



# CIARS

Centre for Integrative Anti-Racism Studies

## NEWSLETTER VOLUME 1 ISSUE 5

# TEACHING HISTORY FROM AN AFRICENTRIC PERSPECTIVE

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## Africentricity in Education (in History Teaching)

by Phiona Lloyd-Henry

In February, I had the pleasure of engaging in conversation with an esteemed panel of Black educators and activists about the role of Africentricity in Education. In moderating this conversation, I was grateful to participate in and contribute to the central priority of CIARS — which is to bring together thought leaders from OISE, K-12 educational practitioners, and the local community who share the commitment to decolonize, to challenge racism, and intersecting forms of oppression.

As I begin this commentary, which continues the conversation we started in *CIARS in Conversation panel series*, I want to acknowledge the first peoples of the land we occupy today. This CIARS newsletter highlights the possibilities of Africentricity in Education as a counter to Eurocentricity. I acknowledge settler-colonialism, displacement, dispossession, and the ongoing racializing projects that, though unequal in their impact, are similar in how they erase, misrepresent and distort the lives, histories, stories and cultures of Indigenous nations; and of Africans and African descendent peoples.

Africentricity is a frame of reference wherein phenomena are viewed from the perspective of the African person. The Africentric approach seeks the appropriate centrality of the African person in every situation. In education, teachers who adopt an Africentric lens allow students to study the world and its people, concepts, and history from an African worldview (Asante 1991: 172). Africentricity allows us to talk about teaching history, social sciences, works of literature, and other subjects through an anti-racist, anti-colonial framework — one that allows us to raise critical questions and challenge the absences, omissions, negations, denials and devaluations of Black lives. Furthermore, Africentricity allows us to interrogate and subvert racist narrative misconstructions. Through Afrocentricity, we centre African/Black experiences, address the totality of African/Black experiences, and place African/Black experiences at the centre of analysis and as a prism to understand global events. As we search for new educational futures in the centuries-long global climate of anti-Black/African racism and anti-Blackness, Africentricity presents new opportunities to work with and leverage Black community-centred knowledges.

Educational reform movements are rife with discussions of student-centred classrooms. Unsurprisingly, these conversations often do not challenge Eurocentricity nor trouble the taken-for-granted "universality" of the White, able-bodied, middle class, cis-hetero, Judeo-Christian male student experiences that are centred in our classrooms.

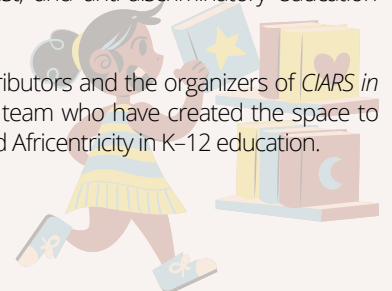
We know how harmful Eurocentricity is to Black/African children. Quoting Carter Woodson, Dr. Molefi Kete Asante notes that African/Black peoples are taught to give more value to European culture, even if it comes as a detriment to their own.

This leads them to be disillusioned of their histories and they thus face the risk of psychological and cultural death, as they reject the harsh realities of North American life to someone of their race by falsely assuming that they hold the same position as a white, European North American. Adding insult to injury, the psychic dissonance caused by Eurocentricity in schools and the potential for mental illness are often ignored or used as reasons to pathologize Black students and their families further.

Racism is deadly. The COVID-19 pandemic has laid bare the logic of necropolitics and the deleterious impacts of racism, anti-Blackness, whiteness, and white supremacy on Black/African peoples. According to Johns Hopkins university's visual map, we have had more than 6 million COVID-19-related deaths worldwide, many of whom were already exposed to "group-differentiated vulnerability to premature death". As educators, advocates, policy agents, and actors, we have an opportunity to materialize the aims and possibilities of an education that serves all students — Africentricity includes centring the 'whole child' in their education. This location of possibility was demonstrated in *CIARS in Conversation* and is reflected in this newsletter. The potential for students thriving, building critical consciousness, developing cross-cultural relationships, and having the capacity to act for freedom, justice, and liberation is exciting and hopeful. This is an extraordinary moment for us to learn more about Africa, African epistemologies and offer fulsome and critical links between African-diasporic peoples and contemporary African cultures and life. We must connect African/Black and other learners to the past, present, and future. We need to approach African/Black histories in relational terms and place African/Black experiences at the centre of analysis and as a prism to understand global events; speak of the totality of African histories, languages, cultures, identities, and experiences; and use African Indigeneity, resistance, and politics as entry points of critical conversations (Dei 2020).

There will be resistance to adopting Africentricity — It is not just a lack of capacity with Africentricity that prevents us from adopting this framework. It is essential to ask what those reasons are and what our society gains from de-centring Black lives. Decades-long data tells us what we have to lose from the disinvestment into the education of Black children. We know that curriculum that is not culturally relevant or responsive, disciplinary practices that disproportionately remove Black children from learning environments, and program placements that limit access to different learning pathways contribute to Black children's 'push out' of schools. This is the moment to achieve the promises of a fair and just, and anti-discriminatory education system.

As I conclude, I want to thank the contributors and the organizers of *CIARS in Conversation* and the CIARS newsletter team who have created the space to and helped add to the discourse around Africentricity in K-12 education.





# What does it mean to be human - A Spiritual Process

by Karine Coen-Sanchez

Echoing Albert Einstein, redefining our understanding of morality within the universe is the key to freedom and human unity. But what are morals? And how can we trust our perception of reality when we have been conditioned to think and behave in terms of social, cultural, and religious doctrines?

When I think of morals, I think of a process of self re-discovery, the essence of being, that is linked to empathy and, sincerity—just being a decent human being. During this process, we must dissociate from ideas that have been ingrained in our upbringing. Two concepts repeatedly entered my thoughts as I reflected on my moral perception: *hope* and *faith*. For me, hope is found in the idea that something can be done differently, while faith is the belief in that something. Most people hope to find a resolution to their inner suffering so their inner divine would excel beyond the traditional belief systems. At the same time, having faith in the greater good of humanity is believing in the notion of trusting the other and living an ethical life where one experiences personal fulfillment and works towards collective unity.

An important part of achieving these goals has been getting in touch with the different levels of my essence of being, by experiencing hope, not as a rational process, but as emotional development. For instance, mental freedom from your own expectations of what constitutes *trust*. At that point, you must disengage from your own pretensions and embrace the dialogue and syncretism. This process is needed during the stage of social and mental dissociation from your own ingrained beliefs that refer to your reality. Here we become the observer to our social conditioning.

Questioning your morals is crucial during this process and can ignite different social perspectives about the elements of faith and hope, and how they can act as a doctrine to influence and guide decisions and change your views on humanity. All of us fear the unknown—we become emotionally paralyzed—but understand that while fear of the “unknown strangles the heart, one tiny act of courage can bring hope alive” (Chittister, 2003, p. 99). Believe in your own courage. Do not denounce your own authentic spirituality.

It is the emergence of a series of systems of philosophy, culture, hope, and faith that would enable me to have a heterogeneous outlook of trust. Initially, my understanding of trust was narrow and limited to the teachings of the social, and cultural commitments, but I soon experienced an emotional and spiritual transformation. I was no longer embedded in my belief system but could stand outside of my preconceptions and rationalize my suffering. I was able to appreciate my spirituality and faith as “an early notion that life is bigger than we are,” and understand how the belief that “there is something out there that is eternally just,

eternally loving,” is the antidote to darkness and a strong step in the exercise of hope” (Chittister, 2003, p. 99). Life at that moment was good. This process of reflection provided me with the skills necessary to understand what it means to be human.

Consciously, I perceived trust within my social traditions as my inner connection with the other and myself. I became aware of the factors that influenced my judgment of the other, and I overanalyzed and over complicated the simplicity of the act of “trusting” while my focus on autonomous individualism provoked my disregard for understanding trust within my spirituality. Nonetheless, this self-reflection promoted my transition to the “conjunctive stage” of my spiritual development, and I began to make peace with “the tensions arising from the realization that trust must be approached from a number of different directions and angles of vision” (Fowler, 2000, p. 65).

Fundamentally, it is to recognize your own solidity in order to properly assess and respect others’ belief systems, values, and social ideologies. The fact that I am able to understand my relationship with myself and to take a step back from my own biases enhances my ability to assess others, while also giving me a profound understanding of any resistance to change that may be a link to their own belief systems.

It is very difficult to acknowledge our negative contributions to our own development. Despite that, I am pleased to accept my responsibility in my suffering. Although I do not dismiss the influences that provoked my inability to trust the other, I can now respect the axiom: “Those who are unaware of their history are destined to repeat it.” It is the platonic ideal of always being in a state of becoming and constantly being redefined that provides me with the awareness of my future and my past, and the theme of acknowledging the antecedents and preceding events in my life will constantly guide my future. This is an ongoing process and does not have a time limit.

I began to notice how free I felt, and I experienced freedom through a spiritual lens. Culturally, I was entrenched by my values and norms, and now, I can freely accept trust as a gift from the other rather than as punishment. Opening our minds to others will increase social unity.

## References:

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Fowler, James W (1996). *Faithful change: The personal and public challenges of postmodern life*. Nashville: Abingdon Press.





## Integrating Africentric Traditions in the Classroom

by Ida Thibeh

Aida Al-Thayabeh (Ida Thibeh Wiese), PhD (student), MEd, OCT

Celebrated Senegalese novelist Cheikh Hamidou Kane once said, "the cannon compels the body, the school bewitches the soul" (Kane, 1972, pp. 48-49). In other words, the most dangerous weapon left behind by the colonizers was the schools, which led the colonized to believe that their colonization was, their liberation. Colonization of the mind is the most potent and effective tool used against the colonized.

Thus, the first step in decolonization—must come from within. Acknowledging that the current educational system is a colonial structure embedded with a white supremacy ideology. We must become comfortable with resisting the norms of white supremacy and unlearn the habits ingrained in our thought processes, behaviors, and actions. The second step is creating and implementing solutions to decolonize, disrupt and dismantle white supremacy ideologies. This can be achieved by integrating global Indigenous ways of knowing, being, and doing, such as Africentric approaches.

Below are a few practical examples of how an educator can begin to decolonize by disrupting and dismantling white supremacy in the classroom by integrating Africentric approaches. These examples may seem small and simple but can be used as a stepping stone in shifting mindsets, disrupting ideologies, and embracing Indigenous ways of knowing.

- **Hand Raising:** The concept of hand-raising is rooted in white supremacy power structures. Simply removing hand raising and embracing the Africentric tradition of "call and response" creates a classroom environment rich in conversation and promotes the mutual transmission of knowledge between student and educator.
- **"Our" Classroom Community:** Language is a powerful tool, and embedding the concept of "our" has a profound impact on students and the classroom. Changing the language from the "my/your" to "our" classroom establishes a community rooted in Africentric approaches and culture.

- **Traditions of Orality:** Integrating traditions of orality through storytelling strengthens classroom community, student oral skills, and Indigenous ways of knowledge and traditions. There are many ways educators can embed the traditions of orality, including knowledge, content, curriculum, and assessment. For example, providing students with an opportunity to be assessed through art, drama, music, dance and spoken word poetry, rather than producing a written product for assessment.
- **Knowledge Seeker:** Embedding Africentric approaches as an educator means understanding that knowledge in a classroom is circular, not hierarchal, with a mutual transmission of knowledge among teacher, student, family, and community.
- **Re-Defining Success:** To disrupt and dismantle notions of success, we must critically question how success is defined.? Who defines success? What standard is being upheld to maintain this idea of success? When thinking of success, be mindful of your social location, explicit and implicit biases, stereotypes, and the structural framework. Consider the implications of success that have been contingent on the ongoing suffering and oppression. When integrating Africentric approaches, consider that success will look, sound, and feel different for each student.

If the colonization of the mind was the most powerful and effective tool used against the colonized, then the decolonization of schools must be the starting point. Embedding Africentric approaches in the classroom requires educators to change how they speak, teach, assess, and communicate with students, families, and communities. Finally, the examples illustrated above are merely stepping stones in the ongoing process of disrupting and dismantling white supremacy in the hopes of decolonizing the mind. The strategies used in dismantling structural systems must continuously grow, pivot, and change in our new learnings.

### References

Kane, C. H. (1972). *Ambiguous adventure*. Melville House.



# My opinion on the Africentric perspective

by Fatema Hossain

I am inspired by Asante's (2010) statement, "Afrocentricity is not color-conscious, it is not a matter of color but of culture" (p. 3). This viewpoint convinced me to relate myself, as an Asian, with the Africentric perspective. As Asante mentioned, the Africentric movement or perspective was initiated in response to Eurocentric viewpoints, "It is not reverse of Eurocentricity" (p. 2). The Eurocentric approach ignored the contributions of, primarily, the people of African descent and other heritages to world history. Contrarily, the Africentricity perspective is respectful to all cultures. It embraces the ideas of, not only Africans but all racialized people. This teaches us to see the full view of world history where people from all races have contributions and to respect diverse heritages. This view also informs us about equality and human rights and how relates to social justice education. To respect other cultures and their heritages, we need to know their histories, empathize with their struggles and experiences. This interconnectedness among different cultures can create agency and bring in multiple voices around any issue.

The Africentric approach directs us towards a multicentric perspective. Being (as the education system is still dominantly colonial), inclusion of those diverse racial community perspectives in the curriculum is required. Without decolonizing education, without including diverse community perspectives in curriculum, education is not complete. Thus, the full view of world history is lacking. This may create problematic social discourse around different diverse communities and stereotypes may arise.

Respecting other cultural histories and understanding experiences gained by other racial communities allow us to recognize equality and humanity. To make this happen, as members of different racial communities, we need to share our stories as contributors, counter the narratives and stereotypes that exist about us and empower ourselves to challenge social injustice.

#### Reference:

Asante, Molefi Kete (2010) Afrocentricity: The Theory of Social Change. Online resource retrieved on February 18, 2022 from website -<https://multiversityindia.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/05/Afrocentricity.pdf>

#### Fatema Hossain

I am Dr. Fatema Hossain. I recently completed my Doctoral Degree from LHAE, OISE and at present working as a Research Assistant at OISE. My Doctoral research highlighted South Asian Women graduate students as knowledge mobilization agents.



## Claudette Howell Rutherford

(She/ her)  
Mother, Educator, Masters in Social Justice  
Education Student at OISE

1. *Your work responds to the urgent need to centre racial justice in education. Africentric approaches have been an important tool to formulate pedagogies that serve Black, Indigenous, and other racialized students. Where have you seen the value of Africentric approaches to teaching exemplified within student/parent activism and result in policy change?*

A focus on the “whole child” and the practice of incorporating the whole community within the teaching and learning experiences of children is one of the central tenets of Africentric pedagogies. Growing up in a Black Saturday School setting was a nurturing space for me and my peers, where we were surrounded by Black families and taught by Black educators who mentored and supported us. We learned about Africa — not just in relation to Eurocentric views and ideologies — and about Black Canadians as key stakeholders in the formation of this country. In the Saturday School environment, Black parents curated space for their children, developed a curriculum that centred Black experiences, and celebrated traditions and eldership. They cultivated a village where children were immersed in the language, folklore, and the history of their ancestral homeland. Africentricity is grounded in the idea that people of African descent are characterized by their narratives and terms (Dei & Kemp). We were taught to see the world through our eyes, which, in my opinion, is the gateway to an emancipatory education.

The groups that were integral to the development of the Saturday school, such as Black Education Project, Black Liaison Committee, ACHA, African Heritage Educators Network, Organization of Parents of Black Children, CABE, to name a few, all played a crucial role in creating racial equity and education policy reform for Black students in the GTA. They built upon the legacies of advocacy groups comprised of educators and parents, who have defended the right to a fair and equal education for Black students since the 1820s.

INTERVIEW BY:  
Sanjana Singh



**"We were taught to see the world through our eyes, which, in my opinion, is the gateway to an emancipatory education."**

In Toronto's Africentric schools now, educators partner with caregivers and the community to accomplish goals such as legitimizing African stores of knowledge, embracing indigenous African languages, and incentivizing self-determination (Lee, 1992). Education is viewed as a reciprocal exchange of knowledge.

Teaching children to see themselves as central to their learning is imperative. As we teach children to engage with Africentric knowledge and frameworks, we also teach students to engage in critical examinations of the dominant culture and Eurocentric perspectives. In doing so, we are invoking racial literacy as a core competency so that learners can understand and challenge the power dynamics of racialization and thus become agents of social change.

Embracing and sharing counter-narratives is an essential element of African-centred approaches to learning. However, Black experiences should be presented on their merit, not only as a point of comparison to other dominant perspectives.

Working to decolonize education invites us to reimagine and redefine this institution's role in society. I am excited about how we might continue to re-envision education to create identity-affirming spaces for Black children to learn that inherently fortifies and inspires them.

## Claudette Howell Rutherford

(She/ her)

Mother, Educator, Masters in Social Justice Education Student at OISE

2. *During the CIARS in Conversation discussion, you spoke about incorporating Africentric histories and perspectives in all classes. In your opinion, what are some excellent Africentric pedagogical practices to follow when it comes to developing a curriculum resource?*

Historical and contemporary examples of the contributions of Black people can be successfully infused into any course discipline. For years, I have worked with many educators to audit our curriculums to ensure the most equitable representation of systemically excluded groups. There needs to be a pedagogical shift in how we see Black existence, Black prosperity and vitality, and how we teach about these things. Many people go through their JK-graduate school education having never been exposed to Black/African success examples. It is likely that if we participate in a deep examination of what images and stories we use to communicate to children about Blackness, we will see exactly why our children are surveilled but not protected in schools, we will see how our children become invisible and undervalued, and why our children face racial violence daily. There is deliberate obscurity and erasure of African livelihoods. This is why Black humanity is up for debate for so many. It is why anti-Blackness is the pervasive currency that thrives in our governing institutions. We have to do better.

In *Returning to the Root*, William Tate discusses an Africentric approach to education of mathematics. He first emphasizes the fact that Africentricity is not a static ideology but rather a dynamic strategy for understanding the thinking and experiences of Black people. He offers this as a shift in pedagogy that attempts to move the Black child to what he refers to as the "village centre." When we teach mathematics, do students learn that Africa was the birthplace of measurement and calendar charts or that the Yoruba people of present-day Nigeria created their complex counting systems?

In the early 1990s, Gloria Ladson Billings introduced Culturally Relevant Pedagogy, which highlights the benefits of teaching children according to their experiences and contextual understandings of the world around them. Nevertheless, in 1933, Carter G. Woodson, author of the *Miseducation of the Negro*, speaks of a "foreign pedagogy" where Black children are forced to navigate rigid teacher-centred, rote learning practices based on a dominant master script that places constraints on their ability to apply knowledge and master learning expectations. Both of these approaches illustrate how crucial it is for all students to see themselves in their work. By encouraging them to augment their ancestral knowledge and gifts, we can unlock their potential for optimal engagement and achievement.

**"There needs to be a pedagogical shift in how we see Black existence, Black prosperity and vitality, and how we teach about these things."**

**"By encouraging them [Black Children] to augment their ancestral knowledge and gifts, we can unlock their potential for optimal engagement and achievement."**





## Rosemary Sadlier

(She/ her)

Diversity, inclusion and equity consultant, a social justice advocate, researcher, writer, and, international speaker on Black History, anti-racism, DEI and women's issues

1. How can studying the history of Canadian human rights foster student activism? How do we equip students to speak truth to power? How do you see the power of writing influencing students and parents to engage more in issues dealing with Africentric approaches and touching on the lack of equity they often see? Do you see other tools creating the same impact as books for this issue?

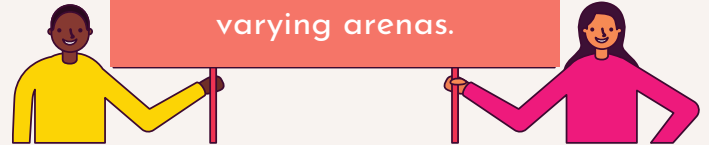
I believe that studying the history of Canadian human rights can foster student activism. First, students must see themselves being included as a part of Canadian history. If they are students of African or racialized backgrounds, they will be limited in their ability to do so. That very lack could be part of the reason they may choose, by default, to focus on finding their place in this history and their place in this space and actively seek to ensure that others are not left out. Even incredibly young students understand when things are unfair or know when someone is expressly excluded. We are experiencing a fight for freedom all the time, which is part of what all of us do — to speak truth to power about it in varying arenas. Sometimes we speak truth to power in terms of writing and writing about our involvement, our own lived experience in this place. After all, representation has been so bereft about Canadians of African origin because we have been left out. We have been left out, omitted, pointedly overlooked, or ignored in so many facets of society. We need an Africentric approach applied to history and social justice and applied to how we approach women, how we approach labour, and how we approach education. This is to ensure that the tools created to address the dominant Eurocentric narrative are created in a comprehensive and wide-ranging manner to bring a corrective and inclusive focus and attention in the household and the classroom.

INTERVIEW BY:

Ayaan Hashi



We are experiencing a fight for freedom all the time, which is part of what all of us do — to speak truth to power about it in varying arenas.



2. August 1 is recognized as Emancipation day in a concerted effort to acknowledge the apparent influence that Black people have in Canada. From your perspective, where do you believe the ongoing resistance comes from that continues to prevent these initiatives from becoming more widespread? Where do you believe we still see this form of resistance? In schools, institutions etc

When I advocated, initiated, and supported the efforts to have February as Black History Month (building on the initiative of the founders of the OBHS) — which was officially recognized in the city of Toronto in 1993, the province of Ontario and all provinces in this country, as well as the federal government (in cooperation with MP Jean Augustine by Dec.1995) — I did so with the hope that this would help fuel a passion among people and create a curiosity about the long-term presence of people of African origin in this country. I also expected that there would be a required Black History-infused curriculum from K through 12. About the same time, I also began the efforts to formally recognize August 1 as Emancipation Day, again hosting events (e.g. I was the keynote speaker at the reanimated celebration of Emancipation Day in Windsor in cooperation with US CG John Nay), building up a community of interest, and ultimately achieving success with the city of Toronto, Metro Toronto, the city of Ottawa, the province of Ontario — on a unanimous Bill in 2008 (holding events in cooperation with LG David Onley at Fort York National Historic Site as well as all political parties at Queen's Park)...



## Rosemary Sadlie

(She/ her)

diversity, inclusion and equity consultant, a social justice advocate, researcher, writer, and, international speaker on Black History, anti-racism, DEI and women's issues

and just recently, as of March 2021, my ongoing effort and persistence since 1994 were recognized with the national commemoration finally being effected on a Motion put forward by MP Majid Jowhari. Emancipation Day puts focus on freedom and resistance. We all need to remember that we are continuously challenged and face barriers produced by entrenched interests and white supremacy. We cannot be lulled into believing that we are post-racial when we are not. These formal recognitions, these formal days are significant points in the year to bring additional focus, have courageous conversations, and ask tough questions that can happen anytime. However, these special days may trigger curiosity and a platform. These conversations are essential to see and create the kind of society we feel is important to us.

*3. Your work with deputations on race relations and consultation requires having conversations about anti-racism. What advice would you give to those who want to get involved in hands-on procedures in creating these changes to incorporate more EDI practices where they see a lack of it?*

If you find yourself in a situation where diversity, equity, and inclusion are not being "served at the table," you have a choice. You can ask questions such as, who is not there? Whose voice is not being heard? Who is not being represented? Whose story is not being told? Who may face barriers getting to this table? Sometimes, this is also affected by an audit of the business or the institution to determine what the demography of that place might be regarding race, gender, LGBTQ+, and disability matters.

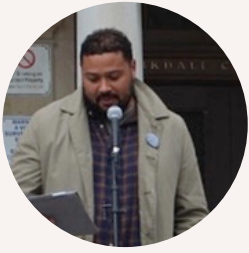
*4. How do we work towards systemic change without the onus falling mostly on teachers? What are some of the avenues or actions to transform the curriculum and education policy?*

The onus should never fall mostly on teachers and parents should never assume that the school can do it all for them. No one person nor institution should oversee trying to make the changes that need to occur. This needs to happen at all levels, by all partners, from the individual through to the system itself, because they reinforce and mutually support each other. We cannot create curriculum and education reform if we do not have policymakers willing to effect those changes, politicians willing to fund their creation, and people willing to see this happen. How do we have policymakers willing to take that step if they do not feel that there is a community of interest willing to support them in taking that brave step?

Similarly, parents need to be able to provide a safe space at home to encourage and allow their children to become critical thinkers based on the values that are important to them. In a classroom, the teacher can then draw upon the students' lived experiences because that is how we come to learn about human rights. We need to both understand the intellectual basis and feel them in our hearts to create the freedoms and responsibilities we cherish. We all have a responsibility to create the informed, intelligent, social justice-oriented, critical thinkers that we want in the future.

"We cannot create curriculum and education reform if we do not have policymakers willing to effect those changes, politicians willing to fund their creation, and people willing to see this happen."





## D. TYLER ROBINSON

Pronouns: (He/Him)

1. *Your work advocating for racial justice and incorporating anti-racist pedagogies in education is admirable. You co-designed an important anti-Black racism course that now has been implemented in over 43 schools across six different school boards of Ontario. Can you tell us more about this course's impact on students and families?*

It is important to note that this course is but one of many that different educators across this province, past and present, have created to dismantle anti-Black racism and other versions of racism and oppression. This is important to state because it needs to be understood that many educators have, and continue to, engage in this work directly, in the absence of leadership from the Ontario Ministry of Education, who has failed to produce a single high school course focusing on Black studies, available to schools across the province, despite the large body of evidence and scholarship which supports the necessity of this type of coursework. While specific feedback is still being collected (as many schools are currently running this course in semester two of this 2021–2022 school year), the feedback thus far has been overwhelmingly positive.

For starters, in the Front Matter of our curriculum document, we included the following excerpt, "The positioning of this Interdisciplinary Studies course as 4U is intentional; it is a specific response to a well-known and documented culture of low expectations that exists for Black students in Ontario's education system (James & Turner, 2017). Students needing to take an 11U course as a prerequisite should be made aware that it is also designed to lift Black students out of widespread, lower-level streaming." For the above reasons, parents, educators, and other stakeholders have been very excited to see this coursework brought into their students' public education experience. As a parent, it is meaningful to me to know that my daughter may at least have the opportunity to take one course where her identity and experience are affirmed and celebrated.

However, this course is not a cure-all, nor is it sufficient to ease my concerns about the likelihood of her future experience of systemic racism on and in this land. Like other parents, I want to see a provincial strategy that implements Kindergarten to grade 12 curricula, where this and other similar coursework can be built upon over time.

As with any subject area with a K-12 strategy, anti-colonial, anti-racism, and anti-oppression curricula can and should also exist alongside these other areas of study. Indigenous and Black experiences should be a central component of this work. These are the historical Canadian entry points into any examination of settler-colonialism, genocide, racism/oppression, white supremacy, and the resulting Eurocentrism that pervades public education in this province.

However, this course is not a cure-all, nor is it sufficient to ease my concerns about the likelihood of her future experience of systemic racism on and in this land. Like other parents, I want to see a provincial strategy that implements Kindergarten to grade 12 curricula, where this and other similar coursework can be built upon over time. As with any subject area with a K-12 strategy, anti-colonial, anti-racism, and anti-oppression curricula can and should also exist alongside these other areas of study.

INTERVIEW BY:  
Talha Anwar Chaudhry



Indigenous and Black experiences should be a central component of this work. These are the historical Canadian entry points into any examination of settler-colonialism, genocide, racism/oppression, white supremacy, and the resulting Eurocentrism that pervades public education in this province.

Some encouraging signs from student feedback gathered from the pilot of the course is that we saw 100% credit accumulation of this university-level course, even though students enrolled in the course came from the university pathways, the college pathway, and the essentials pathway. My co-creator and teacher of the pilot also shared that she has never seen such excitement, engagement, and spirited discourse from students as she did while guiding students through and co-creating this journey with them. The following is a quote from a grade 12 student having completed the pilot version of the course, "In our schools, Black students are not taught about their history. No one is taught Black history. Moreover, if we do not tackle these topics in schools, we are holding our society back — not only from learning about history but also from history. Moreover, that is exactly how racism perpetuates. Many of the courses we take in school, such as science, math, and English, will not help us tackle these social justice issues. The [Deconstructing Anti-Black Racism] course teaches us about [a] history we never learned. It shows us the issues and helps us understand how racism came to be... and how it continues to thrive worldwide. This course... educates us on a real issue; it makes us feel the emotions, and it will make us put theory into practice... it is making me more eager to make a change."

2. *What advice can you share with non-Black educators facilitating this and similar courses?*

This is an essential question. While working to mobilize the community to push this coursework far and wide, this topic came up repeatedly. Context matters here: across Ontario, you do NOT have Black teachers in every school. Beyond not having Black educators in the buildings, the question of respecting the autonomy of Black educators to decide for themselves, whether they want to take on the emotional labour and possible trauma — be it re-lived or happened upon in the course of guiding this curriculum — was also top of mind for us.

In those discussions, some stressed that the course should only run at schools where there was a Black educator willing and ready to teach the course; the rationale was to achieve the desired outcome of the principle, "Do no harm." Others argued that a non-Black educator, committed to their ongoing efforts toward allyship with Black communities, can effectively hold space for the wide range of important conversations that can and must arise within the course. After carefully weighing differing perspectives, in the Front Matter of our curriculum, we included the following: "Student feedback from the pilot of this course was unanimous: it is preferable for a Black educator, who is willing and knowledgeable about Black Studies, to teach this course since they can relate to the content by way of their lived experience. This does not mean that Black educators should be expected to teach the course, nor is it their responsibility; however, all Black educators within the school should have the first right of refusal to teach this course before a non-Black educator is considered."

## D. TYLER ROBINSON

**Pronouns: (He/Him)**

In the absence of a willing Black educator, administrators should consider the possibility of hiring a Black educator to teach this course. Finally, in the absence of either of the above, administrators should explore different ways to consult the school community to determine the educator for the course. The absence of a Black educator should NOT preclude offering this course. The educator chosen should have a proven and demonstrable commitment and ability to effectively address anti-Black racism and build meaningful relationships with Black and other racially and historically marginalized groups.

All educators must demonstrate an approach to this course infused with compassion, humility, empathy, and a commitment to continued learning in Black Studies. The classroom educator is responsible for building their capacity and criticality in Black Studies and anti-Black racism, as well as their knowledge of the course's grounding theoretical frameworks: Critical Race Theory, Historical Thinking Skills, Afrocentric Pedagogy, and Culturally Relevant and Responsive Pedagogy."In the absence of a willing Black educator, administrators should consider the possibility of hiring a Black educator to teach this course. Finally, in the absence of either of the above, administrators should explore different ways to consult the school community to determine the educator for the course. The absence of a Black educator should NOT preclude offering this course. The educator chosen should have a proven and demonstrable commitment and ability to effectively address anti-Black racism and build meaningful relationships with Black and other racially and historically marginalized groups. All educators must demonstrate an approach to this course infused with compassion, humility, empathy, and a commitment to continued learning in Black Studies. The classroom educator is responsible for building their capacity and criticality in Black Studies and anti-Black racism, as well as their knowledge of the course's grounding theoretical frameworks: Critical Race Theory, Historical Thinking Skills, Afrocentric Pedagogy, and Culturally Relevant and Responsive Pedagogy."

Moreover, from this experience, how can the classroom and the school be used as a space for intersectional solidarity? Below I have posted another excerpt from our course curriculum Front Matter that adequately addresses this question: "This course is designed to provide space for ALL Ontario students to engage meaningfully with anti-Black racism specifically, and racism and oppression more generally. Black students need a mirror in which they will see themselves reflected in the curriculum.

All other students need a window to gain a meaningful perspective on their Black peers' experiences as they consider what it means to work toward allyship (Styles, 2013). The Interdisciplinary Studies framework hinges on student inquiry.

Inquiry is a process that can be taught and seeks to question the world critically, thus giving rise to new knowledge. It asks the students to engage in wonder and curiosity, thereby finding meaning in the world around them.

The recognition that knowledge is dynamic and ever-changing is a central tenet of the inquiry process. The educator is responsible for guiding the inquiry process by teaching "how" to inquire. Inquiry in the classroom asks students to solve problems while acknowledging their social location and what they need to do to solve the problem, thus giving students greater agency in their learning. Inquiry can begin with an essential question based on student voice and choice (Graham & Watt, 2021)."

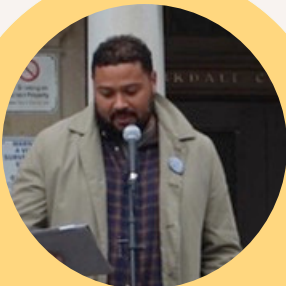
The Interdisciplinary Studies framework hinges on student inquiry. Inquiry is a process that can be taught and seeks to question the world critically, thus giving rise to new knowledge. It asks the students to engage in wonder and curiosity, thereby finding meaning in the world around them. The recognition that knowledge is dynamic and ever-changing is a central tenet of the inquiry process. The educator is responsible for guiding the inquiry process by teaching "how" to inquire. Inquiry in the classroom asks students to solve problems while acknowledging their social location and what they need to do to solve the problem, thus giving students greater agency in their learning. Inquiry can begin with an essential question based on student voice and choice (Graham & Watt, 2021)."

3. *Based on your experience designing an anti-racist curriculum, how can we create tangible connections between the TDSB, other school boards, and OISE as we move forward to collaborate on decolonizing the curriculum and inserting African perspectives into teaching?*

It is no secret that over-stressed teachers who are tasked with creating and disseminating professional learning in the minimal time funded for this work leave much to be desired. A key way to move beyond the 'ivory tower' problem would be to build tangible and ongoing partnerships directly with teachers to work toward this aim. This would ensure that the latest and best practices in education are quickly moving from academia to the 'on-the-ground' reality of teaching and learning.

Moreover, this learning needs to reach ALL adults in the building (not just teachers), as systemic racism comes at students from many directions and many people. It thus presents a clear need to bring this work to every individual operating inside our schools and interacting with young people. Beyond the above, higher education institutions getting involved would reduce the wide gap and lag time between theory and practice, lessen a load of over-worked and under-supported practitioners, and bring a level of seriousness to professional learning time and discourse. Scholarly work with no direct channel to deliver its findings immediately and directly to the folks best positioned to implement its findings leaves many unexplored possibilities. I also think every student pursuing higher education I think centres of higher learning must have a presence in EVERY high school. It is great that at the MEd, Ph.D., and Post Doctoral levels, there are many people engaged in vital research and Africentric scholarship that helps lead our thinking. However, the ivory tower reality means that, often, this important work is not reaching most teachers or students where it needs to in the schools. Leading-thought centres and schools of education, like OISE, need to have 'boots on the ground' in our schools. Students need to SEE the diverse set of academics engaged in this work, walking in the halls, having conversations with them, and/or being welcomed into classrooms with critical consciousness being built.

Learning is relational and personal; immeasurable would be the value of a young person being able to directly discuss complex conversations about race with someone that looks like them, who studies and seeks to move the needle on issues that matter to them. The opportunity for mentoring possibilities could be endless. Additionally, professional learning for staff would be something that should have to mentor a high school student as a criterion for completing one's program. There is SO much need for guidance, belonging, and community, and we need to begin to do things differently, taking an 'all-hands-on-deck' approach to raising the young people in our village.







**Dr. Marie Green**  
(She/Her)  
Sessional Lecturer in OISE's MT  
program - Religious Education  
CTL7041

*Imbued in your educational research is the importance of cultivating and nurturing relationships. What relationships are necessary for foregrounding anti-colonial practices in education, specifically in the classroom?*

In light of our present quest to root education praxis in anti-colonial and decolonized pedagogies, the village concept is critical. I had a really difficult time in high school. My mother was on her own, had three jobs, and did not have the capacity to support and advocate for her five children. As new immigrants to Canada, we did not have the village we had back home in Jamaica. My mother did the best to provide food and shelter, but when it came to school and the social aspects, we had to fend for ourselves. Regaining some semblance of a village was key to my survival. I had some really good teachers who recognized this, but there were other teachers who did not.

As someone now involved in teacher preparation, I have spent a great deal of time contemplating what it is that separates those who recognize this and those who do not. I encountered individuals during the period of my teacher training, who felt that it was not their duty to do anything other than teach the subject at hand. That is pretty scary when you consider the needs of our students. We need to figure out a way to end up with pools of teachers who have a baseline realization of all that teaching encompasses and who are willing to take the comprehensive approach to education. Starting with that baseline, we can then begin to initiate teachers into the village concept.

Today we have all kinds of names for the village concept, including, but not limited to, Culturally Relevant Pedagogy, Equity and Inclusive education, anti-colonial education, decolonized education, and student-centered learning. It all falls under the canopy of thought that led Gloria Ladson-Billings (1995) to declare "That's just good Teaching!" When a teacher really gets it that you are teaching the whole person, they will be willing to do what it takes to ensure successful outcomes for all their students.



**INTERVIEW BY:**  
**Sonia Canzio**

They will get to know the community, read material outside of their immediate zone, have conversations that engage them in diverse ways of knowing, and attend workshops and training to improve their understanding. A teacher who is willing to grow, to learn, and to understand their place as a part of the village is going to produce students with good academic outcomes. I encourage teacher candidates to cultivate those relationships within what Jacques Maritain (1943) calls the "education sphere" (family, community, faith groups, school, the state). Seeing oneself as a part of the village increases accountability.

What is the inspiration behind designing your course, Black Lives Matter in the Classroom?

This course allowed for the Faculty of Theology at St. Mikes to engage students in the collective conversation about anti-Black racism. When I sat down to put it together, I drew on my own experience as a Black student. In high school, I had so much going on at home, and in my personal life, that I simply was not applying myself academically. Then one year I took this social science course, I think it may have been Family in Canadian Society, and the teacher introduced us to Alvin Toffler's Future Shock. Toffler immediately piqued my interest. I was already an avid reader and really intrigued by socio-political, digital technology, futurology, and sci-fi topics. But we didn't get enough of that kind of material in school at the time. I didn't relate to most of what was being taught and very few of my classes interested me. I devoured Toffler, and for the major assignment — an essay — I really did my research and wrote what I thought was the best darn paper I had ever written. When it came time to return papers, the teacher took me aside and began asking me questions to ascertain whether I had actually written the essay myself. He asked me if my older siblings had written it for me. I remember telling him that all my siblings had part time jobs and their own schoolwork leaving no time to help me. He asked me if anyone else helped me with it? I told him my mother had three jobs.

When he finally let me go, I remember thinking that if he thought someone else authored this essay then it must be good. I felt certain I would get an A.

But I also felt criminalized, like I had been interrogated for a crime, when all I had done was write an essay about a topic that spoke to me. The real blow came when my teacher handed me back my paper days later. He gave me a B- and I ended up getting an overall B in the course. I really felt that he didn't believe me. It was a real blow to my self-esteem. I was a struggling C student, bordering on Ds, and when I reached for that A, I got my hand slapped. I felt that what happened to me that day was intellectual assassination or academic murder.



## Dr. Marie Green

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Sessional Lecturer in OISE's MT program - Religious Education CTL7041

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Over the last few years, we have seen the atrocities being wrought on Black bodies both here and abroad. But there is a different kind of violence being inflicted on the minds of Black children in the classroom. For some students it can mean death. That death can come from them being pushed out (Dei, Mazzuca, Mclsaac, Zine 1997) of the education system (academic death), to them ending up in activities that further put them at risk for physical death. Low expectation is violence. Black Lives Matter in the Classroom (SMP3416) attempts to bring attention to this reality. I build on what I gleaned from the great teachers I encountered as a student, as well as the ones that put me at further risk for non-completion. I wanted to have a course that would lead participants to interrogate their beliefs and biases, recognize power imbalances, and call out whiteness and epistemologies of oppression. To help us on the journey, I engage members of the Black community, the village, to talk about what needs to happen on the periphery of the classroom — from administration down to extra-curricular activities and whole school culture.

**"They recognized my humanity."**



**"I wanted to have a course that would lead participants to interrogate their beliefs and biases, recognize power imbalances, and call out whiteness and epistemologies of oppression."**

Africentric and multicentric historical approaches to teaching are often only examined in the confines of academia. How can systems in education foreground this approach while considering the necessity for every child to feel valued and represented?

As a teacher and someone directly involved in teacher preparation, I often reflect on what helped me as a student. In my case, what actually saved my academic life, was the arrival of a Black teacher named Ms. Vicky Brooks-Johnson. I think I may have been in Grade 10 when she arrived at my school. She paired up with a Black student named Carmella Goodridge to start a Black History Month club. They would bring in guest speakers and one of them was Akwatu Khenti. When I heard him speak about the kingdoms of Songhay, Meroë, and the libraries and manuscripts of Timbuktu, that did it for me. It solidified my academic success and brought me from the brink of leaving school (being pushed out) to being determined to succeed academically. But none of that was possible without people in the positions of power acting with intentionality. There was the librarian who went out and purchased Black history books for the library; the principal who hired Black teachers and supported the club they started; my white teachers who engaged me, a new immigrant, in extra-curricular activities. Their actions said to me loudly and clearly, "We see you" and "Yes, you can."

They never gave up on me even when I skipped class. They recognized my humanity. This suggests active, intentional work that starts with seeing and acknowledging the humanity in every child. It means actively pursuing and embracing approaches that fall outside of the mainstream construct. Silence, that normalized sort of neutral space that we sometimes like to exist in, is also a form of violence, but we can change that narrative.

# isms ...

by *Sabra Desai*

I am not your hollow hologram  
I am my body, spirit and soul

I choose to fight your destructive constructions  
of *us* and *them*

Your deliberate perpetual deficit narratives go on...  
and on, *and on...*

While your hate may not be a crime by your standards  
it is mental imprisonment, a life sentence...

*I choose...*  
*I choose* to liberate myself  
*I choose* to breathe despite your choke  
*I choose* to speak despite your muzzle  
*I choose* to be inspired by my ancestors' struggle

They survived your relentless assault on their dignity  
They rose above your bigotry

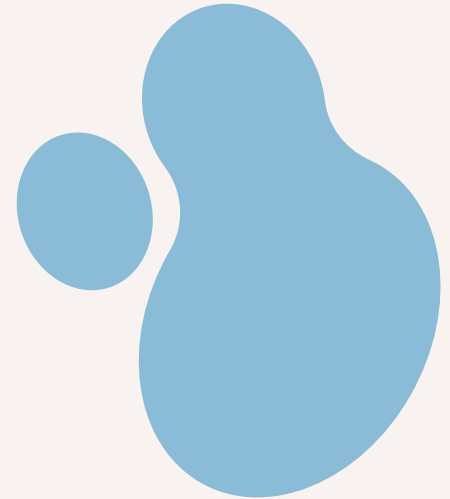
*I choose* to honour their faith and perseverance over your fragility  
*I choose* living and rising up against  
your deceptions,  
your distortions,  
your destructive power  
your hypocrisy

*I choose* to honour my body, spirit and soul  
over your hateful hold  
your *so-called* supremacy in remembrance of my ancestry

*I choose to remember*  
Their rich heritage to counter your false claims of superiority

Your lies are systemic, oppressive, a damaging legacy  
Nothing you do is excusable as mere idiosyncrasies

*I choose...*  
*I choose* to stand tall on my ancestors' shoulders  
remembering their love, knowledge and spirit.



# Memory Lane

## by Fiona Edwards

I want you to take a walk with me down memory lane  
 To you, the memories might be different, but to others, it remains the same  
 Let me take you way back to a place where you have never been  
 Not to mention the weeping and moaning of the people we have never seen  
 Why did our ancestors have to be inflicted with so much pain?  
 The answer to that question is not hard but rather plain

Their identity and dignity were taken from them in so many ways  
 When the white men came and captured them back in those days  
 Mama Africa, Mama Africa, why did they have to turn to you, Mama?  
 Tell me something, Mama, was it something you did or didn't do?  
 I wonder why the thoughts of you have been on their minds  
 They came in numbers, not even their guns they left behind

Your people journeyed to a far land, all the way to the Caribbean  
 With tears and feelings of fear of how it all began  
 The treatment they received made them feel that they were inferior  
 The authority of the white men made them believe they were superior  
 They enslaved your people and worked them tirelessly  
 With hard hours of labour, they earned little to call their own

The thought of remembering those days bring tears to my eyes  
 I can't explain the way I feel but I know it's not nice  
 Whoop! Whoop! The sound of the whip as it leaves the hands of a White man  
 Why me....! Can you hear it? It's the cry of a hopeless Black man  
 Why can't I be the same person here as I was back in Africa, Lord?  
 I want to be me, I want to be free, freedom, that's the word

I can't wait to see another day, freedom will be here and it's tomorrow  
 I am happy to be freed but I can't forget my sorrows  
 Day after day, year after year, how I prayed that day would come  
 I can't waste a minute of my time, I am heading for home sweet home  
 Mama Africa, Mama Africa, you never turned your back on me, no never  
 How can I ever turn my back on you now that I am free, not ever?

In the Caribbean is where I have built my nest  
 But in Africa, my Africa, is where my soul will be laid to rest  
 Africa is the place where I was born to grow  
 Just a little reminder in case you did not know  
 I am proud of you Africa and I hope you are proud of me  
 For making me Black and the person I turn out to be.

# Black

by Iyanuoluwa Akinrinola

Contact: [iyanu@afutureahope.org](mailto:iyanu@afutureahope.org)

Black. That is what we are said to be.

Black, synonymous with inventors?

Black, synonymous with innovators?

Black, synonymous with creatives?

Black Kings? Black Queens? Black Empires? Black Kingdoms?

What is meant by Black?

Black knowledge? For we, too are guardians of the land.

Black, like you and me? Changemakers.

Black, has impacted human existence in unique ways since the dawn of time. So Black that time and history could not erase the influence of our existence. Our stories are unique in their similarities. Different in their commonalities. Triumphant in the reality of a modern world that was meant to break Black. For no longer shall tongues be held back in speech.

No longer shall heads be bowed, nor eyes lowered to not cause a rift in the systems. Black.

That is what we are said to be.

Black. That is who we are.

With Excellence as our watchword and Joy as our stance.

Black Lives Matter, and the understanding of this begins with education, truth.



## MY BLACK!



<https://express.adobe.com/video/MdMalsgBc41se>

The effects of colonialism continue to impact us today as they are embedded in so many different facets of our day to day lives, this is why this piece was written. There is a false narrative permeating in our society that has worked to define what Blackness is. It has negatively impacted our sense of self and resulted in issues such as internalized racism. For some, there is a lack of self-love and their pains are invisible to our eyes, this poem is written for them and those less familiar with their heart's songs of grief. Black in all its forms is beautiful and so is seeing the world through an anti-racist mindset, this is the framework embedded in this poem. As a collective, we have a responsibility to use our understanding to help empower children by reaffirming them and dismantling any construction of a false sense of self.

## VIDEOS & PODCAST



**Anthonia Ikemeh (She/Her)**  
**Master of Teaching Candidate,**  
**Primary/Junior**  
**Curriculum, Teaching and**  
**Learning Department**  
**Ontario Institute of Studies in**  
**Education (OISE)**  
**University of Toronto**





**Podcast: BlacktoCanada.**

This podcast provides listeners with the rich, interesting, and often untold 400-year history of Black Canadians. Listeners learn about the challenges, barriers, hardships, joys, achievements, accomplishments, courage and resilience of Black Canadians and how they have contributed to Canada.

**Anchor:** <https://anchor.fm/channonoyeniran>

**Spotify:** <https://open.spotify.com/show/4dAXZH6dp3h8xLD6LURcRh>

**RadioPublic:** <https://radiopublic.com/blacktocanada-8XVLLz>



**Channon A. Oyeniran**

First Vice President, Ontario Black History Society  
 B.A. (Hons) U of T, M.A. (Hull), Cert. in Instructing Adults (George Brown)

PhD (c), Dept. of Geography and Planning, Queen's University

Social Media:

Twitter: @LookingBackInto

Instagram: @Lookingbackinto

Website: [www.oyeseducation.org/channon](http://www.oyeseducation.org/channon)

**COMPLAINT AS A QUEER METHOD**

**SARA AHMED**



Sara Ahmed is an independent feminist scholar and writer. Her work is concerned with how power is experienced and challenged in everyday life and institutional cultures. She is currently writing *The Feminist Killjoy Handbook* and has begun a new project on common sense. Her previous publications include *Complaint!* (2021), *What's The Use? On the Uses of Use* (2019), *Living a Feminist Life* (2017), *Willful Subjects* (2014), *On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life* (2012), *The Promise of Happiness* (2010), *Queer Phenomenology: Objects, Orientations, Others* (2006), *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (2014, 2004), *Strange Encounters: Embodied Others in Post-Coloniality* (2000) and *Differences that Matter: Feminist Theory and Postmodernism* (1998).

2022 Margaret Laurence Lecture  
 Department of Gender & Social Justice  
 Trent University

**Sarah Ahmed's Webinar**



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cbRFH5Q7JtY>





I READ A HISTORY THAT HAS  
BEEN WRITTEN TO FORGET ME.

SO I FIGHT TO REMEMBER,  
AND TO RELEARN WHO WE  
WERE AND WHO I WILL  
BECOME.

## Amani Arts

Visual Artist, Writer, and Spoken Word Poet



@its.amani.arts



# SOCIAL MEDIA FEATURE

The Leonard Braithwaite Program (LBP) is the first Africentric program of its kind at the secondary school level in Canada. Data collected by the TDSB indicated an increasing achievement gap exists among black students. This is an Africentric Program within a school that is thriving; it is a program that provides students with an alternative way of learning, while still being a part of the Winston Churchill community. The Africentric curriculum is meant to be a critical approach to the curriculum and to thinking about the curriculum and the nature of curricular knowledge. This is supplemented by monthly Professional Leadership Seminars. All materials and subject areas can be adapted to an Africentric perspective and are in Leonard Braithwaite Program.



YOUR COMMUNITY PLACE FOR  
LEARNING: FAITH,  
EXCELLENCE, KNOWLEDGE



Please work through your school's  
Guidance Counsellor to complete  
and submit a Leonard Braithwaite  
Program registration form by  
**January 31, 2020**

Student can register now for the  
2020/2021 school year starts  
September 2020.

The application is available on the  
WCCI Website

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Scarborough M1P 2P7  
[www.winstonchurchillci.ca](http://www.winstonchurchillci.ca)



@africentricwcci

## WINSTON CHURCHILL COLLEGIATE INSTITUTE

### The Leonard Braithwaite Africentric Program



The Africentric Program at Winston Churchill Collegiate Institute delivers an exciting, creative approach to the diverse perspectives, experiences and history of the people of the African diaspora.

The Leonard Braithwaite Program is open to all students interested in Grade 9, 10, 11, and 12 courses with this type of curricular focus. Register now!



**27 out of 34 students have successfully entered Post-Secondary education.**



# LEONARD BRAITHWAITE AFRICENTRIC PROGRAM



## The Leonard Braithwaite Secondary Africentric Program



**Promoting  
academic excellence  
and cultural enrichment**

Learn more about our programs.

[www.WinstonChurchillCI.ca/LBP](http://www.WinstonChurchillCI.ca/LBP)



# SOCIAL MEDIA FEATURE



As Africentric curriculum has often been misconstrued in the public and in educational circles, to provide more clarity the **Africentric curriculum is not:**

- A replacement for Eurocentric curriculum which simply glorifies people of African descent as the champions of progress and civilization and negates the contributions and perspectives of other racial groups.
- Curriculum solely about systems of slavery, the trans-Atlantic slave trade, or the enslavement of African peoples.
- An emphasis on casting people of African descent globally as victims of racism and discrimination.
- The sole answer to the disengagement and underachievement of some students of African descent.
- The sole answer to disengagement and underachievement of some students of African descent.
- Not only for Black youth.

## LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Students within the Leonard Braithwaite Program benefit from smaller class sizes. These students have opportunities to grow and learn from a myriad of opportunities. The goal is for students to graduate and move on to post-secondary. From Grade 9-12 students are given opportunities to go to post-secondary institutions so they can see that these are spaces for them.



The program offers students from grade 9 to 12 the opportunity to learn through an Africentric lens in the credit-granting, de-streamed program that allows students to meet achievement expectations, without defining their educational pathways. The courses will be designated as academic in order to provide students with the most choice for future pathways; however, through the use of layered curriculum, students will reach the required expectations in their own way, even if they are currently not at the academic level.



LBP student in Extra Help Program



LBP Students in the Classroom

### Harvard University (2017)

In 2017, students received the opportunity to visit the Harvard Law Black Student Association. In addition, Students in LBP have had an opportunity to tour University of Toronto, York University, and Windsor University and learn about the admission process and they got to see what university is like.



Harvard University 2017



WCCI and Downsview SS Students at Harvard

### Nova Scotia Trip (2019)

In May 2019 students in LBP got an opportunity to go to Nova Scotia to learn about Black Canadian History. Students also got an opportunity to spend time with Downsview SS and Auburn High as they are the other schools with an Africentric Program in Canada.



The Black Loyalist Heritage Centre



WCCI and Downsview SS students in Nova Scotia

LEONARD BRAITHWAITE  
AFRICENTRIC PROGRAM





## SOCIAL MEDIA FEATURE



Register Now At  
[WWW.MACCA1987.COM/YSSI](http://WWW.MACCA1987.COM/YSSI)



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# SOCIAL MEDIA FEATURE



The flyer features a blue and white color scheme. At the top left is a compass icon. The main text is in large, bold, white letters on a blue background. Below the main text is a photo of graduation caps. The value of the scholarship is listed in bold black text on a white background. The application website and deadline are also listed in bold black text on a white background.

**FIND YOUR PATH  
SCHOLARSHIP  
2022**

**VALUE: \$500**

**FOR APPLICATION, VISIT: [WWW.FYPCANADA.COM](http://WWW.FYPCANADA.COM)**

**DEADLINE: APRIL 4, 2022**

I hope this message finds you well! Find Your Path aims to help Black youth and first-generation students realize their academic potential through the creation of engaging, restorative and Afrocentric educational programming and a scholarship fund. Every year we award scholarships to youth who are the first in their family to pursue post-secondary education. Our seventh annual Find Your Path scholarship is valued at \$500 for students who are the first in their families to pursue post-secondary education due April 4, 2021. Would you be able to share our flyer on your story?



@findyourpathca



# CIARS *newsletter*

**VOLUME 1, ISSUE 5**



@ciars\_uoft



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**CIARS in Conversation: Africentric Approaches to Teaching history:**

<https://youtu.be/IZbFYFzgx1M>

