

Dismantling the Racial Contract in SPS

**Brought to you by the
Partnership Committee**

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Today's Agenda

- The Racial Contract—Charles W. Mills
- How it shows up in SPS
- Impacts of the Racial Contract

-BREAK-

- Dismantling the Racial Contract through Liberated Teaching Practices and Social Emotional Learning

Social Contract

Key Definitions:

- **Social Contract:** an agreement between a governing body/public servants and a group of people (constituency). Also, an agreement among the members of a society to cooperate for social benefit.
- **Constituency:** a group of people that a governing body/public servants are accountable to

5-minute Personal Reflection:

- Write a short list of ways we are charged with and accountable to serving students and families in SPS
- Name a social benefit of turning a blind eye to/cooperating with people falling short

The Coronavirus Was an Emergency Until Trump Found Out Who Was Dying- Adam Serwer



0:16:52

Adam Serwer discusses the Racial Contract and how it relates to Coronavirus



Pause (k)



1:26

0:21:26

Scroll for details



0:21:31 / 1:31:43

The Coronavirus Was an Emergency Until Trump Found Out Who Was Dying- Adam Serwer

"...The racial contract is not partisan—it guides staunch conservatives and sensitive liberals alike—but it works most effectively when it remains imperceptible to its beneficiaries. As long as it is invisible, members of society can proceed as though the provisions of the social contract apply equally to everyone. But when an injustice pushes the racial contract into the open, it forces people to choose whether to embrace, contest, or deny its existence."- Adam Serwer (The Atlantic)

Email a Letter to a Colleague

What are you thinking?

What are you feeling?

What is resonated with you most?

0:26:16

Racial Contract in Schools

- How Racial Contracts show up in schools as it applies to children/teens- learning, discipline, health, safety, etc.
- How upholding the Racial Contract is harmful to the children/teens and our ability to serve students in ways we're accountable to serving them.

Click to add notes

Racial Contracts in Schools

- Presented By: Marquita Prinzing, Director of Seattle Education Association Center for Racial Equity



0:43:30

Racial Contracts in Schools

- Learning: “if the social contract is the implicit agreement among members of a society to follow the rules then the racial contract is a codicil rendered in invisible ink, ***one stating that the rules as written do not apply to nonwhite people in the same way.***”

“The Coronavirus Was an Emergency Until Trump Found Out Who Was Dying” – Adam Serwer, *The Atlantic*

0:47:46

A Few Examples: Learning

- Content: Much of the content taught and the materials used reinforce white culture despite basic attempts at multiculturalism.
- Reinforces the idea that black and brown culture is always supplemental and even when used, doesn't show that that black and brown students are valued in complex ways.

0:50:42

A Few Examples: Learning

- Project Based Learning: Often times reserved for students who adheres to classrooms expectations or performs “schools” well.
- Often the excuse that students of color or black students require more discipline and structure results in the message that White students exploring learning and Black and brown students “need” to be taught.



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A Few Examples: Learning

- Small Group Work: Whether or not specific group communication protocols are explicitly taught, there are often hidden expectations that result in black and brown students being reminded that many ways of their ability to communicate are inferior to those that perform white normed communication styles.

A Few Examples: Learning

- Who gets evaluated and how: For all services, what behaviors are seen as upholding the racial contract and which ones are challenging it?
- Black and brown students are disproportionately seen for their behaviors that challenge the social contract and therefore need to be “redirected” (e.g. overrepresentation of students of color in behavioral special education services/programs)

A Few Examples: Discipline

- “He’s menacing. He’s 5-feet-7, 191 pounds. He wasn’t that little kid you’re seeing in pictures. He’s a 12-year-old in an adult body.” Steve Loomis, the head of Cleveland’s police union, said in 2014.
- White students get second chances and benefit of the doubt and are said to be developmentally appropriate in their behavior; black children are said to be “disturbed”, must have had trauma (other than racist trauma)

A Few Examples: Health

- Social emotional: Black people are seen as having higher pain tolerance and are receive less nurse care or seen as overexaggerating their pain and are dismissed or punished for the disruption.
- Certain emotions are an indication of ineffective coping behavior. However, the child is to blamed if they are Black and coddled if White



Consider:

How is the racial contract influencing learning content, responses to student behavior, and implementation of policies, and procedures in your school/program/classroom?

Next up: Racial Contracts of Family Partnerships and Engagement-Anita Koyier-Mwamba

- (a) how Racial Contracts show up in schools as it applies to our family partnerships and engagement—
- (b) how upholding the Racial Contract is harmful to our family partnerships and engagement and our ability to serve families in the ways we're accountable to serving them.

Learning Outcomes/Objectives



WE WILL:

- Interrogate how racial contracts influence and impact interactions between families and schools (nuances of racial dynamics)

Racial Contract-Charles Mills



- According to Mills, the Racial Contract is:
- Political
- Moral
- Epistemological (relating to the theory of knowledge, especially with regard to its methods, validity, and scope, and the distinction between justified belief and opinion.)



1880



Scramble for Africa/Partition of Africa(1884)

What is a Contract

- An agreement between private parties creating mutual obligations enforceable by law;
- The basic elements required for the agreement to be a legally enforceable **contract** are: **Mutual Assent**, expressed by a valid **Offer** and **Acceptance**; adequate consideration; **Capacity**; and legality.



Devastation of Africa through terror and violence 650 ACE-Present

Five years ago, a British TV documentary showed how poorly the descendants of African slaves in Pakistan are treated by the authorities. The racial discrimination was so bad that one of the African descendants recounted on camera how, even in sport, they were not picked to represent Pakistan at national and international levels no matter how good they were.

<https://newafricanmagazine.com/16616/>



Foundations of the Racial Contracts

With regard to Africa proper, Hegel refers to it as **"the land of childhood, which lying beyond the day of self-conscious history, is enveloped in the dark mantle of Night"** (Hegel, 1956, p. ... The **African** is, in Hegel's words, ***"natural man in his completely wild and untamed state"*** (Hegel, 1956, p. 93).



GUIDING QUESTIONS



- *How do racial contracts show up in your life?*
- *How do they impact the families you serve that are non-white?*



OUTCOMES

CHECK: Did we meet these outcomes?

- Interrogate how racial contracts influence interactions between families and schools (nuances of racial dynamics)