Doc 8 Research Forum Abstracts

Tom Heaney
National-Louis University, THeaney@nl.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.nl.edu/ace_forum

Recommended Citation
https://digitalcommons.nl.edu/ace_forum/8

This Presentation is brought to you for free and open access by the Adult and Continuing Education at Digital Commons@NLU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Doctoral Research Forums by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons@NLU. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@nl.edu.
In this research conference, members of the 2013 ACE Doctoral Cohort (Doc8) will present their research for public review and discussion. These presentations are a formal component of the Critical Engagement Project—a sustained and critical inquiry.

Through their Critical Engagement Project doctoral students infuse their dissertation with a critical sense of self, their commitments, and their vision of both self and the world they seek to build through their inquiries.

Agenda

**Friday, April 12**

6:00 p.m. Welcome and Opening Remarks • *Dr. Tom Heaney*

6:15 A Phenomenological Investigation into the Transformational Learning Experiences of Technical and Vocational Education and Training Instructors Who Facilitate Affective Learning (*Kornel A Brown*)

7:00 Break

7:15 From Seed to Harvest: A Portrait of Maywood Fine Arts Association Cultivating a Culture of Community (*Melissa Rochelle Casteel*)

8:00 Break

8:15 Discovering and Using Voice: Characteristics of Exemplary Directors of Early Care and Education Programs Who Advocate Workforce Issues (*Jill Marie Bella*)

9:00 Closing • *Dr. Scipio A.J. Colin, III*
Saturday, April 13

8:30 a.m.  Refreshments

9:00  Welcome • Dr. Randee Lawrence

9:15  Social Media and Ministry: the Creation of Community (Stephen Conrad Fedota)

10:00  Break

10:15  The Inequity of Women in Art History: New Structures for a Changed World in Adult Education (Joan Hastings Crane)

11:00  Break

11:15  The Courage to Serve: Appreciative Inquiry of Professional Development and Retention of Early Childhood Teachers (Liliam Perez)

12:00 p.m.  Lunch Break

1:00  John H. Johnson: A Historical Study on the Re-Education of African Americans in Adult Education Through the Selfethnic Liberatory Nature of Magazines (Margena A. Christian)

1:45  Break

2:00  A Case Study Regarding the Continued Impact of Institutional Racism of African American Men in corporate America: the Need for Intra-racial Mentoring (Reginald C. Jackson)

2:45  Break

3:00  By Birth, Not Choice: A Narrative Inquiry of African American Women Who Found Success Without a Positive Female Role Model (Yolanda Anderson)

3:45  Break

4:00  At the Intersection of Peace Education and Critical Pedagogy: Implications for Practice (K. Taylor Davis)

4:45  Closing • Dr. Tom Fox
Sunday, April 14

8:30 a.m.  Refreshments

9:00  Welcome • Dr. Randee Lawrence

9:15  Truths about Transformative Learning: The Narrative Inquiry of Adult Educators Experiences in Graduate Education (Norma Nerstrom)

10:00  Break

10:15  Integrating Aesthetics: Transforming Continuing and Professional Education Through Africentric Practice (Auburn E. Ellis)

11:00  Break

11:15  The Critically-Reflective Evaluator: The Use of Collaborative Inquiry Methodology to Examine Cultural “Competent” Practice (Leah Christina Neubauer)

12:00 p.m.  Break

12:15  Being the Difference: Change from Below. A critical examination of a participatory action research project that aimed to embed equity into daily practice (Ericka Turley)

1:00  Closing Reflections • Faculty

1:20  Closing Reflection • Doc8

1:30  Adjournment
Abstracts

A Phenomenological Investigation into the Transformational Learning Experiences of Technical and Vocational Education and Training Instructors Who Facilitate Affective Learning
Kornel A Brown

Tom Heaney, Ph.D., National Louis University, Primary Advisor
Scipio A.J. Colin, III, Ed.D., National Louis University
Dyremple Marsh, Ph.D., Delaware State University

The purpose of this study was to gain deep understanding of the nature of transformation experienced by Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) instructors. Transformation, for the purpose of the study, is consistent with Jack Mezirow’s Transformative Learning Theory (TLT), which connotes alteration in meaning schemas. The study utilized a qualitative research methodology, phenomenology, as the basis for investigating the instructors’ transformation. The TVET instructors were considered for the study specifically because they were placed in a situation which required them to fundamentally alter their traditional approaches to facilitating learning activities and, as a consequence, were forced to adjust to a new normal. The operationalization of the methodology involved the interviewing of 15 TVET instructors, selected from vocational training institutions in Jamaica and Barbados. Consistent with the guiding tenets of the phenomenological methodology, the interview questions were administered to encourage the instructors to tell authentic stories of their lived experiences relative to the new-normal context, which required them to make radical adjustments to how they traditionally carried out their teaching-learning practices. The study addressed three key: 1) What specific challenges do TVET instructors encounter as a result of altering their traditional approaches to facilitating learning? 2) Do TVET instructors undergo transformation as a result of emphasizing strategies aimed at enhancing affective learning outcomes? 3) What are the key elements that were conducive to the attainment of transformational learning outcomes? The study found that, first, TVET instructors who traditionally emphasized the skills domain in their practice experience a disorienting dilemma, when required to attend to the more qualitative, affective aspects of learning. Second, perspective transformation is a real possibility when a disorienting dilemma is encountered and the option of returning to old/traditional ways of doing is not a possibility. And third, engagement in Transformative Learning, which yields transformation, consistent with TLT, occurs in a conducive experiential context, as opposed to didactic teaching-learning environment.

For more information about this critical engagement project contact: trainingtrainers@yahoo.com

From Seed to Harvest: A Portrait of Maywood Fine Arts Association Cultivating a Culture of Community
Melissa Rochelle Casteel

Randee Lawrence, Ed.D., National Louis University, Primary Advisor
Scipio A.J. Colin, III, Ed.D., National Louis University
Joyce R. Perry, Ed.D, School District 90, Retired
Keith Wood, Ed.D., Principal, Brooks Middle School, Valley View SD365U

Through the frame of community building this research explored a resilient arts community created when one couple was moved to affect change in their town. Portraiture methodology was utilized to tell the story of Maywood Fine Arts, a grass roots community arts organization. The practice of Maywood Fine Arts is grounded in high quality fine arts programming. This organization uses the arts as a tool to
build community. The intent of this study told from a strengths based perspective, is to promote action and growth while building upon healthy community building characteristics.

As a member of the geographic and arts communities highlighted in this study, I believe it is of value for communities to shape and tell their own stories. Empowering stories work to bring communities together to find solutions. However, a negative story like one that has formed about the Village of Maywood can hinder progress as citizens are weighed down by negative factors and are inclined to look for outside resources to save them.

Explicit learning of art skills was valued at Maywood Fine Arts; however, it was found that intangible experiences left lasting impressions and evoked passionate responses from participants. Emergent themes of this study included 1) uplift, empowerment, and pride, 2) like a family, 3) commitment, and resiliency. Maywood Fine Arts is creating and sharing a counter story of community in a town that has been known for negative factors including crime and apathy.

For more information about the critical engagement project contact: mcast505@gmail.com

---

Discovering and Using Voice: Characteristics of Exemplary Directors of Early Care and Education Programs Who Advocate Workforce Issues

Jill Marie Bella

Randee Lawrence, Ed.D., National Louis University, Primary Advisor
Tom Heaney, Ph.D., National Louis University
Kay Albrecht, Ph.D., Innovations in Early Childhood Education
Paula Jorde Bloom, Ph.D., National Louis University, Reader

The purpose of this study was to gather information about directors of early care and education who are considered exemplary advocates for workforce issues. Quantitative and qualitative research methods were used to explore common characteristics among exemplary director advocates. A survey was sent to approximately 6,000 directors of early care and education programs to discover if few or many directors were advocating for workforce issues. Of those directors who were advocating for early childhood workforce issues, the survey examined what training and experiences they had related to early childhood workforce issues, what actions they had taken on behalf of early childhood workforce issues, and what perceptions they had about themselves as advocates. In-depth interviews were conducted with eight exemplary director advocates for workforce issues. The interviews sought to further explore the concept of exemplary director advocates and sought to answer the following questions: 1) What constitutes exemplary advocacy in early care and education? 2) What are the means by which exemplary advocates practice advocacy for workforce issues? 3) What motivates directors to become advocates for the workforce? 4) What are the characteristics of early childhood program directors who are considered exemplary advocates for workforce issues? and 5) What are strategies to encourage other directors to become more engaged advocates for workforce issues?

The findings suggest exemplary director advocates for workforce issues 1) see a need to improve the field and realize they can, 2) feel a responsibility to advocate, 3) are inspired by formal and informal supports, 4) make advocacy a priority, 5) step up and take advantage of opportunities, 6) recognize that persistence is a necessary component of advocacy, and 7) have a systems perspective. Implications for practice include the development of training programs that include both advocacy skill-building strategies and a mentoring component.

For more information about this critical engagement project contact: jill.bella@nl.edu
**Social Media and Ministry: the Creation of Community**

*Stephen Conrad Fedota*

Tom Heaney, Ph.D., National Louis University, Primary Advisor
Craig Cunningham, Ph.D., National Louis University
Kathryn Tooredman Ph.D., Consortium for Educational Change

The purpose of this case study was to investigate the use of social and digital media relative to its use in creating and sustaining community in one suburban mainline religious organization. The study investigated a variety of implications for the use of this new media in the areas of teaching and learning, engagement and the celebration of ministry.

Issues of spirituality, while individual and personal in itself, when addressed in a formal church setting take on the overtones of the religious community. It is in this context of how a religious community facilitates the spiritual learning of its members, in community, that this research resides. As Merriam & Clark identify “Learning is a social activity, one that involves others in dialogue and community. In fact it is difficult to think about any learning that is linked to development that occurs in isolation to others.”

While the use of this media is in an early stage of development within the organization studied, implications of the study suggest there is a significant difference in vision and understanding of the nature and use of the media by various members of the community, the effectiveness of the use of such media is contingent on clear lines of empowerment and communication within the organization and there are significant differences of the perceived utility and comfort level of the user relative to his / her formal role within the organization. The implications for further analysis include the development of effective protocols to protect professional staff from the use of inadvertent pastoral care tools and an appropriate definition of the technology as it continues to evolve and is implemented in this and similar organizations.

For more information about this critical engagement project contact: steve.fedota@nl.edu

---

**The Inequity of Women in Art History: New Structures for a Changed World in Adult Education**

*Joan Hastings Crane*

Tom Heaney, Ph.D., National Louis University, Primary Advisor
Scipio A.J. Colin, III, Ed.D., National Louis University
James J. Murphy, Ph.D., Florida State University

The purpose of the study is to examine the issues that are thought to cause gender inequity in art history? Just as important, it investigates the question as to why women artists have more opportunities available to them today, but the statistics continue to show a great discrepancy in women artist’s representation in contemporary art history? These findings guided the outcome of this study to construct art history courses based on the principle of the feminist pedagogy classroom. The adult education course outline and curricula will educate all students and provide a structure with equal views of important men and women artists and will help eliminate the inequity of women in today’s changed world.

Through narrative inquiry with four art historians, and three women artists, this study uses feminist research, to explore common themes, historical facts, and the many women artists that have been
marginalized in art history. The findings show that their discrepancies in art history had religious, education, economic, social and political implications. The voices of the women artist’s tell us of their struggles and successes. The artist’s narratives are used to determine the climate in today’s art world as support to the findings.

This research will benefit the learner, adult education, higher education communities, and will help reform relationships between student and professor, build community, empower and privilege women artist’s voices. The outcome of the study is intended to ultimately create a more inclusive contemporary art history course or workshop for all adult learners. This study is important to adult education because it supports the individual, creates a climate comfortable for discourse, growth, and sharing along with other benefits to both the learner and the facilitator.

For more information about this critical engagement project contact: jhcrane2@yahoo.com or www.TransitionResearchFoundation.com

The Courage to Serve: Appreciative Inquiry of Professional Development and Retention of Early Childhood Teachers
Liliam Perez

Tom Heaney, Ph.D., National Louis University, Primary Advisor
Randee Lawrence, Ed.D., National Louis University
Teri Talan, Ed. D., National Louis University

Understanding the importance of professional development and retention of bilingual-bicultural teachers in the early childhood field, the purpose of this study is to understand the practices and policies of an urban non-profit organization that successfully manages to recruit and professionally develop bilingual (English-Spanish) early childhood professionals, and to encourage advocacy and replication of services in centers struggling to recruit, professionally develop, and retain their diverse early childhood faculty.

Informed by Appreciative Inquiry, and analyzed by Critical Pedagogy, this case study used focus group, semi-structured Interviews, observations and review of artifacts to inquire about: 1) the encouragement and motivation of the research participants to pursue higher education; 2) the barriers encountered by the participants as Adult English Language Learners while pursuing Higher Education 3) the assistance and resources provided to support participants in obtain a B.A. degree; and 4) the policies and practices that successfully retain teachers after obtaining teacher certification and degrees.

The results yielded themes such and organizational culture/symbolism, servant leadership and human agency which give life to a community of servants armed with education and courage to serve. The study findings pointed at family responsibilities-cultural institutionalized roles; limited information about financial resources and educational choices; and fear of failure as barriers that prevented participants from engaging in higher education before the organization’s intervention.

The study concluded that participants were encouraged, motivated and supported by a leadership model that combined Maslow’s theory of needs and Freire’s Critical Pedagogy which also inspired teachers to support the organization’s mission, vision and praxis of community uplift through higher-liberatory education.

For more information about this critical engagement project contact: perezla13@gmail.com

Margena A. Christian

Scipio A.J. Colin, III, Ed.D., National Louis University, Primary Advisor
Tom Heaney, Ph.D., National Louis University
Vanessa Sheared, Ed.D., Sacramento State
Reginald Ellis, Ph.D., Florida A & M University, Reader

The purpose of this study was to document the selfethnic liberatory educative nature and goals of John H. Johnson’s work between 1942 and 2005 as a pioneering publisher and adult educator. It documented the impact his magazines—EBONY and Jet—had on the history of the adult education field. The goal was to additionally expand the historical knowledge base of the discipline. This study addressed the problems that this area has, as it doesn’t include the contributions of African-American adult educators. This disparity in the literature leaves the history incomplete, because it is not reflective of the rich diversity that Johnson and his publications have contributed to the adult education field.

This study is framed within an Africentric Historical Paradigm, which grounds it in African Centered values, beliefs and ideas. Concepts within this paradigm, which helped to shape the study, were: selfethnic, selfethnic reflectors, selfethnic negation, agency, the seven principles of the Nguzo Saba and Africentric Culturally Grounded Programs. The Theory of Selfethnic Reflectors and Philosophy of Selfethnic Liberatory Adult Education also fall within this paradigm in helping to define the research. A second intellectual paradigm examined in this study is Critical Race Theory, which addressed the negative impact factors of racism, specifically the concept of marginalization.

For more information about this Critical Engagement Project contact: Margena_xan@msn.com

A Case Study Regarding the Continued Impact of Institutional Racism of African American Men in Corporate America: the Need for Intra-racial Mentoring

Reginald C. Jackson

Scipio A.J. Colin, III, Ed.D., National Louis University, Primary Advisor
Loren N. Moore, Ed.D., Roosevelt University
Gilo Kwesi Cornell Logan, Ed.D., Northeastern Illinois University

The purpose of this qualitative study was to examine the impact of institutional racism on African American men in corporate America and to explore how mentoring assisted in their survival in corporate America or left a void during their careers.

In this case study, seven men were interviewed to discuss the effects of institutional racism, their survival techniques and the role of mentoring in their corporate careers. The theoretical framework of Critical Race Theory (CRT) and concepts of CRT (microaggressions and marginalization) informed this study and were used to analyze the data obtained from these interviews.

The major findings derived from the data were that: (1) racism continues to be a major problem for African American men in corporate America; (2) effective coping strategies were developed over time as it is critical to find ways to take care of their mental and physical health outside of the environment; (3) it is important to become a mentor and it is imperative to mentor young men from their own ethnic group.

For more information about this critical engagement project contact: reginald.jackson@comcast.net.
By Birth, Not Choice: A Narrative Inquiry of African American Women Who Found Success Without a Positive Female Role Model

Yolanda Anderson

Randee Lawrence, Ed.D., National Louis University, Primary Advisor
Tanya Giordani, Ed.D., National Louis University
Jacqueline P. Callery, Ed.D, Robert Morris University

Strong Women analyses the life histories of five Black women and two Black female fictional characters from literature. This research focuses its attention to the ways in which the participants story their lives and make sense of their multiple identities through their narratives as a way to discuss the impact of sexism, classism, and racism in society.

The purpose of this research is to give voice to Black women that have been silenced. The research questions guiding this study were: 1. What characteristics or experiences allowed these women to continue to move forward when society had discounted them? 2. What obstacles were encountered by these women and how were they overcome?

The themes are 1. education, 2. poverty, 3. religion/spiritual awareness, 4. lack of love, 5. survival, and 6. self-reliance.

Future implications: More research is required in this area and more stories need to be shared. Appreciation of the voices and experiences of the Black female, which differs from any other group of people, should always be considered.

For more information about this critical engagement project contact: yolandaanderson01@yahoo.com

At the Intersection of Peace Education and Critical Pedagogy: Implications for Practice

K. Taylor Davis

Scipio A.J. Colin, III, Ed.D., National Louis University, Primary Advisor
Randee Lawrence, Ed.D., National Louis University
Dale T. Snauwaert, Ph.D. University of Toledo

The concern is that there appears to be a lack of personal accountability or theoretical underpinning for mediators in practice. Practitioners hide behind ethics based on legality rather than a connection to their society at large or their accountability as a member of the human community. If front-line conflict engagers are self-removed from their connection to the human community, what are they demonstrating to participants in conflict as to a motivation or reasoning to live peaceably? Educators of mediators and other front-line interveners have a role to play in providing an underpinning to inform purposeful conflict engagement within a shared local community and humanity at large.

Seven peace educators representing work in Albania, Nicaragua, Philippines, Ukraine and the United States were engaged in an adapted Appreciative Inquiry process. The task was to examine what peace education would look like if practiced from a specific theoretical approach. Research questions guiding the study were; 1. How do peace educators define Critical Pedagogy? 2. How can Critical Pedagogy inform Peace Education? 3. What are the implications for praxis when Critical Pedagogy informs Peace Education?
Implications for practice that were born out in this Critical Engagement Project was the need for Peace Educators to; 1.) address root causes of conflict and understand cultural hegemony, 2.) emphasize the teacher-learner relationship, 3.) expand the definition of violence and 4.) focus on personal and social action as the end product.

For more information about this critical engagement project contact: cra@columbus.rr.com

**Truths about Transformative Learning: The Narrative Inquiry of Adult Educators Experiences in Graduate Education**

*Norma Nerstrom*

Randee Lawrence, Ed.D., National Louis University, Primary Advisor

Scipio A.J.Colin, III, Ed.D., National Louis University

Craig Mealman, Ed.D, National Louis University

Through the authentic experiences of adult educators, fifteen truths about transformative learning were presented in this qualitative study. Truths about transformative learning have been emerging for nearly 40 years beginning when Jack Mezirow (1978) opened the conversation with his seminal study of community college women who were transformed by their college experiences. Using narrative inquiry as the methodology, this study continued the conversation. Literature described the elements leading to transformative learning and the conditions necessary for transformations to occur, but there was little discussion on adult educators’ personal experiences of being transformed, how their transformation was constructed, or the significance of their transformative experiences. This was an effort to begin to fill that gap. Adult educators whose transformations were sparked by their experiences in adult education graduate programs were interviewed 3-18 years after completing their programs to discover the impact of their transformations. The six participants, ages 35-65 and from diverse backgrounds, shared their stories through in-depth interviews, art, previous writings, and found poetry. The questions guiding this research were (1) how do graduate level adult education programs influence the transformative experiences of the learners; (2) to what extent do adult education graduate programs contribute to continued transformative learning experiences beyond the program; and (3) what is the significance of adult educator’s transformative learning experiences initiated by graduate adult education programs? The key findings uncovered fifteen truths about transformative learning by identifying five dominant themes: (1) Examined Prejudices (2) Incidental Experiences (3) Fostering Transformative Learning (4) Reconceptualization of Learning and (5) Transformed Personhood. This research also established the Nerstrom Transformative Learning Model as an additional means to understand and explain the complexities of transformative learning.

For more information about this critical engagement project contact: nnerstro@harpercollege.edu

**Integrating Aesthetics: Transforming Continuing and Professional Education Through Africentric Practice**

*Auburn E. Ellis*

Scipio A.J.Colin, III, Ed.D., National Louis University, Primary Advisor

Thomas Heaney, Ph.D., National Louis University

Derise Tolliver, Ph.D., DePaul University

K-12 practitioners in urban areas are faced with unique circumstances while serving racially marginalized students in public schools. As a response to this issue, the purpose of this study was to review and describe curricula used in three African centered educational institutions in Chicago. African centered
schools are uniquely different, thus the need for research emerges to identify new ways to disseminate knowledge for traditional public school practitioners. Goals of the research were to analyze content and instructional strategies at African centered educational institutions in order to design a continuing and professional education model based on their successes.

The research design was an Africentric qualitative single case study that focused on the experiences of six educators in African centered schools. The Africentric Paradigm was utilized as the theoretical framework. Research questions that guided the study were as follows: 1) how are conceptual and theoretical elements of the Africentric Paradigm reflected in educational environments and incorporated into curriculum and instruction at an African centered institution, 2) how are the problems that result from sociocultural and intellectual racism addressed both cognitively and affectively through curriculum content, 3) what are the design and objectives of continuing education programs implemented at African centered institutions, and 4) what culturally grounded strategies can be transferred to a traditional continuing education model for K-12 practitioners? The data collection instruments were document analysis, interviews, site visits (observations), and photography. To interpret field notes that emerged from observations during site visits, I completed a series of paintings to create a meaning context, which expressed the cognitive and affective impacts of instructional activities.

Several important findings and conclusions emerged from the research. Each site had similar missions and the shared goal of building of positive selfethnic image (Colin 1989). This was reflected in both curricula and artistic instructional strategies. African centered practice is grounded in the cognitive and affective domains. In addition to K-12 curriculum content, what makes African centered schools different is the focus on building positive selfethnic identity and the importance of community development. Academic rigor and affective growth was developed through a consciousness of African centered ideas and positive selfethnic image (Colin 1989). These culturally grounded strategies were reflected in the continuing education model that emerged from analysis. If we look at how traditional public schools are affecting our communities, it is clear that our students are being cognitively and affectively marginalized. By employing an Africentric framework, continuing and professional education can play a role in adequately preparing public school practitioners for success with students of this Diaspora.

To view artwork completed during the course of research visit: auburnaesthetic.com
For more information about this Critical Engagement Project contact: auburn@auburnaesthetic.com

The Critically-Reflective Evaluator: The Use of Collaborative Inquiry Methodology to Examine Cultural “Competent” Practice
Leah Christina Neubauer

Randee Lawrence, Ed.D., National Louis University, Primary Advisor
Scipio A.J. Colin, III, Ed.D., National Louis University
Christina Christie, Ph.D., University of California, Los Angeles

This CEP highlights the design, implementation, and initial outcomes of collaborative inquiry (CI)-rooted, innovative action-research study that investigated cultural competence in complex culturally-responsive evaluator practices. Since program evaluators work in complex ecologies, their work involves addressing evaluation questions at numerous levels across several systems. This complex reality requires critical analysis of the self, situational assessment and multiple level mixing: paradigm, theory, methodology and method. Through a systematic, qualitative inquiry process, a diverse group of CI participants...
(culturally-responsive evaluators) worked collaboratively to address “culturally responsive practice” through repeated episodes of reflection and action (praxis) focused around practice-based examples. The emergent group-generated knowledge became the basis for innovative action designed to create changes in future practice (e.g., curricula, guidelines, etc). Benefits and challenges of using CI among practitioners and inquiry-methods as prime mechanisms to promote adult learning, professional growth, ongoing lifelong evaluator development, and impact to the larger evaluator communities of practice will be described.

For more information about this critical engagement project contact: ineubaue@depaul.edu

**Being the Difference: Change from Below. A critical examination of a participatory action research project that aimed to embed equity into daily practice**

*Ericka Turley*

Tom Heaney, Ph.D., National Louis University, Primary Advisor  
Randee Lawrence, Ed.D., National Louis University  
Robert Hughes, Ed.D., Seattle University

The project was designed to examine the ways in which equity and social justice could be infused into everyday work. Concerned with the ability of an organization to promote equity and social justice without acknowledging the inherent inequities that exist within it, it sought to document the contradictions that existed between what workers say they do and what they actually do. It asserts that, because government programs are products of the workers who design and implement them, workers must be attuned to issues of privilege and how it is embedded in their daily actions.

Over the course of a year, an equity and social justice committee located within a human services department of a large county government participated in a participatory action research project and met weekly to investigate, understand and create strategies that would address workplace inequities and promote racial justice. As a result of their investigation, they created a multi-year plan to be used by their department to achieve their equity and social justice goals.

Various methods were used to create, collect, examine and analyze information and knowledge and to triangulate findings for this critical engagement project. Each member of the workgroup was interviewed and data was collected from the weekly PAR meetings. Each meeting included activities and discussion to develop shared meanings and decision making which was documented individually and as a group.

The findings suggest that even workers who strive to embed equity and social justice into daily practice often act to support the system as much as they act to challenge the system. Filtered through their personal experiences of internalized oppression and internalized domination, their activities served to support the system by externalizing the problem, confusing repressive tolerance for management blessing, and not effectively dealing with feelings that arose throughout the process.

For more information about this critical engagement project contact: erickaturley@gmail.com