson (Cayuga)	Welcome
9:15 - 9:30	Eddie Moore Jr., Founder, WPC Thank you with Jennifer Rowsell & Dolana Mogadime	
9:30– 10:30am	Ritu Bhasin, LL.B. MBA, is the Founder and Principal of bci: <b>KEYNOTE</b>	Title: Breaking the Shackles of Oppression and Addressing Privilege: Rise through the Authenticity Principle
10:30 – 10:45	Health Break (Coffee/ Tea)	

<b>10:45 – 12:00pm</b>	<b>Workshops Block 1</b>	Topic:
<b>12:00 – 12:15</b> – Grad. Facilitator	<b>Moderated by Grad. Facilitator</b>	-Questions & Answers
10:45 – 12:00pm 12:00 – 12:15 – Grad. Facilitator	1. Ontario Regional Chief, Isadore Day, Wiindawtegowinini	Putting Reconciliation into Action: Relationship Building post Truth and Reconciliation (TRC)
10:45 – 12:00pm 12:00 – 12:15 – Grad. Facilitator	2. Spy Denomme-Welch & Catherine Magowan	Intercultural collaboration through creative methodologies
10:45 – 12:00pm 12:00 – 12:15 – Grad. Facilitator	3. Chris D'souza	Why is the new super girl a skinny, blue-eyed, white blond?" (Interrupting whiteness in youth culture)
10:45 – 12:00pm 12:00 – 12:15 – Grad. Facilitator	4. Kim Radersma	White allies in antiracism: Addressing the possibility of agency & humility
10:45 – 12:00pm 12:00 – 12:15 – Grad. Facilitator	5. Abhi Ahluwalia	unlearn. Critical thinking by design
10:45 – 12:00pm 12:00 – 12:15 – Grad. Facilitator	6. Ismaël Traoré	"It's more complicated than racist or non-racist: Understanding the White people in your life."
10:45 – 12:00pm 12:00 – 12:15 – Grad. Facilitator	7. Wesley Crichlow	The Black Queer Professoriate and Grievances
10:45 – 12:00pm 12:00 – 12:15 – Grad. Facilitator	8. May AlFartousi	Deconstructing Others: Canadian Muslim Women's Negotiation of Everyday Religious Experiences
10:45 – 12:00pm 12:00 – 12:15 – Grad. Facilitator	9. Bernadette Arthur Race Relations Coordinator, Christian Reformed Church of North America	Reconciling for Eternal Communities
10:45 – 12:00pm 12:00 – 12:15 – Grad. Facilitator	10. Debby Irving	How to Explain White Privilege to Skeptics

## WPSC Day Two: Afternoon

12:00 – 1:00 Lunch Talk	Jennifer Rowsell, Eddie More Jr., & Dolana Mogadime	Fireside Conversation: Building Connections between Academics and Activists in their Social Justice Community Work
1:00 - 2:00	Jasiri X <b>KEYNOTE:</b>	America's Most Wanted: Hip Hop, Media, and Mass Incarceration
<b>2:15 - 3:30</b>  <b>3:30 - 3:45</b> <b>-Community Activist Facilitator</b>	<b>Workshops Block 2</b>  <b>Moderated by Community Activist</b>	<b>Topic</b>
2:15 - 3:30  3:30 - 3:45 -Community Activist Facilitator	1. Desmond Cole	“What Makes You Say That?” Challenging the Assumptions of Anti-Black Racism
2:15 - 3:30  3:30 - 3:45 -Community Activist Facilitator	2. Tabasum Akseer	Experiences of inclusion/exclusion among Muslim female youth in Canadian schools
2:15 - 3:30  3:30 - 3:45 -Community Activist Facilitator	3. Jhonel Morvan	Making visible the issues of racism and racialization in school mathematics
2:15 - 3:30  3:30 - 3:45 -Community Activist Facilitator	4. Carolina Miranda	The Power of Personal Narratives in Deconstructing Privilege
2:15 - 3:30  3:30 - 3:45 -Community Activist Facilitator	5. Tamari Kitossa	Black Face, Eating Belgian Chocolates and African Pie: A workshop on im/possible dialectics of White visual culture & symbolic consumption of the Black Other
2:15 - 3:30  3:30 - 3:45 -Undergraduate Student Facilitator	6. Jada Monica Drew	Youth Leadership for Social Change
2:15 - 3:30  3:30 - 3:45 -Undergrad Student Facilitator	7. Jennifer Brant	Lessons from Homeplace: Promoting Equitable Spaces for Indigenous and non-Indigenous Solidarity

2:15 - 3:30 3:30 - 3:45 -Undergrad Student Facilitator	8. Harjot Natt	The Kids Need Hip-Hop
2:15 - 3:30 3:30 - 3:45 -Undergrad Student Facilitator	9. Christopher Lytle	Whiteness and Ableness
2:15 - 3:30 3:30 - 3:45 -Community Activist Facilitator	10. Jodielynn Harrison & Celeste Smith	Working together: Indigenous Self-determination and Animal Liberation
4:00– 5:30	Jada Monica Drew <b>KEYNOTE and Closing Ceremony</b>	Building Youth Leadership using the Youth Action Project (YAP) Approach