



**Racial Resilience:
Anti-Racism as Spiritual Praxis
Introductory Event**

Introduction

**Why
compassion**

**Developing
Racial
Resilience**

**The pervasive
reality of
race**

**Dr. Seth Schoen
Rev. Dr. Christopher Carter**



Who we are & Why we do this work

We are called to do anti-racist work out of our Christian commitment to foster relationships across difference.

Seth

Christopher

Dr. Seth Schoen

PhD in Practical Theology with emphasis on
Spiritual Formation, compassion formation,
and CRT.





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PhD in Social Ethics with emphasis on Black Theology & Ethics, Environmental Ethics, and Food Studies.

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Isaiah & Bell
4/10/2019

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The What & Why of Compassion

What is compassion?

In its most basic form compassion is being moved in our depths by the experiences of another such that we respond in ways that intend to ease the suffering or promote the flourishing of another.

Why is compassion important?

**Jesus'
threefold path of
radical compassion**

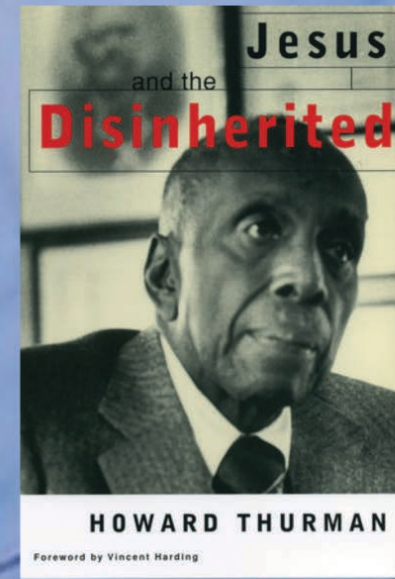
**Why
Compassion &
Anti-racism**

The Spiritual path of Jesus

Jesus' spiritual path of radical compassion has three dimensions:

- A deepening of our connection to the compassion of God.
- A restoration to a humanity fully loved and alive.
- An increase to our capacity to be instruments of compassion toward others in the world.

Jesus embodied a compassionate way of being in the world in the midst of intense marginalization and oppression.





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Compassion & Anti-racism?

- We believe that traditional anti-racism and anti-bias approaches de-personalize anti-racism/bias to focus on structure.
- Anti-racism/bias work causes us to be reactive and we need tools to mine the reactivities for their wisdom.
- Compassion is the core of Jesus' ministry of anti-oppression.
- We have a vocational responsibility to love God & neighbor as we love ourselves.

You must have the courage to take the risk of faith required to do the work of humanizing your neighbor.



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Race, Racial Projects, Racism

Omi and Winnant - Racial Formation in the US

Race is a master category in the US, a fundamental concept that has profoundly shape and continues to shape the history, polity, economy, and culture of the US.

"**Racism**" has been subjected to conceptual deflation because of the era of colorblindness.

A Racial Project is an effort to organize and distribute resources along particular racial lines.

A racial project can be defined as **racist** if it creates or reproduces structures of domination based on racial significations.

Understanding and identifying racism requires an analysis of outcomes and not merely intention.

Structural
Racism

Colonization

US Theological
Anthropology

White
Racial
Frame

Understanding Structural Racism

The departure point of this seminar is the fact that racism is systemic and is embedded in the structural foundation of the US economy, polity, and ideology.

Structural racism includes:

1. The institutionalized economic and other social resource inequalities that can be traced along racial lines;
2. The institutionalized political marginalization that can be traced along racial lines, and;
3. Institutionalized ideological control, with ideology being a set of shared beliefs that help normalize and ultimately moralize racism.

Of the three dimensions of structural racism, our seminar finds its entry point within the sphere of ideology. Ideology plays a crucial role in enabling structurally racist systems to persist by explaining away racist systems through “common sense beliefs.”

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Colonialism

In its broadest sense colonialism refers to the specific form of cultural exploitation that developed with the expansion of Europe over the past 500 years. It is the implanting of "settlements" on distant territory.

Our modern notions of "human," "animal," and "race" emerged during this period.

Settler colonies emphasized the idea of cultural inferiority of the colonized; sets up a binary of colonized/colonizer.





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It is no coincidence that colonialism and chattel slavery emerged during the period when European Christian men were able to claim that Africans and indigenous American people were evil and savage because they were either non-Christian or “too close to nature” and “like animals,” and therefore distant from God.

Dwight Hopkins describes US Theological Anthropology as Demonic Individualism in three parts:

- Historical Amnesia
- Instantaneous fulfillment of desires
- We're #1 mythology

Baldwin

**Implicit
Theological
Anthropology**

James Baldwin: An Open Letter to my sister, Miss Angela Davis

“The American triumph—in which the American tragedy has always been implicit—was to make black people despise themselves. When I was little I despised myself, I did not know any better. And this meant, albeit unconsciously, or against my will, or in great pain, that I also despised my father. And my mother. And my brothers. And my sisters. Black people were killing each other every Saturday night out on Lenox Avenue, when I was growing up; and no one explained to them, or to me, that it was intended that they should; that they were penned where they were, like animals, in order that they should consider themselves no better than animals. Everything supported this sense of reality, nothing denied it: and so one was ready, when it came time to go to work, to be treated as a slave. So one was ready, when human terrors came, to bow before a white God and beg Jesus for salvation.”

US Theological Anthropology



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Implicit US Theological Anthropology

American Christians are implicitly taught and socialized to accept a normative structure of Christianity that places humans at the pinnacle of Creation. Racial formation ensures that the human is understood to be White, patriarchy ensures that he is male, and heterosexism ensures that he is straight.

When black, indigenous, people of color, women, and non-cisgender folx strive to be “full human beings” within this flawed structure, we are striving toward an anti-Christian theological principle that replicates an oppressive hierarchical model that places whiteness, maleness, and heterosexism as the pinnacle of creation.

Oppressed and marginalized people are "given" some of the privileges of humanness as long as they don't challenge existing hierarchical structure.

US Theological Anthropology



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The White Racial Frame

by Joe Feagin

The White Racial Frame is a comprehensive orienting structure that whites have long used to understand, interpret, and act in social settings.

The WRF contributes to white denial about the reality of race and racism in the US.

We resist and dismantle the WRF when we center the experiences and voices of the marginalized.

What is the WRF

The Impact of the WRF

Awareness Practice

What is the WRF?

The white racial frame is the dominant worldview held by many people, especially white people. It is an overarching white worldview that encompasses a broad and persisting set set of racial stereotypes, prejudices, ideologies, images, interpretations and narratives, emotions, and reactions to language accents, as well as racialized inclinations to discriminate. (3)

WRF contributes to the ideological aspects of structural racism.

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WRF contributes to the ideological aspects of structural racism.

In a 2001 survey of 779 white people by the Washington Post found that:

- 61% believed that on average white and Black people have the same access to health care
- 51% believed that Blacks had similar or better education than whites
- 50% believed that whites and Blacks were about as well off in their jobs.

When combined, **70% of whites** held at least one false belief about these important black/white differentials in life conditions.

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The Impact of the WRF

- A frame structures what we see, **or do not see**, in social settings.
- Big picture narratives that are especially important to white Americans
- Language evasion
- #Notallwhitepeople
- **Everyone is affected by the white racial frame.**
 - Racially liberal whites reject certain parts of the frame while holding on to others.
 - Legacy of colorism & "acting white" among BIPOC.
- Collective memory - how we interpret and experience our racialized present depends substantially on our knowledge of and interpretations of our racialized past.
- Collective forgetting - seeks to suppress or weaken collective memories of societal oppression, and to construct positive or fictional memories of that history.

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Whiteboard Practice

What feelings, thoughts, or emotions come up for you when you know you are going to talk about race or white privilege?

[insert mentimeter link]

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Why we created Racial Resilience

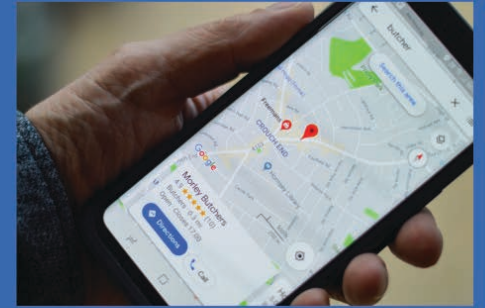
There were three primary driving forces behind the creation of Racial Resilience:

- 1) The emotional hurdles of whiteness
- 2) The exhaustion BIPOC face when doing anti-racism work.
- 3) We are committed to an inter-racial approach

Seminar Roadmap



Seminar Roadmap



Racial Resilience consists of four interconnected movements:

- 1) The first movement of the program cultivates the contemplative capacities necessary for paying attention to one's experience from a compassionate, grounded, non-reactive stance.
- 2) The second movement introduces important critical race theory themes, the theory of racial formation, and the development of the white racial frame.
- 3) The third movement fosters curiosity, openness, and compassion toward other people's experience of the world as racialized.
- 4) The fourth movement emphasizes the engagement of our growing awareness and embodiment of race for compassionate liberative anti-racist action.

Types of Anti-Racist Compassionate Action

- **Generosity:** offering resources to ease others suffering, but especially, those in your community who are most vulnerable.
- **Service:** caring directly for the immediate needs of those who are suffering, serve as allies, seek to listen and learn of the experiences of one another.
- **Witness:** bearing witness to the plight of those community members who have historically suffered, and fight for appropriate action.
- **Solidarity:** sharing the plight of those whose suffering cannot be attended to with short term remedies.
- **Empowerment:** providing marginalized folk with skills, tools, and personal capacities to sustain their own flourishing.
- **Justice:** attending to the root structural (or systemic) causes that give rise to racism in the first place.
- **Accountability:** Full and transparent commitment to the work of access, inclusion, equity, and diversity.

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