

Title: Disrupting racism: an analysis into the theoretical foundation of the nursing discipline

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Abstract

Recent Canadian and international events have sparked dialogue and actions to address racism. While there is an urgency to implement anti-racism solutions, a contemporary analysis of the pathways and mechanisms that continue to uphold racism within the nursing discipline is required first. This presentation will report on the theoretical foundations of my dissertation that seeks to reimagine the current state of concepts and theories commonly employed within the nursing discipline. Specifically, this presentation will uncover the pathways in which covert racism is woven into the fabric of nursing's existing theoretical foundation, and how this process strengthens white supremacy. Through the apolitical concepts utilized in nursing, it fails to change the undercurrents of whiteness and generates the mode through which white supremacy is covertly sustained. Similarly, employing critical theories devoid of a focus on racial power hierarchies when theorizing about racial phenomena fails to provide an analytical entry point into matters of racism. This consequently limits the responsibilities of non-racialized groups in the work to address injustices and contribute to anti-racism. Finally, it will be argued that, in the absence of exposing these covert pathways of racism, developing so-called anti-racism solutions will be futile in dismantling racism. By making visible the covert mechanisms of racism within nursing, and similar disciplinary theoretical foundations, this presentation seeks to establish an opportunity for the academy to dismantle its racist foundation and engage in sustained anti-racism action.