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Combating White Saviorism in Community-Engaged Learning

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2022

MERRIMACK COLLEGE

CAPSTONE PAPER SIGNATURE PAGE

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OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

MASTER OF EDUCATION

IN

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

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AUTHOR: Eva Harrell

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Abstract

The white savior narrative can be seen in a number of different places, including community-engaged learning courses at higher education institutions. We must address this issue because it prevents students and communities from attaining mutual benefits within these relationships, and the student's perpetuation of saviorism can cause harm in the communities in which they work. In this study, a workshop titled "Interrupting White Saviorism in Community-Engaged Learning" was held for community engaged learning (CEL) instructors and associated faculty in collaboration with the Center for Community-Engaged Learning at the University of Minnesota. Participants were presented with information on white saviorism and completed activities that encouraged them to reflect on the prevalence of this narrative in society and its presence in course objectives and student reflections. Using Harro's Cycle of Liberation, participants learned ways to interrupt white saviorism in their courses through discussions, reflections, objectives, and class content. Participants gained an understanding of the concepts and benefited from an environment in which they could talk with other instructors about their experiences. The workshop was successful in increasing instructors' knowledge of the prevalence of white saviorism in community-engaged learning and increasing their access to resources to address it with students.

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Combatting White Saviorism in Community-Engaged Learning

As a result of the protests against racial injustice throughout the summer of 2020, systems of whiteness and white privilege are more recognized than ever before. Moreover, people are recognizing the systemic and institutional racism that we continue to see against communities of color. However, as white people are called to recognize and fight against racial injustice, the narrative of the white savior continues to be prevalent, leading people to believe that they, from their position of whiteness, can liberate others. While this continues to be an issue, this position is not unique to post 2020, and this narrative has been used to describe the relationship of white people to marginalized groups for centuries, with roots traced back to colonialism. Now, this narrative is perpetuated through tropes in media, teens on mission trips, white teachers in inner-city schools, volunteers in food banks, and by students and professors participating in community-engaged learning. As we continue to work towards racial justice, interrupting and dismantling white savior complexes will be essential to moving towards true allyship.

For the purposes of this study, white saviorism will be defined as the phenomenon in which a white person “guides people of color from the margins to the mainstream with his or her own initiative and benevolence” rendering the people of color “incapable of helping themselves” and “lacking the capacity to seek change and thus become perceived as dispossessed of historical agency” (Cammarota, 2011, p. 244). In addition to this definition, it is important to recognize that this operates within a society where whiteness is the dominant narrative, and in which the dominant cultural lens promotes goals of “overcoming” experiences in non-dominant cultures (Mitchell et al., 2012).

The white savior narrative is harmful on both an individual and a societal level. On a societal level, the white savior narrative holds that it has only been with the help and kindness of

“good” white people that people of color have moved from disadvantaged to advantaged positions. The white savior is the only person able to recognize and awaken potential, so they are the only ones able to pull people of color up to be successful in society. This narrative takes agency from people of color and assumes that only white people create change, both good and bad. It promotes the idea that the systems in our society that have caused millions of people of color to live in poverty are not systemic at all, and instead, individuals who have the right skills, and a white savior to recognize them, can “overcome their upbringing” and get out of poverty. This invalidates the individual experience of systemic racism by holding up examples of those who have “overcome” their experience.

In addition to this narrative’s prevalence in our society, higher education is an environment that fosters this mentality. At its core, higher education was formed as a white institution that is “operated by white people for white people” (Dlamini, 2002; Foster, 2005 as cited by Gillborn, 2006, p. 319). Within this framework, service-learning was created over two decades ago as a way for students to participate in community service and reflect on that experience during class (Santiago-Ortiz, 2019). It has become firmly rooted in the field of higher education, and Campus Compact reports that “7% of faculty at over 1,100 member institutions of higher education offer a course with service learning” impacting a countless number of students and, more importantly, countless communities (Mitchell et al., 2012, p. 612). It is important to address this because as it was formed, traditional service learning not only depends on the foundation of white privilege, but strongly implies saviorism as one of its goals. As one study states, service learning can quickly become a pedagogy of whiteness as one of the ways in which these institutions reinforce the norms of whiteness and therefore continue to benefit white people. These “norms and privileges are based on color-blind and ahistorical understandings of

social problems” and not only promote white supremacy and white privilege, but also prevent community engagement experiences that are meaningful for both the students and the community in which students are working (Mitchell et al., 2012, p. 613). However, simply teaching community-engaged learning students about white privilege and systems of whiteness does not mean that students will not perpetuate these systems within their placements (Endres & Gould, 2009). Instead, students must develop a critical understanding of the hierarchical relationships present in community-engaged learning. They must move away from a focus on saving, and instead they must focus on “joining in solidarity with people of color to struggle collaboratively against those institutions that maintain oppression” (Cammarota, 2011, p. 244) . The development of this critical consciousness and an emphasis on community-led social change efforts will not only improve students’ experiences but will also limit community harm. Therefore, professors and community-engaged learning administrators need to be given techniques to interrupt ideologies of white saviorism and to help students develop critical mindsets around these systems and narratives. Teaching instructors how to counter white savior ideologies within their classes can address some of these issues and prevent the reinforcement of white supremacy that occurs as a result of white saviorism.

The purpose of this study is to analyze ways in which faculty can be educated to interrupt white savior complexes both within themselves and within their students. This not only implicates the critical consciousness-raising and anti-racist educations of white students, but also could be used to prevent harm in the communities in which they are working. When students with white savior complexes work in communities, they harm people by devaluing their agency. If community engagement is truly going to benefit the communities in which students are

working, we must ensure that they are not inflicting harm and are working collaboratively towards justice.

Literature Review

The white savior narrative, and the repetition of its actions, is popular throughout volunteering and service professions. On its own, the individual white savior “guides people of color from the margins to the mainstream with his or her own initiative and benevolence,” and takes the narrative of initiative and agency from people of color (Cammarota, 2011, p. 244). However, while the white savior is often described as an individual, white saviorism is a product of a collection of cultural norms and teachings that have established this narrative. We must create a holistic understanding of how to combat this narrative and interrupt the white savior mentality in community-engaged learning by teaching students to see the systems of power and oppression through consciousness raising. By analyzing how white saviorism has been embedded in community-engaged learning in higher education, we can begin the process of interrupting and dismantling it.

Cultural and Societal Foundations of White Saviorism

In addition to the definition of the white savior provided by Cammarota (2011), there are several other aspects that have been identified that contribute to this phenomenon. The first is white privilege. In addition to the privilege that students must have in order to be able to participate in community-engaged learning, which is explored below, white students have also previously been influenced by white privilege. This is a phenomenon that pervades our society, and therefore frames the community-engaged learning experience. White privilege, or the “invisible package of unearned assets which [one] can count on cashing in each day, but about which [one is] ‘meant’ to remain oblivious” allows students to avoid “seeing [themselves] as an

oppressor, as an unfairly advantaged person, or as a participant in a damaged culture” ... Instead, they are “taught to see [themselves] as an individual whose moral state depended on her individual moral will” (McIntosh, 1989, p. 10). Within the context of volunteering, this allows students to avoid acknowledging the potential damage of their actions, instead believing that the morality of their choices is dependent on their own intentions. Since their intentions are generally good, they do not look beyond this to determine the impact of their actions. Therefore, they do not see the relationship of oppressor and oppressed because of their supposed neutrality in the system of oppression. In addition, in these instances, whiteness is centered both in the experience of the white savior as well as in the goals of those being served (Cann & McCloskey, 2017). For children of color, white role models are elevated by community sites and successes are conflated with whiteness, therefore perpetuating the system of oppression.

At the same time, a false generosity is perpetuated by white students. When we look at the “generosity” of the oppressors within the systems described by Paulo Freire (1970) in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, he describes the dependence of the “generosity” of the oppressors on the unjust system. “In order to have the continued opportunity to express their 'generosity,' the oppressors must perpetuate injustice as well. An unjust social order is the foundation of this 'generosity” (Freire, 1970, p. 44). This process of false generosity is similar to the perceived processes of settler colonialism, a distinct type of colonialism in which settlers move to and “develop” a place that is already inhabited by indigenous communities. Within settler colonialism, a binary is created by the colonizer that promotes the “self” as the white hero that promotes progress and development, while the “other” is constructed to be victimized and lacking agency. Consequently, people are taught to assume that the “other” would like to be like the “self” (Willuweit, 2020). This forms the foundation for the superiority of whiteness as well

as the attempted erasure of “others”, while at the same time appearing to “help” the “other” become more like the settler. “Settler colonialism is a persistent social and political formation in which newcomers/colonizers/settlers come to a place, claim it as their own, and do whatever it takes to disappear the Indigenous peoples that are there” (Arvin et al, 2013, p. 12). As the definition highlighted, settler colonialism is a persistent process, and white saviorism is a one of the processes that contribute to this erasure. Colonialism normalizes whiteness, and abnormalizes and creates the “other.” For students this justifies the idea that others should be seeking to be like themselves; or to strive to emulate whiteness. Students, therefore, reinforce white normativity through their work, while being oblivious and under-prepared to combat the unjust system they are perpetuating.

White Saviorism and Student Volunteerism

When students participate in volunteering experiences, they often bring with them their best intentions, but these intentions are not sufficient to prevent them from perpetuating white saviorism and white privilege. Rather than questioning the system that causes the need for the services they are providing, they find fault with the people that live in communities. This, and the structures of social services in many communities, present non-white people as lacking ability and agency. The white volunteer arrives and believes that their own help is needed for the community to overcome this issue, and it can only be overcome with the white savior showing the community of color how to achieve success. They implicitly promote the idea that the only way to solve this problem is to continue to model systems promoted by majority white communities, therefore demonstrating in communities of color that they cannot do it on their own. When they leave at the end of their shift, they pat themselves on the back for the difference

that they made and ignore and therefore reinforce the structures that cause the issue they aim to address.

Community-Engagement Courses

Within the past several years, experiential learning has become much more prominent within higher education (Mitchell, et al, 2012). Community-engaged learning, or service-learning, has emerged as a way to incorporate lived experience, as students work in communities on addressing social issues, and formal education in a classroom setting (Felten & Clayton, 2011). The combination of these two is meant to provide students with a deeper understanding of classroom lessons and gives them the opportunity to apply what they have learned in their studies. One of the most widely accepted definitions of service-learning is provided by Bringle, who states:

“Service-learning is a course-based, credit-bearing educational experience in which students (a) participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and (b) reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of personal values and civic responsibility (2006, p. 12).”

This definition highlights the potential learning of the student, both during the activity and during a period of reflection, during which they are able to not only gain a better understanding of the course content, but also gain an “enhanced sense of personal values and civic responsibility” (Bringle, 2006, p, 12), based on their engagement experiences. The identification of this period of reflection is important because it provides a space for framing and understanding of community participation. It is within this space that professors can introduce the institutional causes of disparities and encourage students to broaden their understanding of

systemic issues. However, this definition does not address the experience of community members and those with whom students are interacting. Adding an important part to this definition were Felten and Clayton, who state that service-learning should “Involve reciprocal collaboration among students, faculty/staff, community members, community organizations, and educational institutions to fulfill shared objectives and build capacity among all partners” (2011, p. 76), stating explicitly the importance of reciprocity and community benefits, whereas previous definitions had assumed the inherent benefits of this service to the community. It is within this assumption that the roots of the savior complex are visible and become even more visible as the history of service-learning in higher education is explored.

History of Service-Learning

Within higher education institutions and their relationships with the broader community, there are power dynamics that cannot be ignored. Higher education institutions are considered to be hubs of knowledge creation and learning. In addition to their assigned credibility, they greatly influence the communities in which they are located in both direct and indirect ways. The power dynamics between the institution and the community must also be remembered as a layer surrounding students and community organizations participating in service-learning. Since its creation, service-learning, as described by Green (2003), is being implemented by “mostly white students at predominantly white institutions” by mostly by white faculty, serving, “mostly poor people of color in urban settings” (p. 277). Its foundations and pedagogies are closely tied to whiteness and white normativity. Instead of challenging the systems of power, students participating in community-engaged learning are reinforcing values of whiteness that ultimately benefit white people and systems of power rather than the people, primarily BIPOC communities, that they are claiming to “serve.” “Service” has been formed as a way in which

white supremacy is reinforced, and a binary has been created to separate those who “serve” and those who are “needy.” White tutors in college programs are often assumed to be competent and students are seen as “needing to be saved from their community and lesser academic status” (Cann & McCloskey, 2017, p. 83). The white tutors are placed as the “guides to success,” conflating whiteness with success (Cann & McCloskey, 2017, p. 83).

The structure of both higher education and community-engaged learning also contribute to the perpetuation of white supremacy. One of the core tenets of community-engaged learning, volunteer service, limits students' ability to participate. It is formed thusly: “service-learning is premised on full-time, single, non-indebted, and childless students pursuing a ‘liberal arts education’” (Butin, 2006, p. 482). It requires students to be able to dedicate time to unpaid volunteering. They must forgo responsibilities like paid work, caretaking, and homework during that time. Moreover, students must be able to access their site either by using a car, public transportation, or other transportation service. Thus, participation requires that students hold a certain amount of privilege, furthering the divide between those who serve and those who are served. Service-learning therefore “may ultimately come to be viewed as the ‘Whitest of the White’ enclave of postsecondary education” (Butin, 2006, p. 482) in its practice, as well as in the constructed narrative of its history.

The narration of the history of service-learning can be used as an example of the devaluation of contributions of people of color and the amplification of contributions of white people. Throughout the foundational literature of service-learning, “when people of color are mentioned they are often referred to as a collective or through allusions, which may indicate that the authors do not consider people of color or non-Anglo individuals’ contributions as worthy of attention as those of their White counterparts” (Bocci, 2015, p. 10). This pattern continues as

“people of color are presented as the needy recipients of service,” in contrast with white people, who are presented as “empowered, capable servers and innovators whose contributions are central and important” (Bocci, 2015, p. 10). This mirrors the narratives of white saviorism, as the contributions of people of color are devalued in comparison to those of white people. This is both influenced by and a cause of the perpetuation of the saviorism narrative in community-engaged learning.

Perpetuation of Savior Narrative in Community-Engaged Learning

The perpetuation of white saviorism occurs in community- engaged learning through a variety of channels, including through students, professors, and community organizations. While all of these groups have good intentions, they often fail to recognize the power and agency within the groups they are working. They believe that with these good intentions and the hard work they put into forming relationships, they have eliminated the possibility of harm.

In an autoethnography, one professor of a service-learning course writes, “I know and love each and every one of the folks we work with, and they know that” (Tilley-Lub, 2009, p. 62). She believed that because of her relationships with the people with whom she worked, she was not doing them harm. Later, she recognizes her error, writing “my ‘good intentions’ inadvertently created social hierarchy and deficit notions of the community, establishing the students as ‘haves’ and community members as have-nots” (Tilley-Lub, 2009, p. 59). Not only was she creating social hierarchy, but she was denying agency to those with whom she was working. She, and her students, wrongly believed they were the only ones able to help.

In addition to the saviorism mindset exemplified by the professor, this example also shows the relationship between the professor and the students. Because she held this mindset herself, she was unable to interrupt, and even encouraged, the saviorism mindset within her

students. Even as students began to recognize the problematic nature of some of their work, she became defensive, preventing discussion about the issue (Tilley-Lub, 2009). In this case, the professor prevents the development of this understanding within her students.

When considering how to interrupt this narrative and prevent the harm that is caused by it, one may consider teaching about whiteness and white privilege. However, this is not sufficient. After being taught about these systems, students continue to perpetuate them and even try to use whiteness to benefit those with whom they are working (Endres & Gould, 2009). They continue to focus on “helping” others, rather than learning themselves (Endres & Gould, 2009). The same patterns continue with teaching candidates who are taught about systems of whiteness and white saviorism (Aronson, 2017).

Students, when given the choice between different forms of involvement in service-learning, rank first charity, then project-based involvement, and third activities that promote advocacy and social change (Bringle et al, 2006; Morton 1995). Instead of promoting social change, students “resist activism in favor of the less challenging role of ‘volunteer’” (Endres & Gould, 2009, p. 428-429). Because of the way service-learning has been structured, these choices make sense. While Morton (1995) argued that a student’s preference should be honored, Cone (2003) argues that this demonstrates that “we are failing to help students understand that civic action involves more than direct service and that systemic problems require systemic solutions” (p. 15). This is where professors have the opportunity to educate students on systems of oppression that they can fight. It is clear that because of the cultural influences they have previously been exposed to, they will continue to choose service-based opportunities unless they are taught differently. Systems of power and oppression in our society are so deeply embedded that students, even when they learn about these systems and the harm they cause, will continue to

try to work within the system to avoid the harms. Instead, students need to build an understanding of how to combat systems of power to dismantle them.

Social Justice Education and Raising Consciousness

While there are several examples of how service-learning has perpetuated saviorism mentalities, there are also examples of professors and students engaging in critical service-learning that incorporates social justice education. As defined by Santiago-Ortiz (2019), “Critical community service-learning incorporates an explicit acknowledgment of power and systemic inequality in the classroom through critical pedagogy by uncovering the political nature of education, providing deeper reflection on and critique of the supposed neutrality of education and its complicity with structural oppression” (p. 43). By incorporating explicit education about structural systems of privilege and oppression, students are given a more holistic understanding of how to fight these systems, and therefore move from a service-based approach to a justice-based approach to their engagement in the community.

In a study by Catlett and Proweller (2011), college students reflected on their understandings of privilege throughout a service-learning course. During the course, the students were guided in critical reflective practices as well as in understanding of systems of power. Many of the students expressed a desire to disrupt the social order, indicating that promoting this critical, or change-oriented, service-learning does lead to positive outcomes.

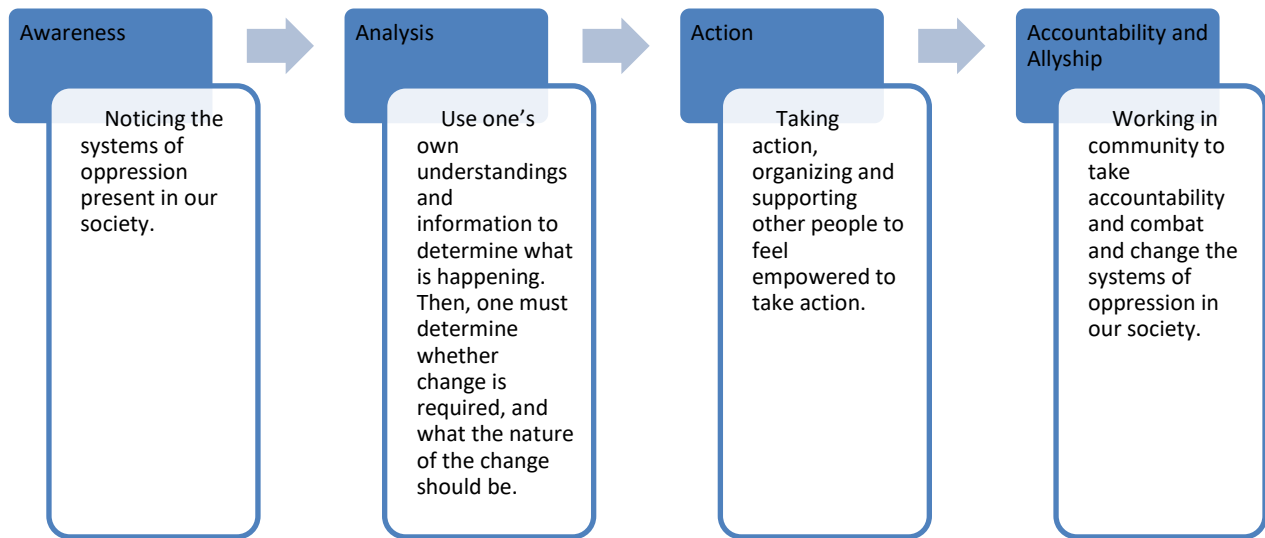
The most effective way to interrupt the white savior complex is by encouraging students to be true allies and work in collaboration with communities to dismantle systems of oppression. This involves raising their consciousness to these systems as well as to the understandings of social justice. They must leave behind their position as oppressors and “heirs of exploitation” and instead push for liberation with the guidance of the oppressed (Freire, 1970, p. 60).

Education and consciousness-raising centered on Freire’s teachings have succeeded in working to end the white savior mentality in other situations. Through reflective writing and the problematization of mindsets, harm can be minimized (Straubhaar, 2015). Professors can encourage both reflective writing and problematization of mindsets through the introduction of Freire’s concepts and teachings, as well as by exploring the issues of “service” that actually reinforce hierarchical relationships. It is the responsibility of the university to prepare and educate students before and while they participate in their community engagement experiences (Tryon & Madden, 2019). Students must “begin the relationship with the principle ‘at least, do not harm,’” and they must continue to have content woven throughout the course (Tryon & Madden, 2019, p. 60). They must learn that community- engaged learning is not an “unidirectional flow of assistance, but a space of co-education” (Tryon & Madden, 2019, p. 64).

Methods of Liberation and Co-Education Creation in Community-Engaged Learning

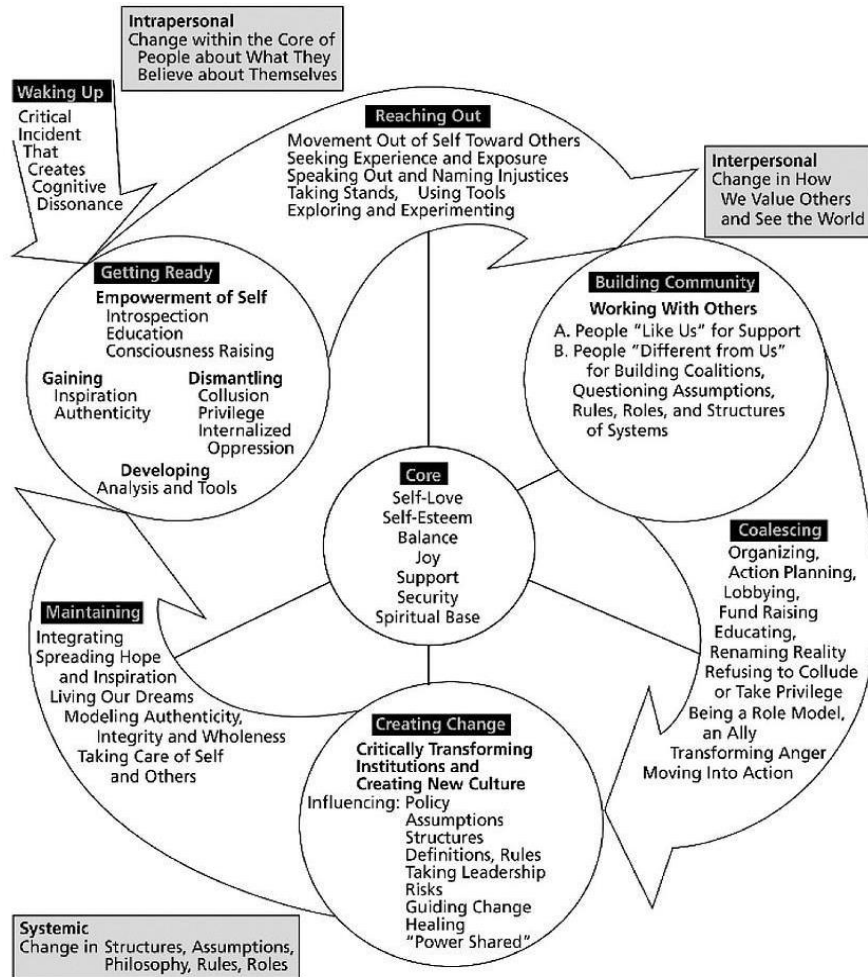
To create a space of liberation and co-education within service learning, and to prevent students from reinforcing oppression through savior practices, students should be encouraged to engage in liberatory practices at their sites, and professors must be given the resources to help students to develop liberatory consciousness. The goal is to allow students to “maintain an awareness of the dynamics of oppression characterizing society without giving in to despair and hopelessness about that condition, to maintain an awareness of the role played by each individual in the maintenance of the system without blaming them for the roles they play, and at the same time practice intentionality about changing the system of oppression” (Love, 2000, p. 611). The elements of a liberatory consciousness are described in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Framework for Liberatory Consciousness (adapted from Love, 2000)



Instructors can use this framework to problematize both the systems of oppression that students encounter at their community-engaged learning sites and also to problematize the savior mindset. They can guide students through the four steps that are outlined through reflections and conversations, while also encouraging them to listen and learn from their sites. In addition to problematizing their own mindsets, educators can work to encourage students to become allies in the fight against oppression. Using the Harro's Cycle of Liberation (see figure 2), inspired by Freire, they can focus on fostering intrapersonal and interpersonal change in their students.

Figure 2: Harro’s Cycle of Liberation (Harro, 2008, p.629)



Source: Developed by Bobbie Harro

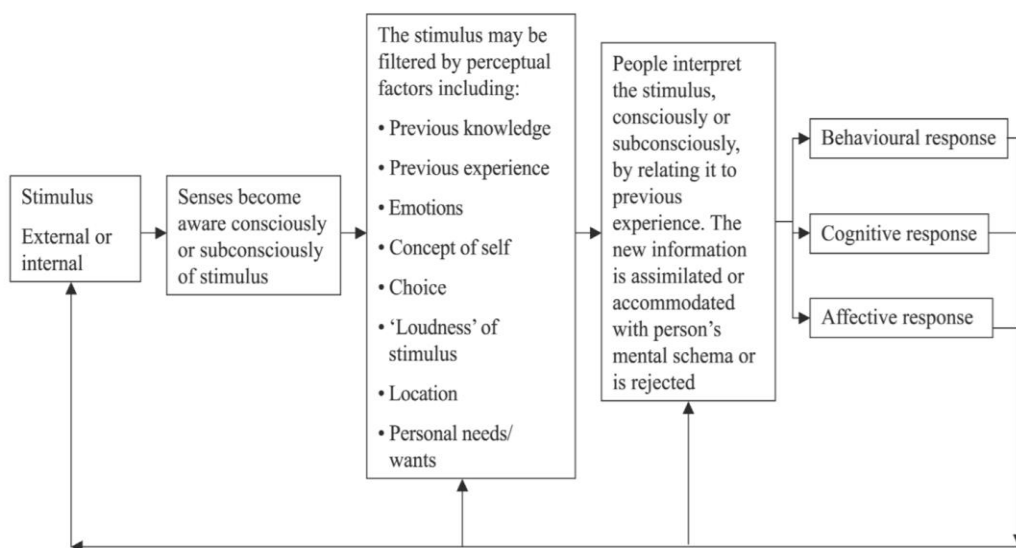
© Readings for Diversity and Social Justice, Routledge, 2000

It is within the first two sections, intrapersonal and interpersonal, that instructors can focus their efforts during the semester. It is possible that the community-engaged learning experience may be the critical incident that creates cognitive dissonance for white students. At this point, they must be guided from the savior mindset to an understanding of dismantling oppression and privilege. The classroom also creates a community space that can be used to support it. As students engage, they should be given the opportunity to name injustices with their

classmates, both in class and through reflections. Then, they should be shown the value of building community to help them continue their social justice journeys. Rather than a feeling of saving the community in which they worked, students should leave the classroom with a motivation to continue interrupting systems of oppression.

These concepts should be introduced in a manner that is consistent with the course learning. Beard and Wilson's Experiential Learning Model (2003) describes the ways in which both internal and external environments can contribute to learning, and how a student may consider this in relation to their previous experiences. Instructors must give students new information as to how to process this new experience so that they can develop liberatory consciousness.

Figure 3: Beard and Wilson's Experiential Learning Model (Wilson and Beard, 2003, p. 90)



Finally, instructors should be prepared to face challenges as they discuss these issues with their students. If students have not been exposed before, it is likely that they will demonstrate white fragility, or the fear, guilt, and anger often exhibited by white people when they talk about racism (DeAngelo, 2018). As students feel like their intentions are good, they may not be willing

to see the savior mindset as problematic. Being equipped with information about how to handle these situations is extremely important to fostering the community referenced by Harro and to creating a learning environment that is beneficial to students and to the community sites with which they engage.

Current Project

This project is focused on exposing community-engagement educators to techniques and activities which they can incorporate into their coursework to encourage students to critically understand systemic oppression and to listen and learn from the communities in which they work, rather than imposing their beliefs and values onto the community. It will focus on creating awareness around white saviorism in community-engaged learning, providing access to various resources to help raise the consciousness of both educators and their students, and creating a space for re-imagining community-engaged learning as liberation and co-education opportunities.

Project Plan

This workshop intends to explore ways in which instructors of community-engaged learning courses can interrupt white saviorism mindsets in their students. It will be done in collaboration with the Center for Community-Engaged Learning at the University of Minnesota, and the stakeholders include students, staff, and community organizations who are invested in the education of students as well as in their preparedness to engage in communities that may not be their own.

Situation Statement

While service learning can result in powerful learning experiences for students who participate, it is important to ensure that students are being properly prepared to engage in

communities. Service learning is being implemented by “mostly white students at predominantly white institutions” by mostly by white faculty, serving “mostly poor people of color in urban settings” (Green, 2003, p. 277). Because of this, experiences can quickly result in students adopting or reinforcing a savior mentality, perpetuating white normativity, and causing harm in the communities in which they work. Instead, instructors must provide their students with understandings of systemic issues communities of color face and foster attitudes of allyship and activism in which students are learning from and listening to communities. This workshop will expose instructors to ways that white saviorism mentalities can be interrupted and shifted to improve both student and community outcomes.

Define Your Goals

- Goal 1: Increase instructors’ knowledge / awareness of the prevalence of white saviorism in service-learning as well as how to recognize it.
- Goal 2: Increase instructors’ access to resources to combat and address white saviorism within their courses and within the mindsets of their students.
- Goal 3: Increase networks, skills, and attitudes about the harms of white saviorism.

Target Audience and Stakeholders

The target audience for this workshop is faculty instructing service-learning and community-engaged learning courses. Because of the content of their courses, instructors who are teaching community-engaged learning courses are in the best position to interrupt students’ white saviorism ideologies, and this workshop is intended to put them in a position to do that. While I expect the majority of participants will be employed at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities in any of the many departments or colleges, this event will also be advertised to faculty at other universities in the Twin Cities. In addition, stakeholders, and therefore

participants in the workshop, include members of university administration who are interested in and/or involved in community-engaged learning curriculum development. This includes the Departments of Student Affairs, Public Engagement, and Community-Engaged Learning.

Incentives for Engagement

Stakeholder	Incentives
Community-Engaged Learning Course Instructor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increase in understanding of how they perpetuate and can instead fight white saviorism ● Improve ability to identify problematic language and projects ● Increase confidence in individual agency ● Improve competence in promoting equity and inclusion among the community ● Increase connections and dialogue between instructors of community-engagement courses
Community Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increase in positive community interactions, which could result in longer-term connects between students and organizations ● Creation of a more democratic understanding of community engagement/service-learning ● Increase in horizontal partnerships
University Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Stronger curriculums that promote social justice, therefore pushing students to be more social justice oriented as well ● More confidence and preparedness when approaching community work

Craft a Clear Message

Community-engaged learning has taken hold as a tool of higher education that provides meaningful experiences for students while helping the community surrounding the university. While students are often gaining meaningful experiences, the structure of community-engaged learning threatens harm to communities as students who are often perpetuating white saviorism mindsets arrive to help, but instead reinforce white normativity and racial hierarchies. Instructors would benefit from having the tools to interrupt these mindsets in their students and instead

encourage students to recognize and work to dismantle the systemic equalities that cause the issues they aim to address through their engagement work.

Identify Outreach Methods

This workshop will be advertised to the target audience through a variety of channels. The most direct outreach method is through the email list of faculty instructing community-engaged learning courses provided by the Center for Community-Engaged Learning at the University of Minnesota. These emails will contain graphics, an informational paragraph, and the registration form for the event. In addition, this workshop will be posted to University of Minnesota event calendars. This information will also be sent to service-learning offices at nearby colleges and universities so that they may share it with their faculty as well.

Responsibilities Chart

Name	Position	Responsibilities	Contact Info
Eva Harrell	Community Engagement Fellow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Research, Develop, and Plan Workshop ● Facilitate Workshop ● Advertising Information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Email Templates ○ Fliers ○ Promotional Blurbs ● Creating Zoom Link ● Creating Registration Form ● Create Evaluation Materials ● Follow Up with Participants 	
	Director of Community-Engaged Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sending emails to UMN faculty ● Sending information to other Twin Cities colleges and universities to send to their community-engagement faculty 	
	Communications and Outreach Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Posting workshop to applicable University of Minnesota event calendars 	

Tools/Measures to Assess Progress

One media kit, 2 committee meetings, event information included in 3 newsletters/other email communications, post-event evaluations distributed to participants.

At the beginning of the workshop, participants will engage in a reflection on the goals for themselves and their community partners. During this activity, participants will fill out a Jamboard with their responses to icebreaker questions.

In addition, participants will engage in self-reflection through a survey in which they will rate their knowledge about the topic prior to the workshop and after participating. The post-event evaluation survey will also include questions about whether they plan to incorporate any of the presented information into their classes, whether they will talk to a colleague about the content of the workshop, and whether they believe that white saviorism plays a role in service-learning. These will be used to determine whether the workshop methods were effective in encouraging participants to both think about the issue and to take action as a result, and therefore to determine the overall success of the workshop. The participants' comments will also be noted during the workshop activities so that the impact and level of success of each activity can be analyzed. These will be measured by whether they promote meaningful understanding and a broader knowledge of the topic.

Implementation Timeline

December 2021	Create materials for workshop (activities, lesson plan)
January 2022	Create evaluation materials Confirm date, modality (in person or virtual), and location Send out advertising emails
February 2022	Continue advertising Finalize activities and lesson plan
March 2022	Host workshop Send follow-up information to participants

	Data Analysis
April 2022	Full capstone draft due
May 2022	Submit final capstone paper for publication in ScholarWorks Colloquium presentation

Logical Framework

LEARNING GOAL	To understand the impacts of white saviorism in community-engagement and service-learning courses, and to explore techniques that can be used to change this mindset and therefore prevent the harms that it brings to communities with whom students are working.	
SHORT-TERM OUTCOME 1	SHORT-TERM OUTCOME 2	SHORT-TERM OUTCOME 3
Increase knowledge / awareness of the prevalence of white saviorism in service learning as well as how to recognize it.	Increase access to resources to combat and address white saviorism within their courses and within the mindsets of their students.	Increase networks, skills, and attitudes about the harms of white saviorism.
-Facilitating a conversation about what white saviorism looks like in broader US culture as well as within service learning. -Using case studies, ask participants to identify and highlight problematic statements as well as project models that perpetuates and/or promotes a white saviorism mindset.	- Create a toolkit that can be used for them to reflect on their own statements as well as with students to effectively facilitate conversations about white privilege, white saviorism, and their roles in community engagement. - Build a worksheet/processing tool that students can take with them to their community engagement sites to write down their thoughts and bring back to the classroom to process together.	-Encourage instructors to continue to reach out to each other to process and engage with combating white saviorism. Because of the nature and roots of service learning, it is likely that participants will continue to check each other and themselves about the mindsets they are perpetuating. -Encourage participants to hold standing meetings where they can talk about this as well as other issues that commonly come up in community-engagement courses.

Methodology

The workshop titled, “Interrupting White Saviorism in Community-Engaged Learning,” was held over Zoom in collaboration with the Center for Community-Engaged Learning at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities. While it was virtual, the workshop was discussion-based and highly interactive, with participants placed in breakout rooms to complete activities as well as using JamBoard and the zoom chat to show ideas. Data from the workshop was collected and analyzed using a dynamic mixed methods approach which allows for quantitative and qualitative data to be examined together to gain insights.

Participants

This workshop was conducted in collaboration with the Center for Community-Engaged Learning at the University of Minnesota. The Center for Community-Engaged Learning focuses on “immersing students in the community through volunteering, community-engaged classes, and other unique experiential opportunities” (Center for Community-Engaged Learning, 2022). The workshop was offered to community-engaged learning instructors and other stakeholders at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities as well as community-engaged learning instructors from several other colleges in the greater Twin Cities, including the University of St. Thomas (private, Catholic), Metro State University (public), Normandale Community College (public community college), and Bethel University (private, Christian). These participants were invited through email and newsletters. The event flier can be found in Appendix A.

Materials

The workshop began with an icebreaker activity using Google Jamboard. Participants were asked two questions: 1) what their goals are for students who are participating in Community-Engaged Learning; and 2) what do they believe their partners' goals are. This

information was collected on a Jamboard and shared with the group. The Jamboard was later analyzed for themes.

Activity number one was a discussion in breakout rooms focused on identifying white saviorism tropes in pop culture. A narrative log was completed by observers, and themes were qualitatively analyzed.

Activity number two was a case study of several students exhibiting white saviorism in their journaled reflections. First, instructors were asked to look for the problematic statements. This was analyzed through the participants statements to written questions on the activity during their breakout groups. A qualitative analysis on the topics and themes on the participants worksheets was completed.

The final activity was a statement of intent in which participants formed a statement of what they plan to do with the information that they gained during the workshop. Participants put these statements on a Jamboard so that others could see, and this was later analyzed using qualitative analysis.

A post evaluation survey was created in Google Forms and distributed to participants to gain information on their experience and knowledge after completing the workshop. The survey consisted of fifteen questions asking participants about their experience in the workshop and knowledge of the topics. The first question was how they would rate the workshop overall on a scale of 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent). The next two questions asked them to rate their knowledge of white saviorism before and after the workshop. Then, participants responded to a series of statements on a 4-point scale of Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. The statements were:

- The goals of this workshop were clear to me
- The topic of the workshop was relevant to my work.

- The activities in this workshop were meaningful and relevant to my work.
- The debrief / discussions in this workshop were meaningful to me and my work.
- I think that White Saviorism plays a role in Community-Engaged Learning
- I plan to use what I learned in this workshop in the future.
- I will share what I learned today with a friend or colleague.
- I would recommend this workshop to other Community-Engaged Learning course instructors.
- I am interested in learning more about White Saviorism.
- I will seek out more information on White Saviorism in Community-Engaged Learning
- I will adapt the discussions or reflections in my Community-Engaged Learning Class based on what I learned in this workshop.

Next, participants were asked how likely they are to review and change their course content based on this discussion. Then participants responded to three more statements on a 4-point scale of Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree:

- Prior to this workshop, I was knowledgeable about the cycle of liberation.
- After attending this workshop, the cycle of liberation is relevant to Community-Engaged Learning.
- After attending this workshop, the Cycle of Liberation is relevant to White Saviorism.

Finally, they were asked what they thought was the most beneficial part of the workshop and how it could be improved.

After they answered questions about the workshop, participants were asked demographic questions about themselves and their previous experiences with community-engaged learning courses. These included how long they had been teaching these classes, in which departments

they taught, and if they had attended workshops focused on this in the past. Then they answered several demographic questions including their race/ethnicity, religious upbringing, and age. This survey can be found in Appendix D.

Procedure

Participants for this workshop were recruited primarily through the partner, the Center for Community-Engaged Learning at the University of Minnesota. The fliers and newsletters were sent out to community-engaged learning departments in the Twin Cities, who then distributed them to their instructors. Participants were asked to register for the workshop and were sent access to the Zoom link ahead of time, as well as a reminder email about the event the day before the workshop.

The workshop was conducted over Zoom. In addition to the features provided by Zoom, including breakout rooms and the chat function, Jamboard was used so that participants could collectively work on activities and to facilitate discussion. Other documents for workshop activities were sent to participants through the chat.

A full agenda with scheduled activities can be found in Appendix B. The workshop began with introductions asking participants to state their names, pronouns, and what courses they teach in the chat. Then, participants participated in an icebreaker activity in which they answered the following questions on a Jamboard: “What are your goals for your students who are participating in Community-Engaged Learning?” and “What do you think the partner organization's goals are?” Then, for about 10 minutes, participants received information about the white savior ideology and its roots in white privilege, white normativity, colonialism, the self/other colonial binary, and assuaging students' guilt. Then, participants were asked to consider the white savior trope in both pop culture and in community-engaged learning. The first

activity, which took about 20 minutes, involved breakout rooms in which participants talked about the prevalence of the white savior trope in pop culture, and how this connects to history and to the ways that students are influenced prior to entering their community-engaged learning site.

Then, participants were given information about the prevalence of the white saviorism ideology in community-engaged learning. This included the symptoms of white saviorism, and how to recognize it. It also included information about its effects and the lack of focus on systemic issues. Finally, participants learned about the Cycle of Liberation.

The second activity was a scenario activity in which participants looked at course objectives and students' reflections and brainstormed together how to address the situation using the Cycle of Liberation as guidance. This activity took about 30 minutes. After debriefing, participants wrote a statement of intent in which they wrote about actions they planned to take as a result of the knowledge they had gained during the workshop.

The workshop lasted two hours, and data was collected throughout the workshop, as well as through a post-event evaluation survey. Data was collected throughout this workshop using the narrative log filled out by observers. In addition, participants' activity responses were collected on Jamboard as well as workshop reflection through a post-event survey.

The Jamboards, narrative logs, and short answer survey questions were analyzed and coded through Excel and then compared for qualitative themes. The post-event survey questions that used scales to evaluate outcomes were analyzed quantitatively to establish whether participants gained knowledge on the topic as well as techniques to address it. This was analyzed overall as well as across demographics collected in the workshop. The descriptive information

collected from participants included the number of years they had been teaching courses, in which departments they taught, as well as their religious background, age, and race.

Findings

The workshop occurred on a Thursday afternoon in early March and was attended by 28 participants. It was hosted over Zoom and lasted 2 hours. The workshop had two observed activities, three Jamboards, one worksheet, and one post-event evaluation. Using a mixed methods approach, all activity feedback as well as post-event survey data was analyzed to determine the effectiveness of the learning tools and the overall workshop impact.

Icebreaker Themes and Observations

The icebreaker was meant to encourage participants to begin considering the relationship between the goals of instructors for students, and the goals of community partners within community-engaged learning. In addition, it was meant to establish a comfortable environment within the workshop in which participants could share their own thoughts and ideas with each other to promote further learning. The participants shared their answers to two questions via Jam Board. The first question participants responded to was “What are your goals for your students who are participating in Community-Engaged Learning?” The second question was “What do you think the partner organization's goals are?” This activity succeeds in its goals to both encourage participation and to ask participants to begin thinking about the relationship between these questions. There was widespread participation in this activity, with 39 responses between the two questions. Several themes emerged in the instructor's goals for students. Five responses referenced wanting students to connect what they learn in the classroom to real life, and five referenced wanting students to learn from the community. In addition, five respondents referenced the goal of professional development for their students, four wanted them to provide

mutual benefits to the organization and to their own learning goals, and two respondents referenced that they wanted students to develop a new perspective and deepen their own critical consciousness.

The second question asked participants to reflect on partners' goals. Eleven responses referenced capacity building as a goal for partners. The second theme among responses was that partners were looking for mutual benefits, with 4 responses referencing this. In addition, 3 responses referenced the partners goal of student education, specifically around their area or social justice issue. Finally, two respondents said that partners wanted the expertise of college students within their organization.

Activity One Observations and Themes

Activity one was a breakout room activity in which participants were asked to choose a movie, book, or TV show which contained a white savior trope. Participants were given the examples of *The Blind Side*, *Green Book*, and *To Kill a Mockingbird*, and were asked to consider a series of discussion questions.

Narrative logs taken during this activity reference very engaged participants, with “lively” discussions. Observations included that participants mentioned they had realized their own blind spots in this trope, as they had not recognized the trope in all of the examples presented. In addition, they recognized that in historical films, some of the characters were added and not historically accurate, and that Hollywood selects specific stories to be turned into movies. One group, who was discussing *The Blind Side* said the “film elevated white women as savior” and “highlights how white women should show up and save children - pull them out of their current environment.” While “black children [are] portrayed with drug abuse and violence

as the only vision of the community and environment without any context of issues and needs,” it “assumes no chance to do well in the neighborhood they come from.”

In relation to students, participants discussed how this influenced the thinking and aspirations of students, and their understanding of history. They stated that there should be tools to help teach and identify white savior examples. In the full group debrief of this discussion, participants shared resources that they thought would help to combat this narrative, including the Cultural Wealth Model, anti-racist teaching strategies, and the Action Star Framework.

Activity Two Observations and Themes

The second activity asked participants to brainstorm how to interrupt white saviorism in the classroom using a case study in which they were provided a course objective as well as student responses to reflection questions that demonstrated white saviorism.

In this activity, participants were able to identify the issues with course objectives and students’ reflections and were asked to create potential reflection questions for students, and change the course objective so that it no longer reflected a saviorism mindset. This activity encouraged participation, and participants successfully identified the issues with the reflections and course objectives, and proposed reflection questions and class discussions that included themes of mutual benefits, assets-based approaches, changes in students’ perspectives, systemic issues, and motivation for students. They determined that course objectives should focus on what students should learn and will receive by being allowed in community spaces, getting rid of language that implies the student will “invest” in the community, and encouraging students to become partners in the community.

Statement of Intention

At the end of the workshop, participants were asked to share a statement of intention. This is a statement that references what action you would like to take in response to the knowledge you have gained during this workshop. In this activity, eleven participants referenced adapting their course content. Specifically, four said that they would like to adapt their reflections, three wanted to add readings/course content, four wanted to change their course objectives and syllabus. The other theme referenced by two respondents was self-reflection and action.

Post Event Evaluation

Of the 28 participants who attended the workshop, 14 completed the post-workshop evaluation, for a completion rate of 50%. Of the 14 respondents, 13 identified as white, and one as a person of color. This ratio closely matched the ratio of participants that attended the workshop. Seven respondents fell between the ages of 45 and 54, three between 25 and 34, three between 35 and 44, and one between the ages of 55 and 64.

Respondents were asked, “What was your religious affiliation growing up? (EX: Catholic, Jewish, Muslim, Protestant, Baptist, Hindu, None / No religious affiliation, etc.)”. Thirteen of the 14 respondents answered this question. Two responded Catholic, two responded Protestant, one responded Methodist, one Christian, one Evangelical, one responded Lutheran, and one Unitarian Universalist. Finally, four responded that they had no religious affiliation. Respondents were also asked, “What is your religious affiliation now? (EX: Catholic, Jewish, Muslim, Protestant, Baptist, Hindu, None / No religious affiliation, etc.)”. All fourteen respondents answered this question. Nine respondents said they have no religious affiliation, one

responded Protestant, one responded Catholic, one responded Christian, one responded Heathen, and one responded that they practice indigenous spirituality.

Respondents were also asked how long they had been teaching community-engaged learning classes. Four participants responded “N/A”, one responded less than one year, one responded 1 to 3 years, one responded 4 to 6 years, and seven respondents said 10 years or more. The departments that they worked and taught in also ranged widely, and included community-engaged learning offices, public health, biblical theology, psychology, horticulture, sociology, family studies, and medical school.

Finally, participants were asked if they had attended workshops focused on community-engaged learning in the past. Of the 14 respondents, eight had attended a workshop focused on critiquing and improving community-engaged learning courses in the past, and six responded that they had not.

The first question asked participants, “On a scale of 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent), how would you rate this workshop?” All 14 respondents answered this question, and the average rating was 4.9 out of 5. Those who had attended workshops focused on improving community-engaged learning in the past rated the workshop about .25 points lower than those who had not. Participants who wrote that they had been raised with a religious affiliation, the average rating was 4.7, while all of the participants who had not been raised with a religious affiliation rated the workshop a 5.

The second question asked participants, “On a scale of 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent), how would you rate your understanding of White Saviorism in Community-Engaged Learning BEFORE attending this workshop?” Thirteen respondents answered this question, with an average of 3.5 out of 5. Participants who had attend workshops focused on improving CEL

courses in the past rated their understanding of white saviorism prior to the workshop an average of 0.75 points lower than those who had not attended workshops focused on improving CEL courses in the past. There was little difference between participants who had been raised with a religious affiliation and those who had not.

Next, participants were asked, “On a scale of 1(poor) to 5 (excellent), how would you rate your understanding of White Saviorism in Community-Engaged Learning AFTER attending this workshop?” All 14 respondents answered this question, and the average response was a 4.4 out of 5, a 0.9 point increase. There was no significant difference between those who had attended workshops focused on critiquing CEL courses. However, participants who were raised with a religious affiliation rated their understanding of white saviorism after the workshop an average of 0.4 points lower than those who were raised with no religious affiliation.

Respondents were then asked a series of questions about the workshop on a scale of Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (4). The first statement was, “The goals of this workshop were clear to me.” All of the respondents (n=14) answered this statement, with an average of 3.6 on the 4-point scale. Those who had attended workshops focused on improving CEL courses averaged about 0.3 points lower than those who had not. There was no significant difference for participants who were raised with or without a religious affiliation.

The next set of statements asked whether the workshop was meaningful and relevant to their work. The first statement was, “The topic of the workshop was relevant to my work.” All respondents answered this question, and the average was 3.9 on a 4-point scale. Participants who had attended workshops in the past averaged a rating of .3 higher than those who had not. Respondents who had a religious affiliation growing up averaged .25 higher than those who did not.

The next statement was, “The activities in this workshop were meaningful to my work.” All respondents answered this statement, and the average was a 3.8 out of 4 points. There was no difference between participants who had attended workshops in the past and those who had not. Respondents who had a religious affiliation growing up averaged 0.38 points higher than those who did not.

The next statement was, “The activities in this workshop were relevant to my work.” All respondents answered this statement, and the average was a 3.9 out of 4. The next statement was, “The activities in this workshop were relevant to my work.” All respondents answered this statement, and the average was a 3.9 out of 4. There was no difference between participants who had attended workshops in the past and those who had not. Respondents who had a religious affiliation growing up averaged 0.25 points higher than those who did not. The next statement was, “The debrief/discussions in this workshop were relevant to my work.” A total of 13 respondents answered this, and the average was 3.8 out of 4. There were no significant differences among the groups mentioned above.

The next statement asked about the participants' perceptions of white saviorism in community-engaged learning. The first statement was, “I think that White Saviorism plays a role in Community-Engaged Learning.” All 14 respondents said that they strongly agreed with this statement.

The next statements asked what participants would do with this information in the future. The first statement said, “I plan to use what I learned in this workshop in the future.” All 14 respondents selected Strongly Agree. Next, the survey asked, “I will share what I learned today with a friend or colleague.” All 14 respondents selected Strongly Agree. The next statement said, “I would recommend this workshop to other Community-Engaged Learning course instructors.”

All 14 respondents selected Strongly Agree. The next statement said, “I am interested in learning more about White Saviorism.” The average response was a 3.9 on the 4-point scale. Twelve respondents selected Strongly Agree, and two selected Agree. There were no significant differences among the groups mentioned above. Next, the survey asked, “I will seek out more information on White Saviorism in Community-Engaged Learning.” Eleven respondents selected Strongly Agree, and three selected Agree, for an average of 3.8 on the 4-point scale. There were no significant differences among the groups mentioned above.

In relation to their community-engaged learning classes, the next statement said, “I will adapt the discussions or reflections in my Community-Engaged Learning Class based on what I learned in this workshop.” Eleven respondents selected Strongly Agree, and three selected Agree, averaging 3.8 on the 4-point scale. There were no significant differences among the groups mentioned above. Next, participants were asked, “How likely are you to review / re-evaluate your Community-Engaged Learning Class based on today’s discussion?” on a 4-point scale of Very Unlikely to Very Likely. Twelve respondents selected Very Likely, and Two selected Somewhat Likely, resulting in an average of 3.9 on the 4-point scale. Those who had attended workshops focused on improving CEL courses before averaged about 0.25 points lower than those who had not. There were no significant differences between people who had been raised with a religious affiliation and those who had not.

The Cycle of Liberation was the next section of the survey. Participants answered a series of statements on a 4-point scale of Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. The first statement was, “Prior to this workshop, I was knowledgeable about the cycle of liberation.” Based on the analysis scale referenced earlier, the average response was a 2 out of 4 points. Three respondents selected Strongly Disagree, five respondents selected Disagree, and three selected Agree.

Respondents who listed being raised with no religious affiliation average .25 higher than those who had been raised with a religious affiliation. There was no significant difference between those who had attended a workshop in the past and those who had not. The next statement was, “After attending this workshop, I think that the cycle of liberation is relevant to Community-Engaged Learning.” Eleven respondents selected Strongly Agree, and three selected Agree, for an average of 3.8 on the 4-point scale. There were no significant differences among the groups analyzed. The next statement was, “After attending this workshop, I think that the Cycle of Liberation is relevant to White Saviorism.” Twelve respondents selected Strongly Agree, and two selected Agree. There were no significant differences among the groups analyzed.

The next set of questions were open-ended, and respondents' answers were coded by theme. The first question asked, “What was the most helpful part of this workshop?.” Five respondents referenced the presentation content. Seven respondents referenced the breakout room activities, with five specifically mentioning the case study discussion. Finally, one participant referenced the Cycle of Liberation, and one mentioned the resources they plan to use in their course.

The final workshop-related question asked participants, “How would you recommend this workshop to be improved?” Five participants referenced that they would have liked to have more time. Out of the five who wanted more time, three of these would have liked more time specifically going over the Cycle of Liberation, and three would have liked to have a follow up activity or to bring their own experiences into the workshop. One response requested a face-to-face format, and one recommended that the slides be shared in advance. One person felt that the 20 minutes spent talking about pop culture was not helpful, as they did not know many of the

references. Finally, one person felt that the other participants were exhibiting white saviorism within their breakout session.

Discussion

Overall, participants responded well to the topics addressed during the workshop. The icebreaker demonstrated that participants framed community-engaged learning in much the same ways that were established by Bringle (2006). They overwhelmingly aimed for students to incorporate their formal education and with a lived experience at a community organization. In addition, they saw their students as fulfilling a needed capacity at organizations. Few mentioned the harms students may perpetuate, and only $\frac{1}{3}$ referenced the need for mutual benefits between organizations and students. Although mutual benefits were mentioned by a few participants, most assumed inherent benefits of students working at community organizations. Only two responses mentioned that students may gain a systemic understanding of social issues, emphasizing that instructors likely are not focused on this in their classrooms, either.

In response to the question of their understanding of white saviorism before and after the workshop, there was an increase of almost a full point after participants attended the workshop. This demonstrates that participants gained an understanding of white saviorism through the workshop. In addition, the participants felt that the activities in the workshop were relevant and meaningful to their work. The activities used in this workshop were deliberately chosen for this audience. While the first activity, focused on white saviorism in popular culture, could be adapted for other audiences, I emphasized the importance of acknowledging how present this trope is in popular culture, and therefore greatly influences students. In addition to demonstrating this, the activity allowed instructors to explore their own understandings of white saviorism in discussion with one another and consider their own biases and influences. Within this activity,

one participant mentioned recognizing their own blind spots, which further emphasized the way this trope operates in our society, as a narrative that has been made acceptable and invisible. In addition, it demonstrates the success of the activity in providing participants with an opportunity for reflection on their own understandings, without directly asking participants to do so, which could have caused them to become defensive. Participants were able to reflect without forcing them to begin by interrogating their own biases. They were able to discuss the issue in a way that allowed them to distance it from themselves, while also encouraging a rich discussion and understanding of white saviorism.

The second activity was created for this audience, and the use of student work and instructor syllabi provided participants with examples of how this mindset may appear in community-engaged learning. In this activity, participants were asked to investigate a case study that is likely much more like their own work, transferring and adapting some of the skills they learned in the first activity, in which they had taken a more distant approach. This activity not only demonstrated how often white saviorism is seen, but also allowed instructors to practice addressing it with each other in situations that are likely to happen within their own classrooms, and to develop reflection and discussion questions they could use with students.

Finally, within their statements of intention, instructors emphasized re-analyzing their own learning goals and outcomes in their syllabi in order to screen for white saviorism and instead emphasize mutual benefit for partners and students, and student learning. This demonstrates the first goal of this workshop, to increase professors' knowledge / awareness of the prevalence of white saviorism in service-learning as well as how to recognize it, was met. Instructors sought to move from a traditional view of service-learning, which many had exemplified through their goals at the beginning of the workshop, to a critical lens of community

engagement. Through their proposals for reflection and discussion, one can see that instructors sought to incorporate instruction and discussion of systems of power into their curriculums, as suggested by Santiago-Ortiz in their definition of critical community service-learning (2019).

While the workshop overall was successful and achieved the goals listed, it is likely that it was more eye-opening for participants who had never attended workshops focused on improving community-engaged learning courses in the past. While it was not a big difference, .25 points, these participants rated the overall workshop slightly lower than those who had not participated in a workshop like this in the past. In addition, when asked whether the goals of the workshop were clear to them, they averaged about 0.3 points lower than respondents who had not participated in a workshop like this. They were also less likely (0.25 points) to review their workshop based on the content they learned, but not because they did not think it was relevant. Participants who had previously participated in workshops rated the relevance of this workshop an average of 0.3 points higher than those who hadn't. All of this could indicate that they see the value of these types of workshops and have already reviewed their content based on prior learning opportunities, and do not have as much room for improvement as the other group does.

The second goal was to increase professors' access to resources to combat and address white saviorism within their courses and within the mindsets of their students. This was achieved as well, for the same reasons as mentioned above. Instructors expressed interest in analyzing their own content and addressing white saviorism with their students through their statements of intention as well as through the post-event evaluation. They stated that they planned to approach this through the lens of Harro's Cycle of Liberation, and they saw the close connections between white saviorism and the Cycle of Liberation. They aimed to introduce students to systems of power that are present in communities and greatly impact community issues and to interrupt

saviorism by pushing students towards a critical consciousness. They will do this using reflection questions and course discussion and content.

In the evaluation, all of the respondents said that they would likely or very likely re-evaluate the content of their community-engaged learning course as a result of this workshop. This demonstrates that the participants both found the content compelling and the issue important to address, and that they had the tools, the Cycle of Liberation as well as information about how white saviorism appears in community-engaged learning, to make changes to their courses that reflect this knowledge and use these tools.

The third goal of the workshop was to increase networks, skills, and attitudes about the harms of white saviorism. This goal was also achieved, as participants were able to network with each other in their breakout rooms, and the chat referenced their plans to continue sending each other resources and ideas. Many of the participants had not previously attended workshops focused on improving community-engaged learning, so this provided a space to have conversations that they had likely not had before in a formal setting. In addition to this, all participants strongly agreed that they planned to share what they learned in the workshop with a friend or colleague. This demonstrates that they plan to extend and continue this conversation with others, which could result in increased understanding of the topic both for themselves individually and for others as they talk to other colleagues and friends about the content.

Overall, a workshop is a successful way to engage faculty and staff who work in community-engaged learning on difficult topics such as white saviorism. It is important that participants have the opportunity to participate in activities that encourage them to discuss issues within the field with each other, and to reflect on their own teaching practices. Participants overwhelmingly appreciated the opportunity to explore the concepts and issues together as well

as share ideas and struggles in a space with similarly goal-oriented people. Community-engaged learning as a field strives to create positive experiences for students and communities through meaningful engagement and action, but opportunities for scholars and practitioners to reflect on this work is rare. The reflection that we ask of students is important for instructors as well, as they consider new and better ways to engage with students and the community. The continued evaluation and reflection of their courses is important for improvement and idea sharing. This feedback from the workshop experience reflects a need and desire for more purposeful learning and exploring of difficult topics and concepts in community-engaged learning. Further, by offering spaces like this, the field can be more deliberate in its impacts in the community.

Limitations

One limitation for this workshop was the online format. It is much more difficult to actively engage people over Zoom, as well as to gauge understandings of concepts. In a physical space, the facilitator can watch conversations to understand body language of participants, as well as better understand how activities are going, and where further explanation may be needed. While participants were asked to keep their cameras on during the session, that was not always possible, and it is likely that participants were not always fully engaged.

In addition, many participants referenced the length of the workshop as a barrier. With only two hours to understand and discuss the concepts, participants were not able to fully grasp the Cycle of Liberation framework. They said that they would have liked more time to talk about it, and more information about it overall. One participant suggested a before and after lunch session in order to dive more deeply into the concepts. In addition, participants wanted more time to discuss their personal experiences. This could be used in a setting where all participants were on a similar level regarding their experience and understanding of the concepts. If used in a

setting where participants were not on similar experience levels, it could discourage some from participating.

If this workshop were to be extended, or if there was another opportunity to reconvene the group, it would be beneficial to ask participants to bring their own course materials to review. It would be beneficial for instructors to have the opportunity to analyze their own materials and discuss course objectives, reflection, and discussion ideas for their specific course topics.

In addition, participants who had been raised with a religious affiliation rated their understanding of white saviorism as 0.4 points lower than those who did not, and this could be due to the complexities of the connections between saviorism and religion. Future workshops that had more time or more focused demographic groups, for example, exploring white saviorism at Christian and Catholic higher education institutions, could explore this connection more deeply, and may help participants at these institutions to better understand white saviorism and its partial roots in Christianity.

Finally, the demographics of the participants themselves could be seen as a limitation. As in most of higher education, the majority of instructors that participated in the workshop were white, and 12 of the 13 participants that responded to this question in the evaluation survey identified as white. This meant that there were not broad ranges of perspectives within participant discussions in breakout rooms. Without broad perspectives, we risk continuing to perpetuate the very things this workshop aimed to address.

Implications for Future Projects

The results of this workshop indicate that instructors of community-engaged learning courses see the connections between white saviorism and community-engaged learning and are eager to make changes to combat it in their classrooms, but participants need continued

instruction to move them from traditional service-learning mindsets towards critical community engaged learning. In addition, all participants strongly agreed that they would recommend this workshop to another community-engaged learning instructor. This established that community-engaged learning instructors saw a connection between the interrupting white saviorism and the cycle of liberation framework. The framework provided faculty with a visual understanding of how students can be introduced to systemic change. They can now use this framework to craft reflection questions, course discussions, classroom assignments, and course objectives. If this workshop were to be repeated, practitioners could consider extending the time of the workshop and the breadth of the topics covered or possibly creating two consecutive workshops. It would be beneficial for faculty to have more time to discuss the Cycle of Liberation.

While this workshop focused on the Cycle of Liberation, future studies could also consider the use of assets-based community development frameworks, social justice education, or the cultural wealth model to interrupt white saviorism. In addition, practitioners of community-engaged learning should continue to talk about the structure of community-engaged learning, and the issues it causes. White saviorism is just one example of an issue that we see in university-community partnerships that results from the structure of community-engaged learning courses, and it is important that we continue to educate instructors on ways to improve community engaged learning while continuing to reimagine the structure of community partnerships to promote mutual benefits and student learning.

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Appendix A: Event Flier

The flier features a vertical gradient background from blue at the top to orange at the bottom. On the left side, there are several white line-art icons: a speech bubble, a profile of a head with a gear inside, a glowing lightbulb, a megaphone, a person jumping, and three hands raised. The text is in white, with the title in a large, bold font. The date and time are in a smaller font, followed by 'FREE EVENT • VIA ZOOM'. A paragraph of text describes the workshop's focus. At the bottom, there is a black button with white text.

 **Center for
Community-Engaged Learning**

Workshop: Interrupting White Saviorism In Community-Engaged Learning

**Thursday, March 3rd, 2022
2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
FREE EVENT • VIA ZOOM**

Community-Engaged Learning is often implemented at predominantly white institutions with students working primarily in communities of color. Consequently, experiences often result in students adopting or reinforcing a white savior mentality. In this interactive workshop, instructors will explore the ways in which white saviorism is seen in community-engaged learning and learn strategies to interrupt and shift the white saviorism mentality to improve both student and community outcomes.

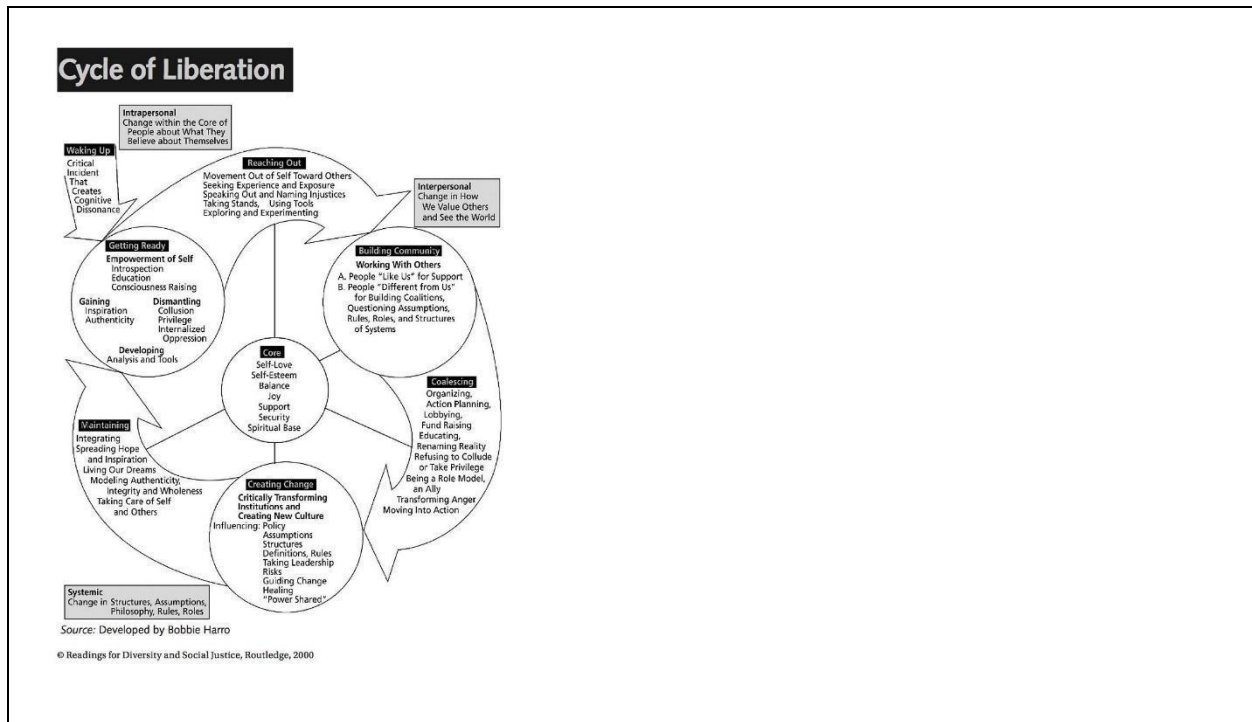
[Registration Link Here](#)

Appendix B: Workshop Agenda**Interrupting White Saviorism in Community-Engaged Learning**

20 Mins	<p>Introductions-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Name, ● Courses Taught ● What are you interested in learning? <p>Ice Breaker</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Jam Board and Discussion: What are your goals for your students who are participating in Community-Engaged Learning? What do you think your partner's goals are? ● (Would anyone like to share their Jamboards out loud?) If not, highlight a few. 	Jam Board
15 Mins	<p>White Saviorism: Problematizing the Mindset</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The harmful effects white saviorism in CEL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Takes agency from communities, puts students in the position of the only ones that can fix it ○ In what ways are students prepared to enter communities? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Pop culture, news, classroom ● Lecture and Short Video 	PowerPoint
25 Mins	<p>Activity 1 & Debrief</p> <p>Jam Board and Discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Discussion- Use pop culture references to explore white saviorism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Goal: To give examples of saviorism and its effects, and to help participants understand how this manifests in Community-Engaged Learning 	Summaries of Popular Movies, TV Shows, and Books that exemplify White Saviorism
15 Mins	<p>Cycle of Liberation- Lecture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cycle of Liberation Introduction with a focus on Getting Ready (consciousness raising), Reaching Out, and (maybe) Building Community. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Emphasis: Raising Consciousness- Not Saviorism 	PowerPoint

<p>25 Mins</p>	<p>Activity 2 & Debrief: Case Study Discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic 2, the Cycle of Liberation, will explore the first 2 steps of the cycle, and show instructors where they may be about to guide students towards a liberation mentality rather than a saviorism mentality. In these scenarios, we will see students’ mindsets through their words/reflections, and practice interruptions. • Activity: Case Studies • Key Outcome: Learn how to recognize and brainstorm strategies to interrupt saviorism ideologies in students 	<p>Cases Studies, PowerPoints, Jam Board</p>
<p>15 Mins</p>	<p>Wrap-up and final thoughts on workshop Open discussion on possible action steps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Declaration Statement- What do you intend to do as a result of getting this information? • If you feel comfortable, please post your statement on the Jam Board. <p>Evaluation Forms</p>	<p>Jam Board</p>

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS / NOTES:



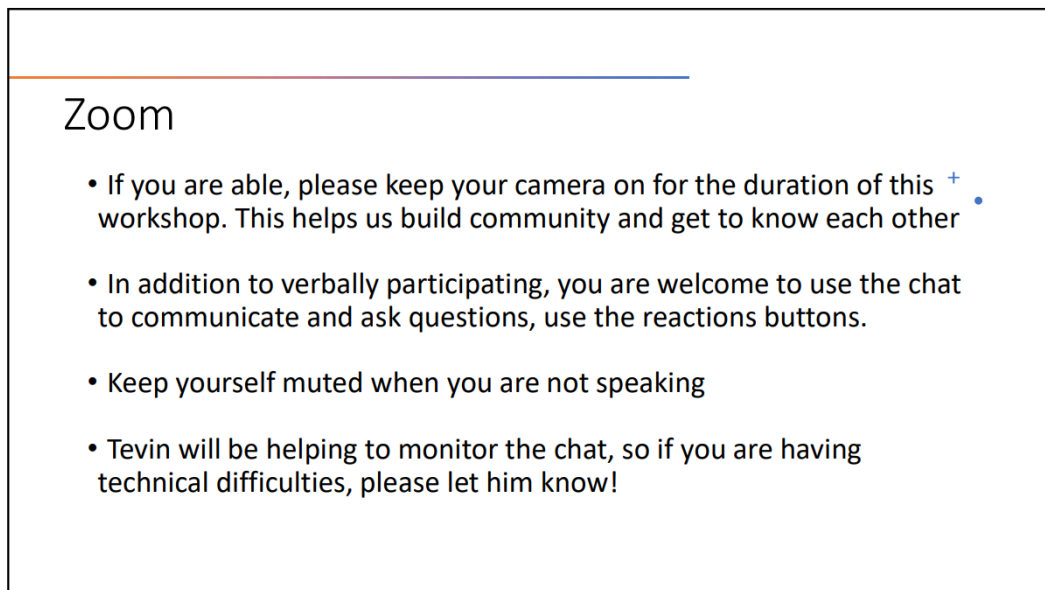
Appendix C: Presentation Slides



Interrupting White Saviorism in Community-Engaged Learning

Eva Harrell

1



Zoom

- If you are able, please keep your camera on for the duration of this + workshop. This helps us build community and get to know each other •
- In addition to verbally participating, you are welcome to use the chat to communicate and ask questions, use the reactions buttons.
- Keep yourself muted when you are not speaking
- Tevin will be helping to monitor the chat, so if you are having technical difficulties, please let him know!

2

Agenda

- Introductions
- Icebreaker
- White Saviorism
- Activity 1: White Saviorism in Pop Culture
- Cycle of Liberation
- Activity 2: Scenarios
- Statement of Intent
- Closing and Evaluation




3

Framing

- Community-Engaged Learning is implemented at predominantly white institutions and with primarily white, middle-class students working mostly in communities of color
- In this workshop, we aim to address how to interrupt white students' saviorism ideologies.

4



Introductions

-  Name, Pronouns
-  Courses Taught
-  What are you interested in learning?

5

Icebreaker

Jam Board and Discussion

- 
WHAT ARE YOUR GOALS FOR YOUR STUDENTS WHO ARE PARTICIPATING IN COMMUNITY-ENGAGED LEARNING?
- 
WHAT DO YOU THINK YOUR PARTNER'S GOALS ARE?

6

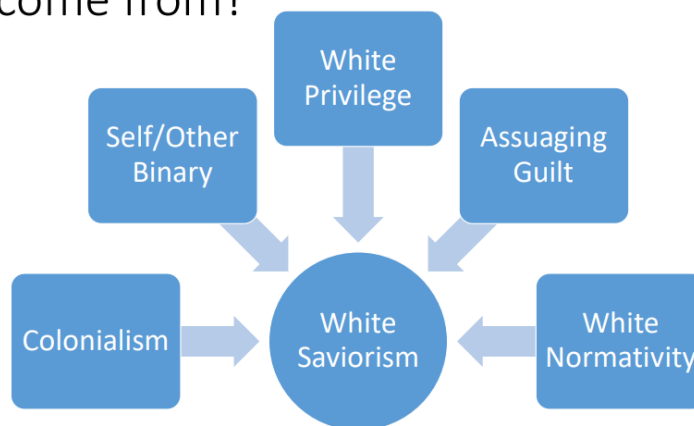
White Saviorism: Problematizing the Mindset

The phenomenon in which a white person “guides **people of color from the margins to the mainstream** with his or her **own initiative** and benevolence,” which tends to render the people of color “incapable of helping themselves” and **disposes them of current and historical agency.**

What do you think of when you hear the term white savior?

7





Roots of the White Savior Complex: Where does it come from?



8

Activity 1: White Saviorism in Pop Culture

9

The White Savior in Pop Culture

- Common trope that involves a well-meaning White Person helping a Person or People of Color achieve what they were unable to achieve on their own.
- Examples:
 - The Help
 - The Blindside
 - Green Book
 - Denaris Targaryen in Game of Thrones
 - To Kill a Mockingbird

10



Breakout Rooms

- Chose a film or tv show that falls into the white savior trope and discuss the following questions in relation to the film:
- What aspects of white saviorism show up in the film, tv show, or book that you chose?
- Who do you think is the intended audience for the film?
- What implications does this film have for representation?
- Many of these films are historical. What does that say about how we represent White and POC history in America?
- **This trope is very common in pop culture. How does its proliferation impact the realms of education and community engagement?**
- **How do we identify and combat this narrative in Community Engagement?**

11

Symptoms of White Saviorism Ideology

- Self-Other Binary
- Focus on good intent
- “Show someone the way”
- Individual Overcoming Situation- Invalidation of the systemic nature of the issue
 - Promotes narrative of a person overcoming it
- BIPOC folks are depicted as lacking agency
- BIPOC communities are depicted as lacking
- Gives an inaccurate historical representation
- With this influence, it makes sense that White students are entering Community-Engaged Learning with this mindset, and it is our responsibility to work with them to interrupt it.

12

Even with the best intentions:

They implicitly promote the idea that's the only way to solve this problem is to continue to **model systems promoted by majority white communities**, therefore demonstrating in communities of color that they cannot do it on their own

When they leave at the end of their shift, they pat themselves on the back for the difference that they made and ignore and **therefore reinforce the structures that cause the issue they aim to address.**

13

Students with this ideology...

- Are not focused on the systems of power that produce inequities
- Do not see the patterns of power behind the issues, and instead see them as isolated
- Not considering the possible harms that are inflicted on people by their presence

14



15

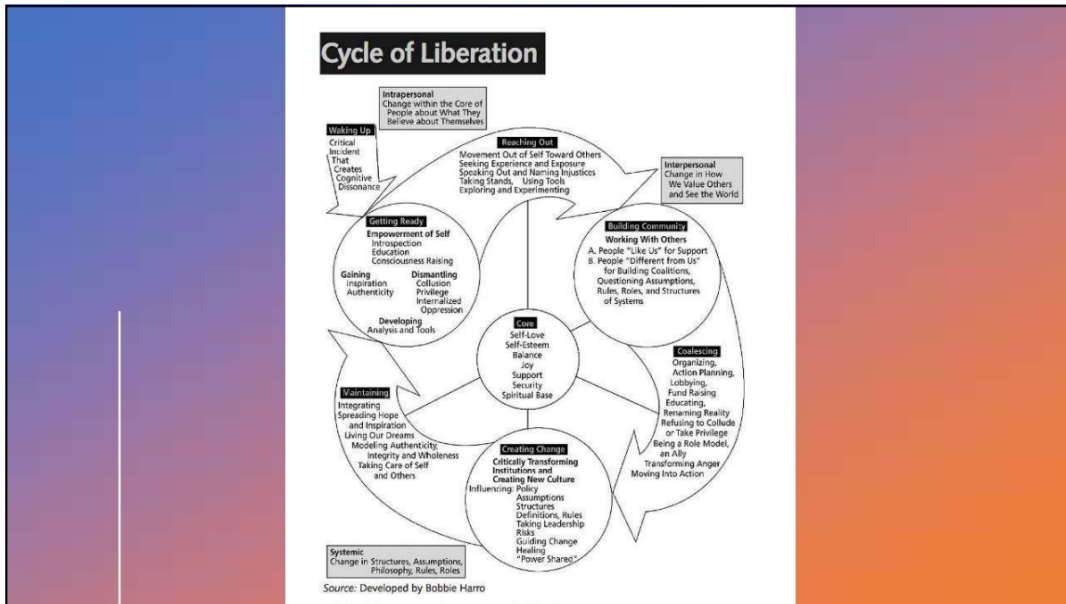
Students Resist Activism In Favor of the Less Challenging Role of Volunteer

- Good Intentions are seen to eliminate the possibility of harm
- **Students, when given the choice between different forms of involvement in service-learning, rank charity first**
- This demonstrates that “we are failing to help students understand that civic action involves more than direct service and that systemic problems require systemic solutions”

16

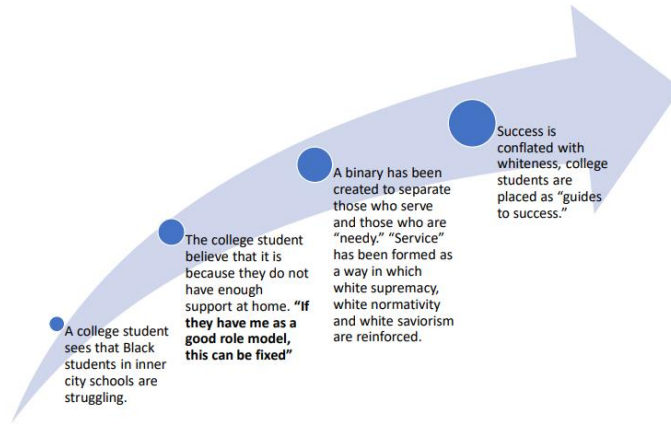
Cycle of Liberation

17



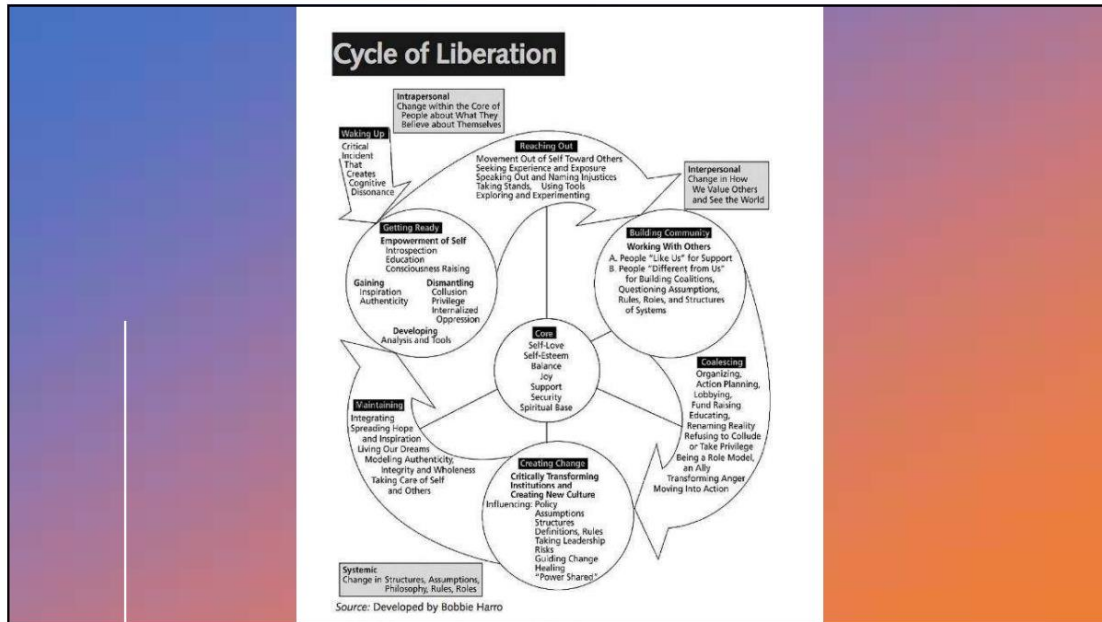
18

Without Interruption:



- College students fail to recognize the power and agency within the groups they are working with. They believe that with these good intentions and the hard work that they put into forming relationships, they have eliminated the possibility of harm.

19

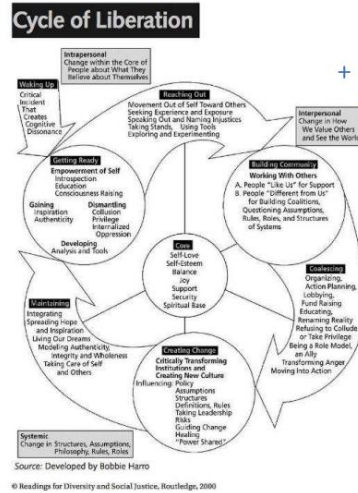


20

Waking Up

A Critical Incident Creates Cognitive Dissonance

- This can happen in class, at a CEL site
- Could also have happened outside
- A student’s belief about the world is challenged



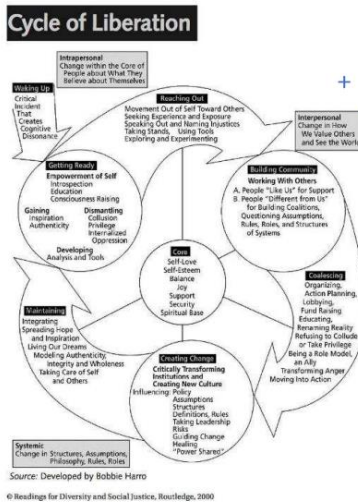
Getting Ready

Empowerment of Self

- Introspection
- Education
- Consciousness Raising
 - Understanding of Systems, rather than relying on cultural emphasis on Saviorism and Whiteness

Developing Analysis and Tools

- Through Reflection and Class Discussion



Reaching Out and Building Community

Empowerment of Self

- Seeking Experience and Exposure
- Taking Stands
- Exploring and Experimenting

Working with Others

- Building Community in the Classroom and at Community-Engaged Learning Site

Cycle of Liberation

Working With Others
Working With Others
A. People "like us" for Support
B. People "Different from us" for Building Coalitions, Questioning Assumptions, Rules, Roles, and Structures of Systems

Creating Change
Critically Transforming Institutions and Creating New Culture
Influencing: Policy, Assumptions, Structures, Definitions, Rules, Taking Leadership, Risk, Creating Change, Healing, "Power Shares"

Self
Self-Love
Self-Esteem
Balance
Joy
Support
Security
Spiritual Base

Getting Ready
Empowerment of Self
Introspection
Education
Consciousness Raising
Dismantling
Cultural
Privilege
Internalized
Oppression

Working In
Critical Incident That Creates Cognitive Dissonance

Reaching Out
Movement Out of Self Toward Others
Seeking Experiences and Exposure
Socializing Out and Naming Injustices
Taking Stands, Using Tools, Exploring and Experimenting

Introspection
Integrating
Spreading Hope
and Inspiration
Using Our Dreams
Modeling Authenticity
Integrity and Wholeness
Taking Care of Self and Others

Developing
Analysis and Tools

Goaling
Inspiration
Authenticity

Systemic Change
Structures, Assumptions, Philosophy, Rules, Roles

Creating
Organizing, Action Planning, Lobbying, Fund Raising, Educating, Renaming Reality, Refusing to Collaborate or Take Privilege, Being a Role Model, An Ally, Transforming Anger, Moving into Action

Interpersonal Change
Change in How We Value Others and See the World

Intrapersonal Change
Change within the Core of People about What They Believe about Themselves

Source: Developed by Bobbie Harro
© Readings for Diversity and Social Justice, Routledge, 2000

23

Tools in our Toolbox

Reflection Questions

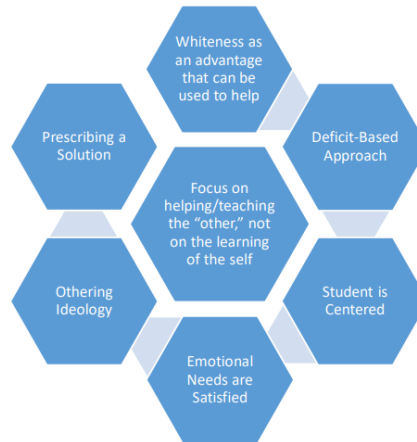
Course Objectives

Class Content

Class Discussions

24

White Saviorism in Service Learning- Find Fault in People/Communities, Not Systems



25

Activity 2: Case Studies

26

Students are coming to us with a broader understanding of race and privilege. We have⁺ a real opportunity to steer their intentions and impact in a new direction:

**Towards Solidarity, Engagement, Listening,
and Systemic Change.**

Statement of⁺ Intent

What do you intend to do as a result of getting this information? How might you reframe outcomes for your course?

Thank you!

Thank you for your participation in today's workshop. As a Community Engagement graduate fellow in the CCEL, today's workshop is a part of my capstone project. I would appreciate it if you could fill out the following [evaluation](#) based on the workshop today. Your thoughts, opinions, and reactions will be used solely for research purposes, and all responses will be kept confidential.

Appendix D: Evaluation Materials

Post Event Evaluation

Evaluation Form: Workshop-Interrupting White Saviorism In Community-Engaged Learning

Thank you for your participation in today's workshop. As a Community Engagement graduate fellow in the CCEL, today's workshop is a part of my capstone project. I would appreciate it if you could fill out the following evaluation based on the workshop today. Your thoughts, opinions, and reactions will be used solely for research purposes, and all responses will be kept confidential.

1. On a scale of 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent), how would you rate this workshop?

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Poor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Excellent

2. On a scale of 1(poor) to 5 (excellent), how would you rate your understanding of White Saviorism in Community-Engaged Learning BEFORE attending this workshop?

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Poor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Excellent

3. On a scale of 1(poor) to 5 (excellent), how would you rate your understanding of White Saviorism in Community-Engaged Learning AFTER attending this workshop?

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	

4. Please share your thoughts about the workshop:

Check all that apply.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
The goals of this workshop were clear to me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The topic of the workshop was relevant to my work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The activities in this workshop were meaningful to my work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The activities in this workshop were relevant to my work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The debrief / discussions in this workshop were meaningful to me and my work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I think that White Saviorism plays a role in Community-Engaged Learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I plan to use what I learned in this workshop in the future.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I will share what I learned today with a friend or colleague.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would recommend this workshop to other Community-Engaged Learning course instructors.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am interested in learning more about White Saviorism.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I will seek out more information on White Saviorism in Community-Engaged Learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I will adapt the discussions or reflections in my Community-Engaged Learning Class based on what I learned in this workshop.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. How likely are you to review / re-evaluate your Community-Engaged Learning Class based on today’s discussion?

Mark only one oval.

- Very Likely
- Somewhat Likely
- Somewhat Unlikely
- Very Unlikely

6. Cycle of Liberation

Mark only one oval per row.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Prior to this workshop, I was knowledgeable about the cycle of liberation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
After attending this workshop, I think that the cycle of liberation is relevant to Community-Engaged Learning.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
After attending this workshop, I think that the Cycle of Liberation is relevant to White Saviorism.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

7. What was the most helpful or beneficial part of this workshop?

8. How would you recommend this workshop be improved?

Finally, I would like to ask a few questions about you...

9. How long have you been teaching courses with a Community-Engaged Learning?

Mark only one oval.

- Less than a year
- 1 to 3 years
- 4 to 6 years
- 7 to 9 years
- 10 years or more
- N/A

10. In what department(s) have you taught Community-Engaged Learning Courses?

11. Have you attended workshops focused on critiquing and improving Community-Engaged Learning Courses in the past?

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

12. What is your race/ethnicity?

13. What was your religious affiliation growing up? (EX: Catholic, Jewish, Muslim, Protestant, Baptist, Hindu, None / No religious affiliation, etc.)

14. What is your religious affiliation now? (EX: Catholic, Jewish, Muslim, Protestant, Baptist, Hindu, None / No religious affiliation, etc.)

15. What is your age?

Mark only one oval.

- 18 to 24
- 25 to 34
- 35 to 44
- 45 to 54
- 55 to 64
- 65 to 74
- 75 years or above
- Prefer not to say

Narrative Log

Observation	Time	Intention & Action/Comments
Icebreaker/ Jamboard activity		To encourage participants to talk and share past experience.
Topic 1: Problematizing the Mindset		PowerPoint- Educate people on the harmful effects of White Saviorism
Activity 1		Explore White Saviorism Through Pop Culture
Topic 2- Cycle of Liberation		PowerPoint- Go over first 3 parts of the Cycle of Liberation

Activity 2- Scenarios		Brainstorm how to interrupt White Saviorism in the classroom
Closing Video- Digital Story		Participants view a video reflection of a student
Declaration Statement		Participants write a statement of future intentions, invited (but not required) to share on JamBoard

Appendix E: Activities

Icebreaker

ICEBREAKER: What are your goals for your students who are participating in Community-Engaged Learning?

ICEBREAKER: What do you think the partner organization's goals are?

Activity One: White Saviorism in Pop Culture

Provide participants with several summaries of tv shows, movies, or books, that contain the white savior trope. Then, ask them to answer the following questions.

Discussion Questions:

As a team, chose a film or tv show that falls into the white savior trope and discuss the following questions in relation to the film, book, or tv show:

- What aspects of white saviorism show up in the film, tv show, or book that you chose?
- Who do you think is the intended audience for the film, tv show, or book?
- What implications does this film, tv show, or book have for representation?
- Many of these films, tv shows, or books are historical. What does that say about how we represent White and POC history in America?
- This trope is very common in pop culture. How does its proliferation impact the realms of education and community engagement?
- How do we identify and combat this narrative in Community Engagement?

Activity Two: Case Studies

In breakout rooms, participants were asked to evaluate 1 of the following case studies, and answer the questions below.

Case Study 1

The following is a case study using real examples of course objectives and student's reflections on community work. As you read, think about how you see saviorism in the professor's objectives and in the student's reflection responses. Then, answer the questions below.

Case Study: Course Objective for Service-Learning

The knowledge gained within our privileged classroom spaces can make a powerful impact if we meaningfully apply it to the community. During this semester, you will have the opportunity to participate in service learning, where you invest 20 hours total over the course with a community organization.

Reflection Question:

1. How do you define the term service? How about the term community engagement?

“Service” is a strong overarching word that signifies the act of helping a community grow and can be used to describe a wide variety of volunteering tasks. The word holds a lot of positive connotations that promotes optimistic feelings in one's work. Other words that I feel like relate to the term “service” include “aid”, “assistance”, and perhaps “acts of kindness.” These three terms are strong, positive words that once again indicate an individual's attempt in giving back to those in need. I think the words “aid” and “assistance” can really be tied to supporting the less fortunate.

During a part of class focused on identifying privilege, I was especially able to see this privilege on the “power flower” where gender was the only color I shaded as a “disadvantage.” I

think that those, like myself, who have been given so many advantages within their lifetime have a duty to those less fortunate to do everything we can to better the world around them.

How do you see saviorism in this case study?	
How would you change the course objective?	
What reflection questions would you ask this student?	
What class discussions might you hold?	
Finally, this student attended a workshop in which they participated in activities to acknowledge and learn about their own privilege. Why do you think this failed to prevent them from perpetuating a white saviorism ideology?	

Case Study 2:

The following is a case study using real examples of course objectives and student's reflections on community work. As you read, think about how you see saviorism in the professor's objectives and in the student's reflection responses. Then, answer the questions below.

Course Objectives:

The knowledge gained within our privileged classroom spaces can make a powerful impact if we meaningfully apply it in the community. During this semester, you will have the opportunity to engage in service learning, where you invest 20 hours total over the course in a community organization

Reflection Question:

1. Why do you want to participate in service- learning? What have you learned so far?

So when I started college, I was determined to become a part of an organization or program that instilled specific qualities in what I believed. This is why I looked to this program. They had a set of values that represented what kind of person I was. That was a person who wants to benefit the lives of others, and to become a role model for younger children. So when I heard of this opportunity, I jumped on it. I did not want to give up the opportunity to become one of the "good" tutors. I wanted to be able to have conversations with these children and give them a safe space to just talk and more importantly, be heard.

Over time, the experiences I have had has motivated even more to become more involved with the community and even more so with youth. One of the first volunteer sites I was at was the {Community Center 1, Minneapolis}. Let me tell you, this was like no other experience I have ever had. To be honest, this was the first time I had ever worked with inner city kids and I realized that it is a lot different than working with rural city kids. To begin with, previously, I had only volunteered in {Town Name}, Minnesota. If you do not already know, {Town Name}

is a small little farm town. Expectations and norms there are different then down in the cities. Behavior-wise, there was a big difference. In {Town Name} it was expected that children listen to those who are older than them, no questions asked. At {Community Center 1}, in a way, you need to earn the children's respect before they reciprocate the same. It was quite difficult for me at first and sometimes I would go home in a depressed state but one thing I realized is that I am glad that I had that experience. I was able to help these children to succeed in school, with support that they were not getting from their community. I hope that as I continue to be a role model for them, that they will see me as a stable figure and one day hope to go to college too.

How do you see saviorism in this case study?	
How would you change the course objective?	
What reflection questions would you ask this student?	
What class discussions might you hold?	
Finally, this student clearly recognizes differences between their previous experiences and their new site. How can we guide them towards appreciation of these differences? How might they have been better prepared?	

Case Study 3:

The following is a case study using real examples of course objectives and student's reflections on community work. As you read, think about how you see saviorism in the professor's objectives and in the student's reflection responses. Then, answer the questions below.

Course Objectives:

The knowledge gained within our privileged classroom spaces can make a powerful impact if we meaningfully apply it in the community. During this semester, you will have the opportunity to engage in service learning, where you invest 20 hours total over the course in a community organization

Reflection Question:

1. How do you differentiate from meaningful and shallow service-learning experiences?

In college, I started branching out and joined an organization called {Mentor Organization}. At first, I had joined the organization because I've always wanted a "Little Sister" to interact with and simply because I just really wanted to volunteer in general to build up experiences. Those were all internal reasons. I could volunteer anywhere and I can tutor middle schoolers in campus-based programs like TRIO bound. I didn't end up in other programs, however, and joined {Mentor Organization} as a "Big Sister" in the Fall of my freshman year at the University. Now, having met my Little for almost a year now, I can honestly say that my reasons for staying in {Mentor Organization} have changed drastically from the reasons why I began. The first event that really struck me was "The Big Day", in which the middle schoolers came to the U to see what a college campus is like and ask questions. The children would ask silly questions such as, "Can you really eat ice-cream everyday?" and the like, but one student asked, "Why did you go to college?" The college students that helped coordinate the event took turn answering. I then turned to my Little and asked her, "Are you planning to go to college?" I

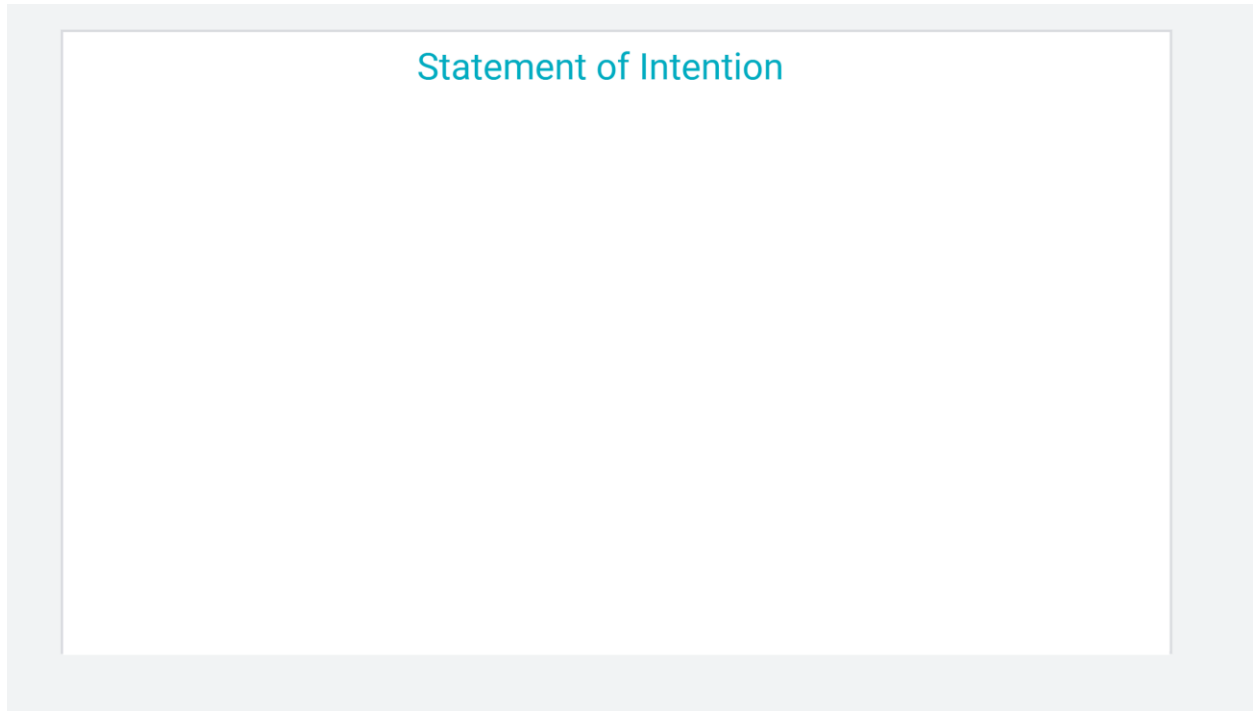
distinctly remember her looking away and said “I don’t know.” That was my big ah-ha moment. Looking back at my middle school years in a white suburban neighborhood, it was always the assumed norm that you would go to college. However, it was different for these children. Living in the inner city of Minneapolis and being of color, they were raised with a different background and mentality than I was. The Big Day wasn’t as much a field trip as it was to encourage the middle schoolers to consider college in their futures. That day marked when my internal reasons to volunteer began to shift to more external reasons, namely showing my Little the importance of taking her education seriously. My external motivation became building a connection with my Little and truly learning about the goal of the program.

In regards to {Mentor Organization}, I have a lot more respect for the organization now once I connected with their implicit mission. My shallow experience at the beginning of my volunteer career has evolved into something much more meaningful as I now understand my role and the implications it can have. I am aware that I have my own limitations as only a weekly mentor, but I also carry hope in change to a reasonable degree as a source of stability in students' lives. I believe that service can be split into charity work and solidarity work. Having experienced both, I am truly grateful for the opportunity.

How do you see saviorism in this case study?	
How would you change the course objective?	
What reflection questions would you ask this student?	
What class discussions might you hold?	

<p>Finally, at the end of this reflection, this student talks about charity work and solidarity work. What implications do you think this has in relation to service-learning?</p>	
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Closing Activity: Statement of Intention



Statement of Intention