

# **White Supremacy in Everyday Language**

**Overcoming Racism Conference 2019**

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# Introductions



# Objectives

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By the end of this workshop participants will be able to:

1. Identify ways white supremacy colonizes the mind through language and re/naming.
2. Discuss alternatives to white supremacy in our speech and everyday language



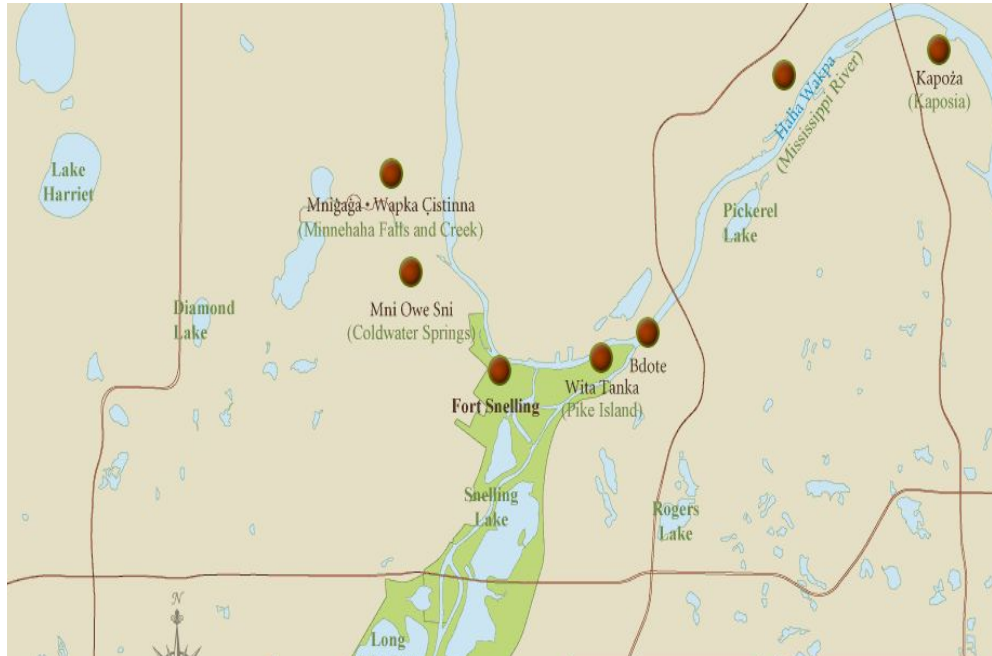
# Agenda

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1. Introductions
2. Overview of Renaming/use of language to subjugate and eradicate others
3. Group Activity: Identifying Language
4. Overview of backlash to language reclamation
5. Group Activity: Goal-Setting
6. Time for Questions & Ending Thoughts

# History of Renaming

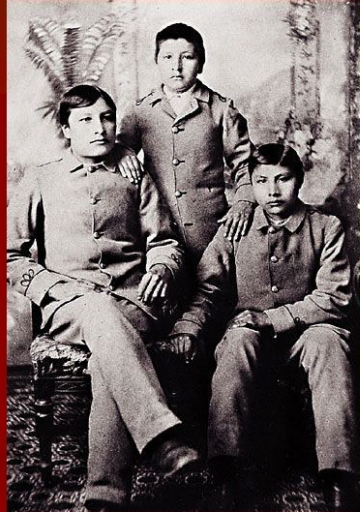
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# History of Renaming

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**“Kill the Indian, Save the Man”**



“We were told not to speak our language and we listened...

Somebody told us we were “Sioux,” and we said, “Yes, sir, we are Sioux.”

Somebody else came along and said, “No, you are Dakota,” and we said, “We are Dakota.”

Others along the way said we are Aboriginal, Natives, Indians, Native Americans, Native Canadians.”

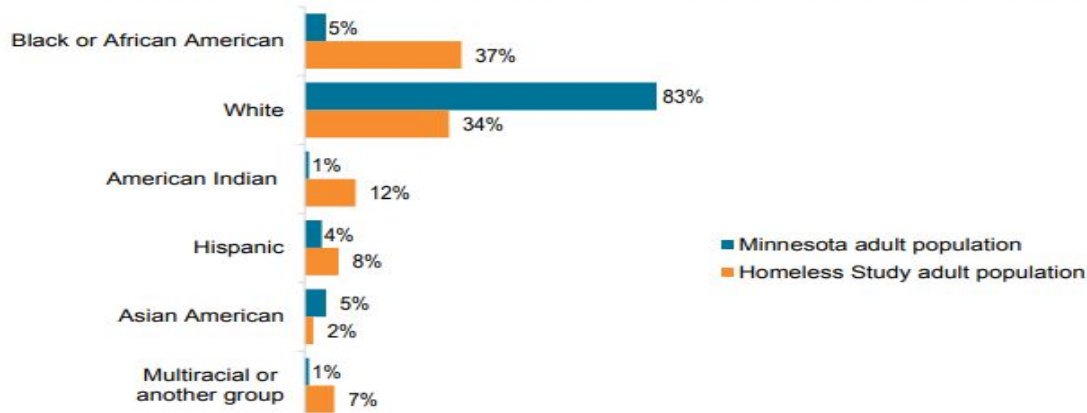
**-Wambdi Wapaha Glenn Wasicuna**

# Language as Transcending Levels of Racism

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- Structuralized/Institutionalized Racism

**RACE OF HOMELESS ADULTS (18 AND OLDER), COMPARED TO REPRESENTATION IN MINNESOTA POPULATION**



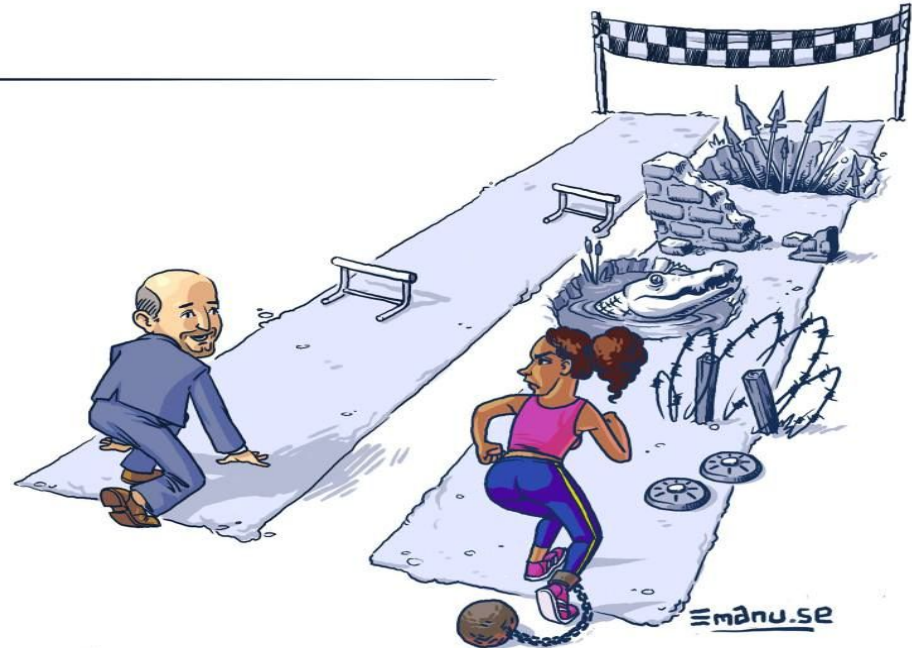
Source. Vintage 2017 Population Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau.

Discrimination is also associated with the overrepresentation of those who identify as LGBTQ in the homeless population. Twenty-two percent of youth (age 24 and younger) and 10% of adults (18 and older) experiencing homelessness identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, or questioning (LGBTQ).

# Language as Transcending Levels of Racism

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- Interpersonal Racism



“What’s the matter?  
It’s the same distance!”

# Language as Transcending Levels of Racism

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We are talking about the multiple levels of racism at which language is working:

- Internalized Racism



## Black

poor	.64
violent	.43
religious	.42
lazy	.40
cheerful	.40
dangerous	.33

## White

wealthy	.48
progressive	.41
conventional	.37
stubborn	.32
successful	.30
educated	.30

Verhaeghen et al. British J Psychology

TEDMED

who is reflecting  
what he has been exposed to

[https://www.ted.com/talks/david\\_r\\_williams\\_how\\_racism\\_makes\\_us\\_sick?utm\\_campaign=tedspreload&utm\\_medium=referral&utm\\_source=tedcomshare](https://www.ted.com/talks/david_r_williams_how_racism_makes_us_sick?utm_campaign=tedspreload&utm_medium=referral&utm_source=tedcomshare)

# Racism Structured Into Everyday Language

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## Prefixes:

- Black - Bad
- Indian - False

## Tenses:

- Use of past tense that keep people in a distant past and not part of current landscape

## Passive Voice:

- Slaves WERE brought to america
- We remove the guilt of the active party acting egregiously upon others

# Group Activity

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In groups:

- Discuss biased language, phrases, imagery, in everyday living
- Write out on your worksheet, separating as:
  - Institutionalized/Structuralized
  - Interpersonal
  - Internalized
  - Be prepared to report back to the larger group



Myq Kaplan ✓  
@myqkaplan



— — —

SOMEONE: "i hate political correctness!"

POLITICAL CORRECTNESS: "i actually prefer to be called 'compassion'"

SOMEONE: "but that makes it harder for me to say that i hate it"

COMPASSION: "i understand"



# Group Discussion Questions

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- Have you experienced stereotype threat?
- Have you experienced/seen these in daily interactions?
- How does this connect to language?

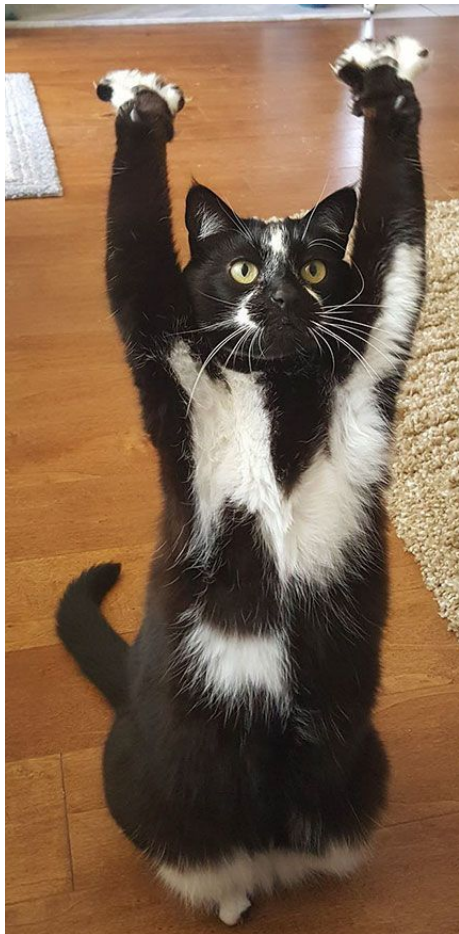
# Activity: Goal-Setting

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For this activity, list your goals with the following prompts:

- “One thing I’m going to focus on after this workshop is.. . “
- “One thing I can do to overcome racism through my use of language is. . .”
- “Steps that I will take to reach this goal are. . . “

# Any Questions?



OPTIONAL

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