

# Racism at the Frontlines

Keith Adamson, PhD, RSW



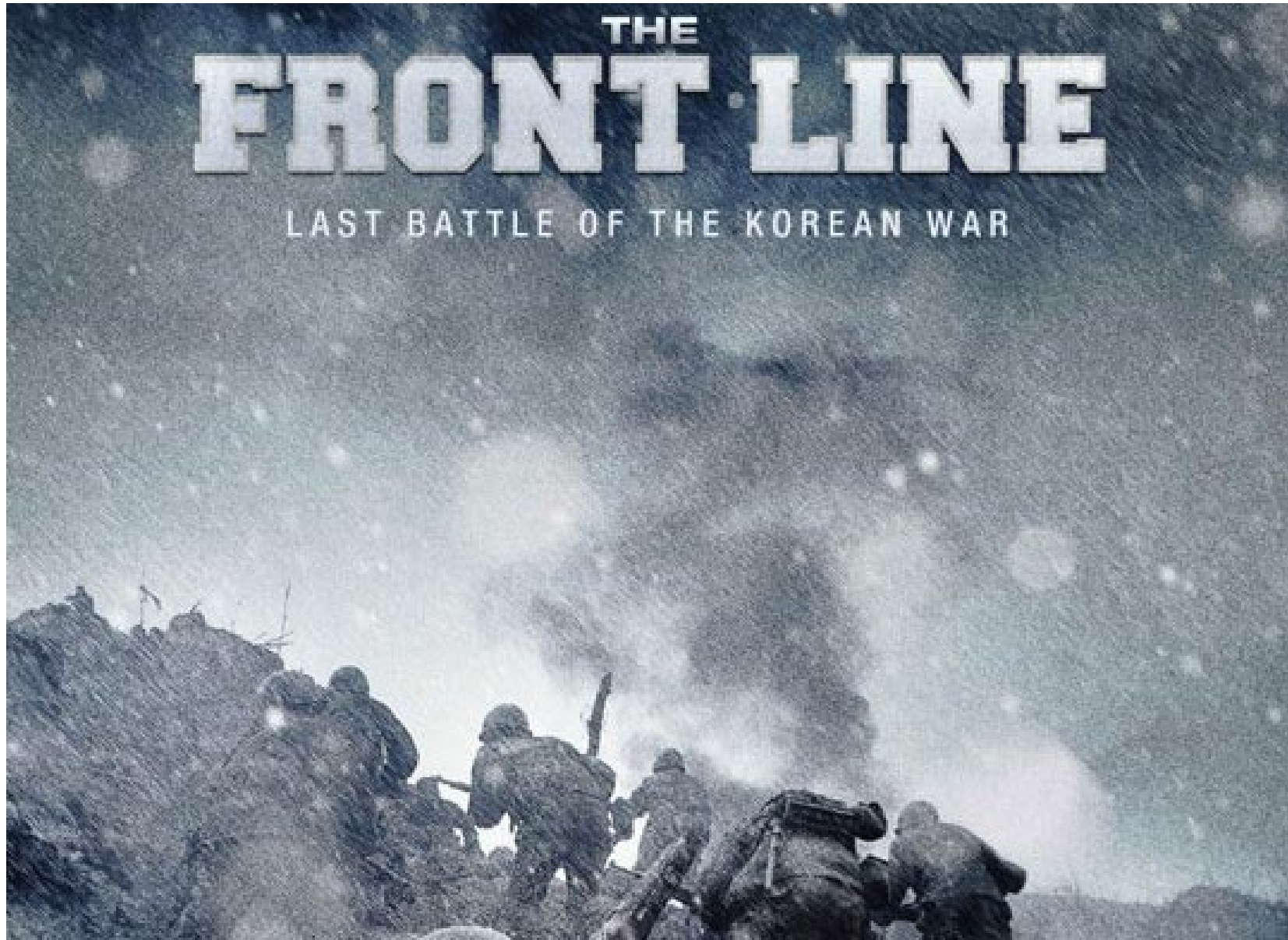
**FACTOR-INWENTASH**  
FACULTY OF SOCIAL WORK  
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO





## Racism

- **bias** (an ideology that favors one group over another)
- **prejudice** (an opinion informed by negative preconceived judgements of a person or a group)
- **discrimination** (mistreating an individual or group on the basis of multiple characteristics including race)



## FRONT LINE

- Frontline : Place where war and fighting takes place
- Racist policies/laws/rules can be seen as weaponized against particular groups.
- How do these groups navigate treacherous terrain?

# Objectives of the presentation

- 1) Promote awareness of, and sensitivity to race through the introduction of the seeing, being, doing framework
- 2) Create a snapshot of what racism looks like in Canada and the impact of racism
- 3) Provide an advocacy framework for social workers and social service workers as it relates to addressing racism

# Racial sensitivity Framework

- **Seeing-** refers to developing the visual acuity to see the nuances and intricacies of race that are embedded in our historical roots as a nation, as well as contemporary societal norms, actions, beliefs and interactions.
- **Being** - refers to the developmental process where one forms a heightened sense of one's self as a racial being. This is where one examines the internalized racial messages and implicit biases that one holds
- **Doing** – refers to the intestinal fortitude as well as the resolve to make the emotional , psychological, and resource investments necessary to take definitive actions to address and alter issues pertinent to race, equity and inclusion
- (Ken Hardy, School of social work- Boston College, 2019).

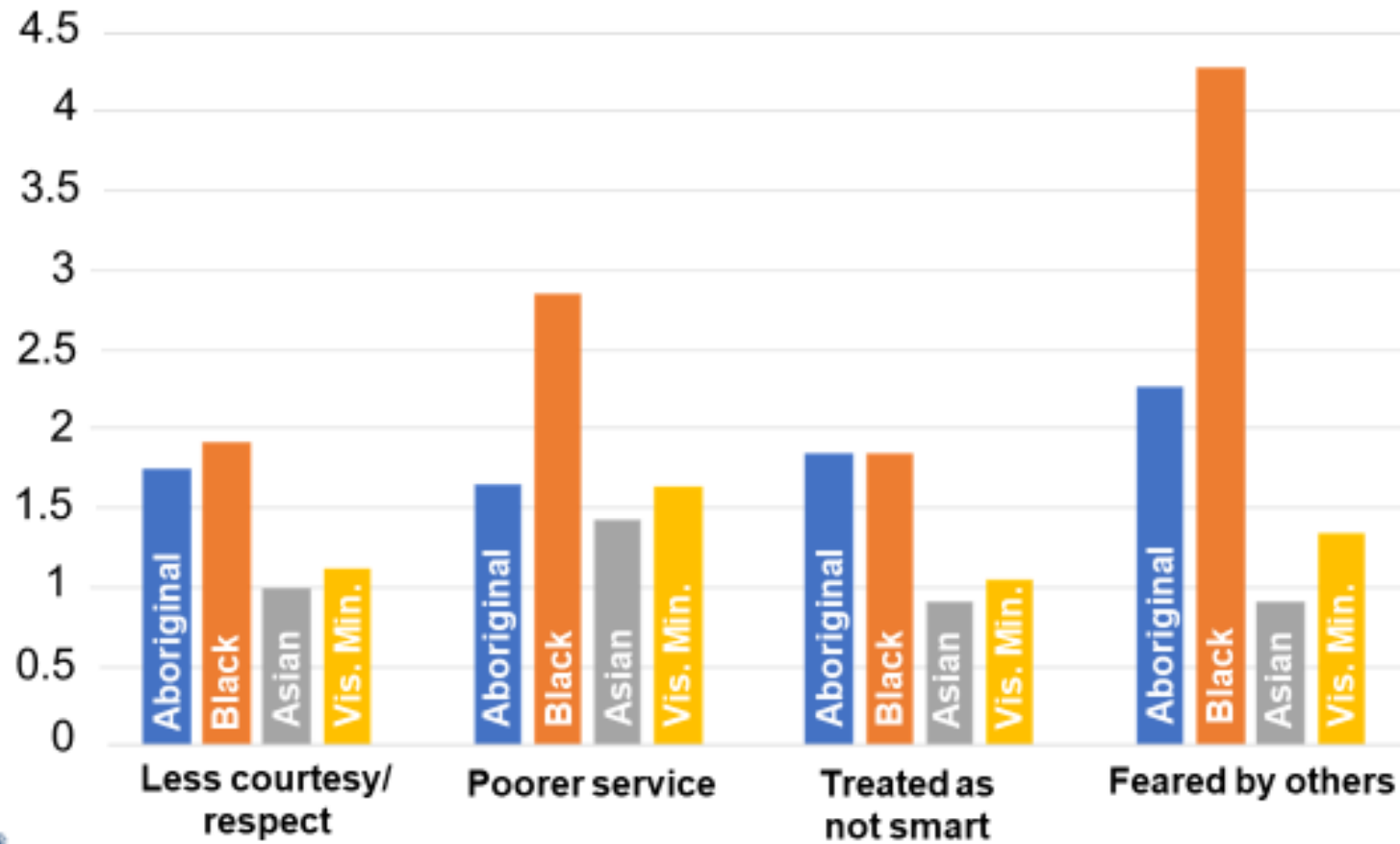
# Seeing – Am I seeing the whole picture?

- Pervasive assumptions about racism in Canada
  - 1) Racism in Canada is not as bad as racism in the United States
  - 2) Some people state “ I do not see colour”, so I’m not racist
  - 3) People are a lot less racist today than 100 years ago, so get over it

Racism in Canada is  
not as bad as in the  
United States

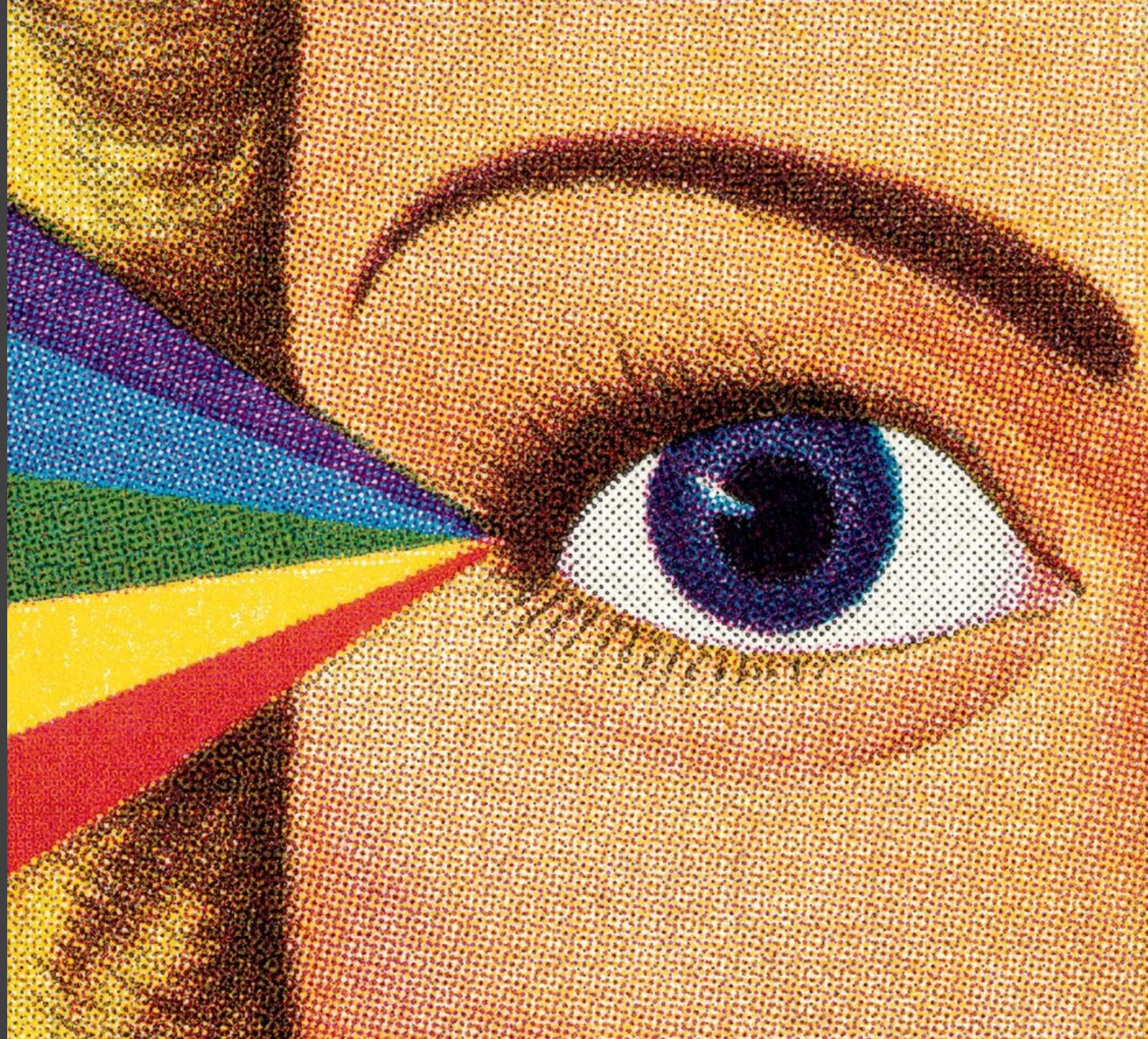


## Canadian data on racial differences in reporting experiences of discrimination





“I DO NOT SEE  
COLOUR: IS  
THIS HELPFUL  
OR  
HARMFUL?”



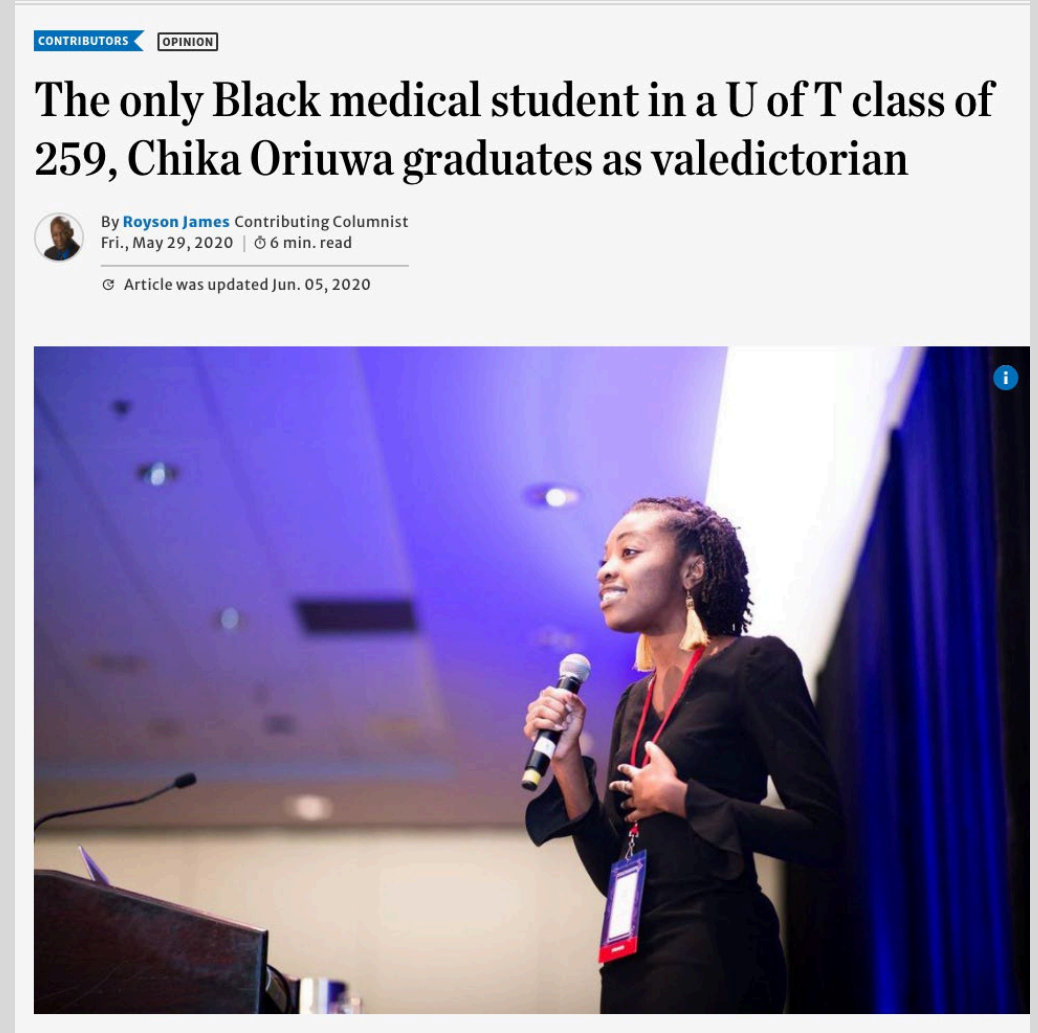
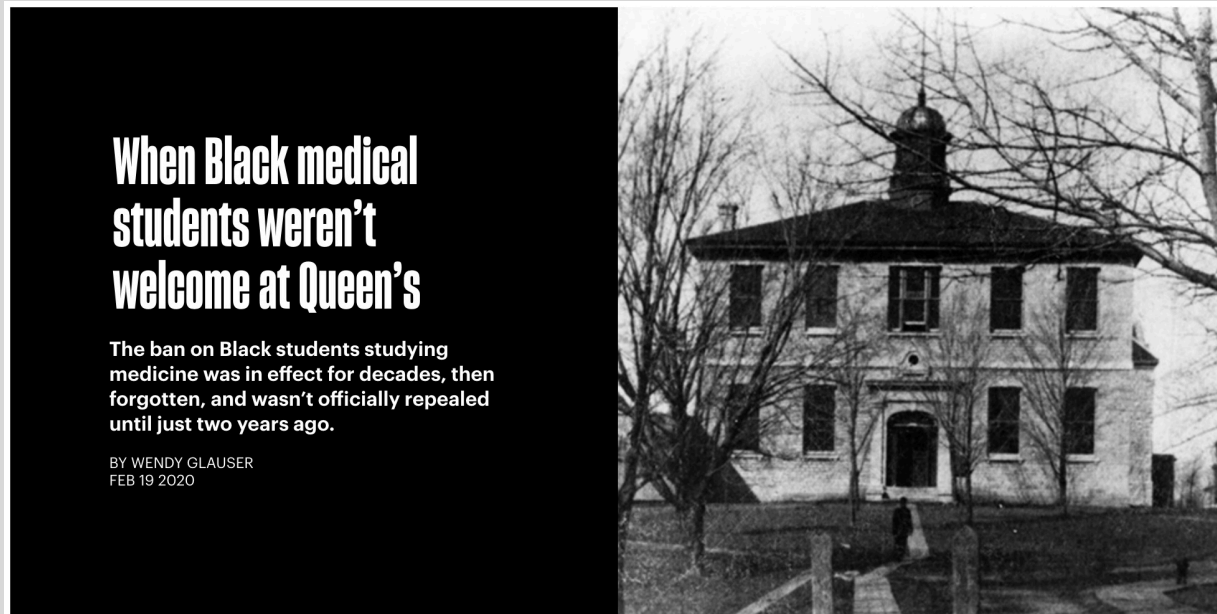
# Students suspended over recording of Calgary school principal using N-word



# Updated: U of O President breaks silence on 'N-word' incident involving faculty of arts professor

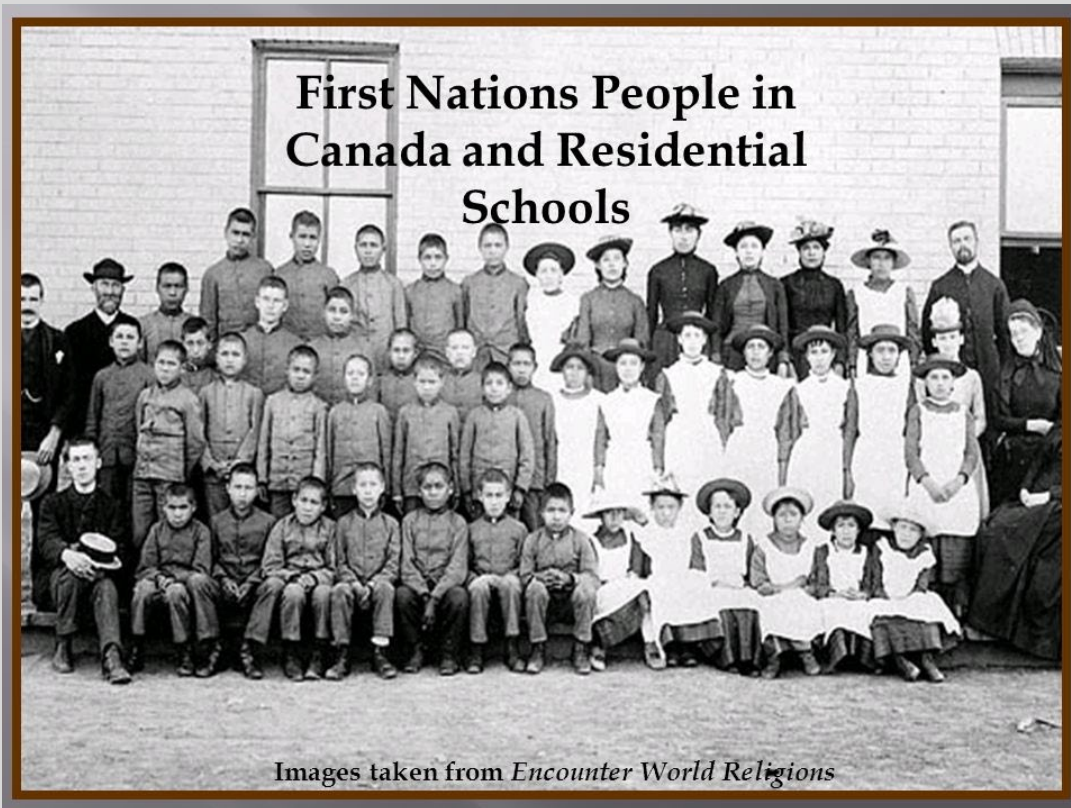


# Does history impact the present context?

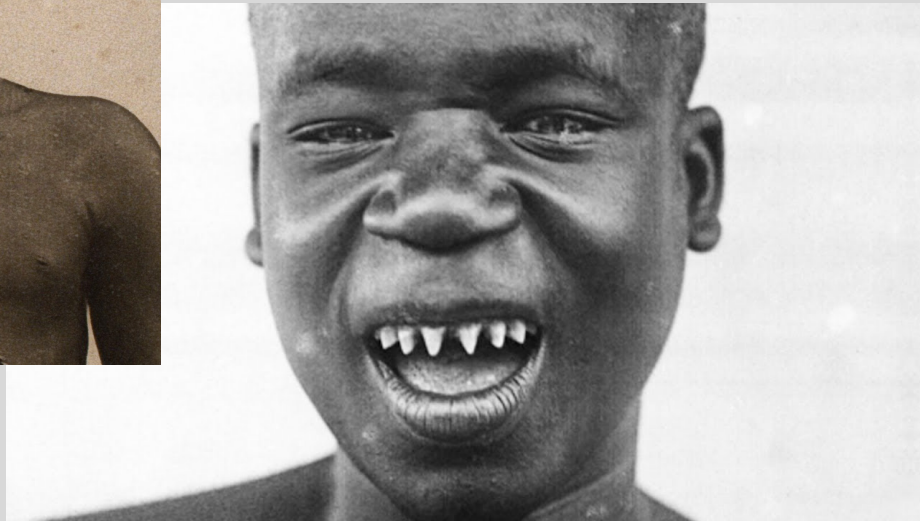


Medical schools at McGill University, Dalhousie University, and University of Toronto placed restrictions on the admission of Black applicants (Glauser, 2020)

# Social services' involvement in residential schools



# Dehumanizing Black people

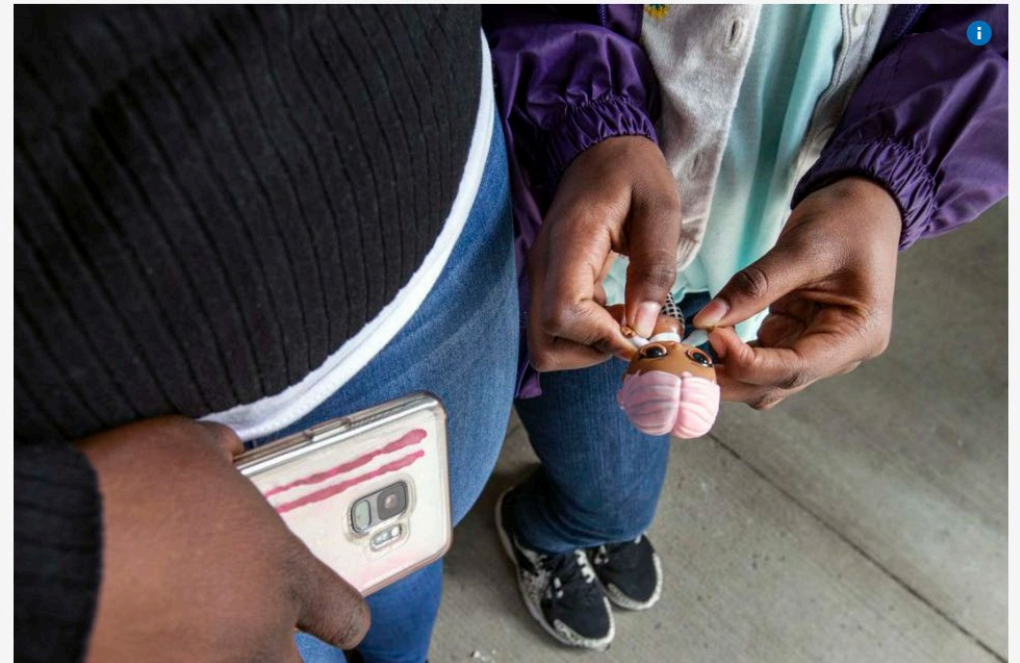


GTA

## Race was a factor when police handcuffed 6-year-old Black girl at Mississauga school, human rights tribunal finds



By **Jim Rankin** Staff Reporter  
Tue., March 3, 2020 | 4 min. read



# Being – What does this all mean for me?

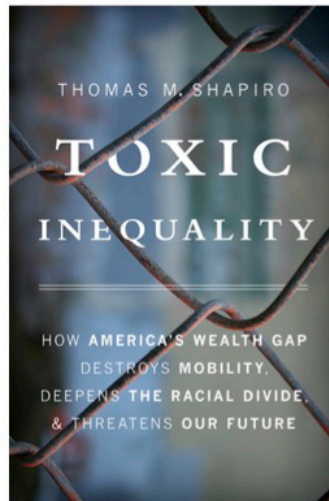
- What does this mean for victims of racism?
- How have I been racially socialized?



# The social impact of racism on Black people

## AJPH BOOK & MEDIA

### Income and Wealth Gaps, Inequitable Public Policies, and the Tentacles of Racism



Toxicity, inequity, and inequality are powerful words in the public health lexicon and are increasingly dominating the public discourse as explanatory factors for health outcomes and their relationship to public resources, neighborhood contexts, and place-based quality of care in the United States. The central premise of Shapiro's book is that inequality is driven not by differing attitudes, values, and characteristics that promote or hinder achievement among rich, middle-income, and poor

often create insurmountable obstacles owing to a lack of access to economic or social resources and institutional policy support systems. Black families are less likely than White families to have family-of-origin assets from which to draw (i.e., family loans) and are more likely to have jobs that provide fewer benefits; also, they tend to live in neighborhoods that are less safe, have lower home equities, and have less resourced school systems. His analyses dig deeply into how schooling and employment are

social determinants and the role of inequity with respect to what it means to be Black or Mexican American as well as the persistent barriers that sustain the wealth gap, lead to a lower quality of life, and produce more adverse health events and outcomes.

#### SOCIAL DETERMINANTS

In 1899, Dubois<sup>1</sup> described differences in health outcomes associated with place (e.g., zip code, community residence), socioeconomic status, and race. Since the early 20th century, public health scholars have developed a more comprehensive paradigm to explain differences



# The psychological impact of racism on Black people

## Commentary: The Trauma of Insidious Racism

Glenn H. Miller, MD

Race-based traumatic stress assessments are difficult because of the insidious nature of racism, the lack of scientific research, and the disregard of the nondominant cultural experience. Although there is a large body of scientific literature about the harmful psychological effects of racism, most of that literature is not directly applicable to individual assessment. Carter and Forsyth begin to correct that deficiency. Implicit in their attempt is the beginnings of defining a race-based traumatic stress syndrome. At present, the psychiatric expert can be useful to the court through a psychological description of the evaluatee within a racial-cultural context.

*J Am Acad Psychiatry Law* 37:41–4, 2009

## Healing the Hidden Wounds of Racial Trauma

*Kenneth V. Hardy*

A disproportionate number of children and youth of color fail in school and become trapped in the pipelines of treatment, social service, and justice systems. This article examines racial trauma and highlights strategies for healing and transformation.

All service systems for youth encounter young people of color who can be challenging to treat, reach, and teach. Our difficulty in meeting their needs is not just because of greater “pathology” or “resistance” as some assert. Rather, we fail to appreciate the ways in which race is entangled with their suffering.



# The neurobiological impact of racism on Black people

[RACIAL/ETHNIC BIAS AND HEALTH](#)

## Physiological Responses to Racism and Discrimination: An Assessment of the Evidence

*Jules P. Harrell, PhD, Sadiki Hall, BA, and James Taliaferro, BA*

> [Soc Sci Med](#). 2017 Dec;194:135-141. doi: 10.1016/j.socscimed.2017.10.009. Epub 2017 Oct 12.

## Associations between race, discrimination and risk for chronic disease in a population-based sample from Canada

[Arjumand Siddiqi](#)<sup>1</sup>, [Faraz Vahid Shahidi](#)<sup>2</sup>, [Chantel Ramraj](#)<sup>3</sup>, [David R Williams](#)<sup>4</sup>

Affiliations + expand

PMID: 29100138 DOI: [10.1016/j.socscimed.2017.10.009](#)

| [RESEARCH AND PRACTICE](#) |

## "Weathering" and Age Patterns of Allostatic Load Scores Among Blacks and Whites in the United States

| *Arline T. Geronimus, ScD, Margaret Hicken, MPH, Danya Keene, MAT, and John Bound, PhD*

[Review](#) > [Stress](#). 2015 Jan;18(1):1-10. doi: 10.3109/10253890.2014.989204.

Epub 2014 Dec 29.

## "More than skin deep": stress neurobiology and mental health consequences of racial discrimination

[Maximus Berger](#)<sup>1</sup>, [Zoltán Sarnyai](#)

Affiliations + expand

PMID: 25407297 DOI: [10.3109/10253890.2014.989204](#)

# Example of the impact of racism – lived experience



# Racism in Health and Mental Health Services

Williams (2002) identifies four processes of systemic racism in mental health care:

1. Rates of access to mental health services by marginalized racial and ethnic groups are very low
2. Marginalized racial and ethnic groups receive inadequate mental health care
3. Marginalized racial and ethnic groups receive improper and inappropriate care; improper treatment
4. Marginalized racial and ethnic groups must assimilate to receive mental health care

Adolescent Research Review (2020) 5:115–136  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s40894-020-00133-2>

QUALITATIVE REVIEW



## Barriers and Facilitators to Accessing Mental Healthcare in Canada for Black Youth: A Scoping Review

Tiyondah Fante-Coleman<sup>1</sup> · Fatimah Jackson-Best<sup>1</sup>



## HHS Public Access

Author manuscript

*Med Care*. Author manuscript; available in PMC 2018 February 01.

Published in final edited form as:

*Med Care*. 2017 February ; 55(2): 173–181. doi:10.1097/MLR.0000000000000638.

## Perceived Discrimination in Healthcare and Mental Health/ Substance Abuse Treatment Among Blacks, Latinos, and Whites

Vickie M. Mays, Ph.D., MSPH [Professor],

Psychology and Health Policy and Management, UCLA Fielding School of Public Health and UCLA Center for Bridging Research, Innovation, Training and Education for Minority Health Disparities Solutions, UCLA; 405 Hilgard Avenue, Box 951563 Los Angeles, CA 90095-1563; mays@ucla.edu; Telephone: 310-206-5159; Fax: 310-206-5895

# Doing – where will I find the courage to act?

**1) What does this mean for the professions as a whole?**

**2) Integrating cultural sensitivity and attunement into practice**

- Location of self
- Integrating questions about race within initial assessments
- Acknowledge Race – be a broker of permission to talk about race within the helping relationship

# Advocacy Framework - Client advocacy, Cause Advocacy, Legislative Advocacy, Administrative Advocacy

## Ontario issues directive to end controversial practice of issuing birth alerts in the province

KRISTY KIRKUP >

+ FOLLOW KRISTY

OTTAWA  
PUBLISHED JULY 14, 2020

COMMENTS SHARE - A A+ TEXT SIZE BOOKMARK



Ontario's Associate Minister of Children and Women's Issues Jill Dunlop, seen here at legislature on June 25, 2020, told The Globe that the government is issuing the directive as part of efforts to address systemic racism in the province's child-welfare system.

Toronto

## Ontario to end 'discriminatory' practice of academic streaming in Grade 9



Will also ban suspensions for young students - both disproportionately affect Black students, studies found

CBC News · Posted: Jul 06, 2020 9:12 AM ET | Last Updated: July 6



Ontario Minister of Education Stephen Lecce called academic streaming 'systemic, racist' and 'discriminatory' in an interview with the Toronto Star published this morning. (Christopher Katsarov/The Canadian Press)

# Solving the problem of racism helps everyone – not just the subjugated

Economic Policy • Analysis

## How rising inequality hurts everyone, even the rich

By Christopher Ingraham

Feb. 6, 2018 at 6:00 a.m. EST

**The rich get richer**  
Share of wealth and income going to the richest 1 percent of individuals.

Year	Wealth (%)	Income (%)
1913	45.1	18.8
1945	32.1	14.3
1980	23.6	10.7
2014	38.6	20.2

Source: Piketty et al., World Wealth and Income Database. WFP/ST/WONK/BLDG

Over the past 40 or so years, the American economy has been funneling wealth and income, reverse Robin Hood-style, from the pockets of the bottom 99 percent to the coffers of the top 1 percent. The total transfer, to the richest from everyone else, amounts to 10 percent of national income and 15 percent of national wealth.

It's part of a massive concentration of wealth and income

## The Haves, the Have-Nots, and the Health of Everyone: The Relationship Between Social Inequality and Environmental Quality

### Annual Review of Public Health

Vol. 36:193-209 (Volume publication date March 2015)

<https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-publhealth-031914-122646>

Lara Cushing,<sup>1</sup> Rachel Morello-Frosch,<sup>2</sup> Madeline Wander,<sup>3</sup> and Manuel Pastor<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Energy and Resources Group;

<sup>2</sup>Department of Environmental Science, Policy, and Management, and the School of Public Health; University of California, Berkeley, California 94720; email: [lara.cushing@berkeley.edu](mailto:lara.cushing@berkeley.edu), [rmf@berkeley.edu](mailto:rmf@berkeley.edu)

<sup>3</sup>Program for Environmental and Regional Equity, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, California 90089; email: [mwander@dornsife.usc.edu](mailto:mwander@dornsife.usc.edu), [mpastor@dornsife.usc.edu](mailto:mpastor@dornsife.usc.edu)

Thank you!

**Contact !**

- Keith - [keith.adamson@utoronto.ca](mailto:keith.adamson@utoronto.ca)