PROGRESSIVE CHANGE-MAKERS OR AGENTS OF COLONIALISM? TAKING

ANOTHER LOOK AT THE CASWE'S STANDARDS FOR CURRCIULUM

ACCREDITATION

by

Ameena Ashley Ali, BA, University of Waterloo, 2015, BSW University of Waterloo, 2017

An MRP

presented to Ryerson University

in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree of

Master of Social Work

in the Program of

Social Work

Toronto, Ontario, Canada, 2019

AUTHOR'S DECLARATION FOR ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION OF A MRP

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this MRP. This is a true copy of the MRP, including any required final revisions.

I authorize Ryerson University to lend this MRP to other institutions or individuals for the purpose of scholarly research

I further authorize Ryerson University to reproduce this MRP by photocopying or by other means, in total or in part, at the request of other institutions or individuals for the purpose of scholarly research.

I understand that my MRP may be made electronically available to the public.

ABSTRACT

Progressive Change-Makers or Agents of Colonialism? Taking Another Look at the CASWE's
Standards for Curriculum Accreditation
Master of Social Work, 2019
Ameena Ashley Ali
Program of Social Work,
Ryerson University

This major research paper (MRP) examines how Schools of Social Work (SSW) in Canada

reproduce social workers who participate in and perpetuate existing systems of oppression.

Social workers either end up continuing to contribute to existing oppressive structures in society

or working towards breaking down those structures; and an integral part in making that

distinction is the education that they receive. This MRP focuses on critically analyzing the

Canadian Association of Social Work Education (CASWE) standards for Masters of Social

Work (MSW) curriculum accreditation through an anti-colonial and post colonialism framework

with an understanding of the effects of neoliberalism. This critical analysis was conducted

through critical discourse analysis to reveal how colonialism and neoliberalism permeate

curriculum standards which ultimately shape social work practice today. Main findings indicate

that the curriculum accreditation standards have underlying discourses related to

professionalism, social justice, surveillance, institutionalization and the absence of race.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this MRP to my parents, both of whom did not have the privilege or opportunity to pursue higher education but worked relentlessly to ensure that all their children would be able to. Thank you, Mom and Dad, for encouraging me to follow my dreams and for always supporting me no matter what.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Social work has deep roots within Canadian history and has quickly evolved into reputable and professional field of work. However, despite the growing demand for social workers and the phenomenal advancements in social justice research and practice, marginalized populations are still being adversely affected by social work intervention. For example, in a report conducted by the Ontario Human Rights Commission in 2018, it was found that there are now more Black and Indigenous children in care than in any point in history, with Black children being 2.2 times more likely to be admitted into care and indigenous children being 2.6 times more likely. One approach to critically examining this problem can be to look at the different overarching systems that govern the most problematic areas of social work, such as the mental health system, the legal system and the child welfare system. As researchers, we can draw our attention to how these systems coerce "good" social workers into perpetuating oppression under the guise of the advancement of social justice. However, I feel as if there is one system that has been overlooked that can potentially explain the compliance of social workers in the continued oppression and marginalization of minorities. This system is the social work educational system, which is the focus of this MRP.

Before I delve any further into my explaining my research topic, I first want to situate myself. I am first generation Muslim West Indian-Canadian woman. Growing up as a visible minority in Canada, my idea of social work was that of the child welfare system and to say the least, it was not a positive view. However, my narrow view of social work expanded as I learned more about the different facets within the social work profession. My first inkling that the social work educational system had major issues was when I was entering my Bachelors of Social Work. One of the first things I noticed was that I was one of less than ten visible minorities out

of a large number of students in my cohort but at the time I figured that everyone has their own reasons for wanting to become a social worker. As the year progressed, I started noticing some extremely disturbing things about my peers and the School of Social Work in general. Our social work education was being delivered in a superficial way. I noticed that any mention of race in the classroom was met with silence and a shifting of eyes looking at the nearest visible minority to speak on behalf of the issue. Most of all, there was no one, peers, instructors or otherwise, who was challenging the problematic thinking of my cohort. For example, a peer who was doing their placement at an agency that worked with children and youth stated that they could not understand why the "Indigenous thing" was so emphasized within social work when all of their caseload was filled with white children. Within my cohort there were troubling ideologies that were anti-Indigenous, anti-immigrant and just discriminatory towards marginalized populations in general. I became deeply concerned about some of my peers working in the field but more than that, I was deeply concerned for how the social work educational curriculum was being delivered. Even as I entered the frontlines and eventually started my Masters of Social Work, time and time again, I was met with the same types of experiences and started to notice a pattern forming.

Based on my personal experiences in school and in the field, there seems to be one reoccurring and consistent theme, which is, Schools of Social Work (SSW) are reproducing social workers who perpetuate and participate in systemic oppression. In this research paper, my aim is to uncover underlying dominant discourses that impact and shape social work education standards, help to identify areas of social work education standards that need improvement or restructuring as well as suggest possible recommendations for change. Overall, this major research paper (MRP) examines how Schools of Social Work (SSW) in Canada reproduce social

workers who participate in and perpetuate existing systems of oppression. Social workers contribute to existing oppressive structures in society or work towards breaking down those structures and an integral part in making that distinction is the education that they receive. This MRP focuses on critically analyzing the Canadian Association of Social Work Education (CASWE) standards for Masters of Social Work (MSW) curriculum accreditation through anti-colonial and post-colonial lenses; and with an understanding of neoliberalism as a guiding framework, discussed in further detail below. This analysis will be done through Foucauldian/critical discourse analysis methodology to reveal how colonialism and neoliberalism permeate curriculum standards which ultimately shape social work practice today

I anticipate that my work will contribute to anti-oppression social work because my research paper aims to uncover underlying discourses that can be oppressive and discriminatory but ultimately impact and shape social work education standards. It can be argued that despite how social work is changing in scholarship and practice towards being more anti-oppressive and social justice oriented, if the educational foundation remains unchanged, then the cycle of oppression will continue. I hope that my research will help to encourage CASWE and schools of social work to critically examine themselves and the institutions that they operate within to make meaningful changes in how they educate and produce social workers.

As the daughter of two people who immigrated to Canada, education and the pursuit of education, was something that was always prioritized and encouraged. Education, to me, is a means of liberation. However, if that education is riddled with policies and guiding standards that aim to further oppress or further colonize our minds, then that education is no longer a means of liberation and in a profession that strives towards social justice for all people, it is all the more important for us to critically examine this.

CHAPTER 2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

The major theoretical frameworks which my research paper will focus on: anti-colonialism, post-colonialism as well as an understanding of neoliberalism. In what follows, I focus on defining and contextualizing both neoliberalism and colonialism as well as providing a brief rationale on why these particular theoretical frameworks are best suited for my MRP.

Neoliberalism was initiated into the world at the height of the Great Depression in the 1930s when policy doctrines such as Keynesian Economics in the UK and the New Deal in the US were first introduced (Spolander et al, 2014). Canada specifically, saw the rise of neoliberalism in the 1970s, as the social welfare state was replaced by the neoliberal state (Calhoun et al, 2014). Neoliberalism is defined as a theory that posits that, "human well-being can be best advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets and free trade" (Spolander et al, 2014 pg. 303). Neoliberalism is prevalent in capitalist, democratic nations where economic capital and individualism take priority over collective welfare and social justice values (Yee & Wagner, 2013). Ultimately, the heart of neoliberalism is that the state upholds its institutional framework that protects free market and free trade, while individuals are encouraged to take care of themselves.

Foucault lends his analysis on neoliberalism and governmentality positing that the state exerts its power by employing a "governing at a distance" tactic (Davidson-Harden, 2013 pg. 388). He states that this tactic can be traced genealogically through history as we see a shift from state governing through pastoral power to transforming into governing through a "special sort of rationality" (2013 pg. 388). This "special sort of rationality" allows the state to control its citizens through their own self-regulation under the guise of individual liberties (2013). It is

4

under this type of governing that inequalities are created by the state and maintained by society because under neoliberal logic, one's socio-economic failings are due to lack of individual responsibility and inadequate self-regulation. Furthermore, these inequalities are exacerbated by neoliberalism's tenet of adopting an a-historical worldview and its promotion of a society where all citizens have equal access to rights and opportunities (2013). This a-historical approach to present day inequalities allows for the presence of colonialism embedded within societal structures to go unquestioned and unchallenged. In my understanding of social work, this can be viewed as a direct opposition to social justice values but can also be argued to be in direct opposition to the integrity of social work.

In thinking about the relationship between neoliberalism and colonialism, it can be argued that colonial regimes laid the foundation and paved the way for the current system of neoliberalism (Yee & Wagner, 2013). Broadly, colonialism can be defined as the domination of people and land by another country (Dei & Kempf, 2006). In Canada specifically, it refers to the attempted eradication of Indigenous peoples and occupation of their land by colonial settlers (Mitchell et al, 2018). It is the process by which the dominant group's ideologies and discourses become normalized and other knowledges and ideologies are erased or discredited.

In Canada, colonialism can be argued to having contributed greatly to the foundation and early beginnings of social work. The establishment of liberal institutions, such as poorhouses, hospitals and the police, in the 19th and 20th centuries, allowed for the practice of categorization of poor and vulnerable people into the deserving and non-deserving by the white dominant, often female, settlers (Johnstone, 2018). This created a system of hierarchy by which those with power were able to subjugate others and thus social work became a tool to secure white middle, upper class superiority (Lee & Ferrer, 2014).

In understanding how colonialism has shaped and influenced the social work profession, the use of anti-colonialism and post-colonialism is integral. Post-colonialism has many contesting definitions but can be broadly defined as a study of how colonialism has effected cultures and societies; specifically, how the three non-western continents, Asia, Latin America and Africa, came to be in subordination to Europe and North America (Young, 2003). It also investigates the ways in which these nations have responded to and resisted the effects of colonization since then. Anti-colonialism is the process of theorizing colonial relations and understanding or uncovering the impact of imperial structures on knowledge production; it also encompasses an understanding of Indigeneity, and the attainment of agency and resistance (Dei & Kempf, 2006). Anti-colonialism acknowledges that colonial powers constructed systemic and structural inequalities that continue to reproduce itself within society (2006). This acknowledgement of the lingering influence of colonialism, centers the critical awareness of, "social relations and power issues embedded in the ways of organizing the production, validation and dissemination of knowledge in order to challenge social oppression and consequently subvert domination" (2006, pg. 3). Another aspect of anti-colonialism is acknowledging accountability and power as it recognizes that oppression is not shared equally by all people who are marginalized and disenfranchised (2006).

Edward Said is understood to be an important figure in developing post-colonial thought through his critique in *Orientalism* (Courville, 2007). *Orientalism* is often credited as the critique by which the emergence of a general paradigm that allowed for the analysis of cultural forms of colonial and imperial ideologies (2007). Other major scholars that have contributed to or have influenced post-colonialism are Aime Cesaire and Frantz Fanon. Aime Cesaire was a revolutionary figure in the French West Indies who was one of the founders of Negritude, a

movement aiming to restore Black African cultural identity (2007). Cesaire wrote *Discourse on Colonialism*, in which he masterfully articulates and exposes the hypocrisy and detrimental effect of Western European colonization. In it he states,

> Between colonizer and colonized there is room only for forced labor, intimidation, pressure, the police, taxation, theft, rape, compulsory crops, contempt, mistrust, arrogance, self-complacency, swinishness, brainless elites, degraded masses. No human contact, but relations of domination and submission which turn the colonizing man into a class-room monitor, an army sergeant, a prison guard, a slave driver, and the indigenous man into an instrument of production. (Cesaire, 1955, pg. 6)

Frantz Fanon was born in 1925 in the French West Indies. He grew up intensely aware of his racial identity and was one of many who fell under the influence of Aime Cesaire (Courville, 2007). Fanon's most influential piece, *The Wretched of the Earth*, is a poetic analysis of the detrimental effects of colonization and also an envisioning of life freed from colonization and class oppression (2007). Post-colonialism developed through the works of visionaries such as Edward Said, Aime Cesaire and Frantz Fanon, who were able to pave the way for many scholars who followed after. A common theme among these post-colonial scholars is the way in which they were able to clearly expose how colonialism influenced not only their identities as marginalized people but how colonialism is embedded into modern day structures that continue to shape systems that only favour and benefit the dominant group.

Other researchers such as Sherene Razack add to the richness of these discussions of colonialism by bringing in a critical race perspective into their analyses. In Razack's book, *White Knights and Dark Threats: The Somalia Affair, Racism and the New Imperialism,* she explores how racism and the denial and erasure of it through law and in national memory

allowed Canadian troops to conduct mass violence against the people of Somalia while simultaneously being cast as peacekeepers of the world (Razack, 2004). In an interview, conducted by Jerome Klassen, about her book, mentioned above, Razack stresses that,

> racist and colonial ideas relate to material practices, that colonial belief structures relate to real colonial relationships. The domination and the exploitation of the Third Word and the internal colonization of Indigenous peoples within North America provide the material basis for colonial ideas that justify such practices of domination. (Klassen, 2005)

Razack provides the necessary analysis of how racism is used not only in the construction of and justification of violence towards the Other but in allowing white colonial powers to be able to continue to recast themselves as the white saviours or peacekeepers.

Neoliberalism and colonialism are foundational not only in social work's inception but in its continued maintenance of systemic inequalities and oppression of those who experience marginalization. This is why it is important that the theoretical frameworks of anti-colonialism, post-colonialism and the understanding of the effects of neoliberalism be used to dissect and expose remnants of those ideologies in social work education. As such, these are the frameworks that guide my analysis in this MRP.

CHAPTER 3. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature on higher education reveals themes around neoliberal influences on universities; diversity and discrimination within higher education and specifically in social work; and the integration of social justice into curriculum. The scholarship seems to have an awareness of the impact of higher education not only on students, but also their respective fields of practice. This literature review will delve into examining each of the mentioned themes in order to gauge an understanding of where the scholarship currently is and any potential gaps for future consideration.

Accreditation, Curriculum, Race and Neoliberalism

An integral part of becoming an effective social worker is the education that they receive. Part of what Schools of Social Work (SSW) are mandated to teach comes from the accreditation standards from the Canadian School of Social Work Education (CASWE) (Watters, Cait & Oba, 2016). However, each individual SSW has autonomy over their own curriculum development, so long as it broadly satisfies the accreditation standards (Stokes, 2016). Anti-oppression education has become more and more embraced within SSW (Wagner & Yee, 2011). However, it is important to note that although anti-oppressive practices are being highlighted within some social work curriculums, faculty and students are still a part of neoliberal and institutional structures (Yee & Wagner, 2013). These structures shape our identities and interests, and seep into how education is delivered.

A study conducted by Johnstone (2018) examined and analyzed historical archives of mission statements and practice of early Canadian social work, specifically following the career of a Toronto social worker named Joan Arnoldi to uncover how first-wave feminism, hegemonic

imperial discourses and settler colonial structures of governance worked as a foundational factor in the birth of Canadian social work. The researcher analyzes how hegemonic imperial discourses and settler colonial structures of governance worked as a foundational factor in the birth of Canadian social work and that it was these foundations that supported social and racial inequalities (2018). The article points out that with the abolition of slavery, policies and reports were made outlining whether ex-slaves were ready for liberty and that there was a need for regulation and civilizing and at the same time policies were also being made on how to civilize, enlighten and order the lives of Indigenous peoples (2018). These reports and policies that were made on the assumption of racial superiority supported and normalized the discourses of white superiority; and race was then seen as a deviance within the already established discourse of the deserving and non-deserving poor on which the foundations of social work were laid (2018). The author concludes that social work practice today continues to operate on the same historical foundations: the values that distinguished between the helpers and the helped and gave power to the helpers to decide who was worthy of unworthy of help (2018). These foundations that created social and racial inequities seep into education policies, particularly where social work education is concerned. Looking into how race is managed within social work education policy, it becomes clear that the organization of the profession and its mission is based on white discursive ideals (Jeffrey, 2007).

An analysis of schools of social work in the US by Felkner (2009) noted that due to accreditation standards, SSW structure themselves to successfully meet the objectives already established instead of pushing boundaries and becoming "academic leaders furthering inquiry" (pg. 121). He argues that SSW, at least in the USA, are covertly constructed to recruit social work students that will adopt and practice the values that they school promotes (Felkner, 2009).

Yee and Wagner (2013), also remark on this, pointing out that SSW are gatekeepers in terms of which students have access to higher education; and that the underlying ideologies that are ultimately being aligned with neoliberalism guide their processes. This is also mirrored in the curriculum being taught by SSW. For example, Indigenous knowledge and education continue to be marginalized in social work education, but SSW often have one elective course on Indigenous knowledge to meet their need to be seen as having a diverse curriculum (Yee & Wagner, 2013). One course is inadequate for students to fully grasp different systems of thought. Furthermore, and on top of that they have the option to not participate in learning that differs from their mainstream education they have received thus far (2013). Another study followed how the Canadian Association of Schools of Social Work (CASSW) struggled to effectively incorporate issues of race and racial inequality into the accreditation standards and the problematic ways in which race and racial domination were represented (Jeffrey, 2007). The researcher examined semi-structured qualitative interviews and textual data to examine the struggle to incorporate issues of race and racial inequality into CASWE standards for Canadian social work schools (2007). The study showed insight into how the white discourses that organize and shape the profession and its mission debate the educational needs of SSWs in terms of race and racism (2007). The study establishes that the conceptualization of whiteness is one of denial, where colonial roots are often historicized; and that the acknowledgment of racism translates into the need for social workers to be culturally competent, a notion that promotes a shallow understanding the complexities of racial inequality (2007).

Diversity and Discrimination

Within recent years, accredited Canadian schools of social work have been required to incorporate discussions of race and racial inequalities within their curriculum (Jeffrey, 2007).

These changes in part have been a response to Canada's changing policies around immigration and multiculturalism. Indeed, it is important for social work students working within a Canadian context to have some competency around race and racial inequalities, given the diverse landscape and client base. A study conducted by the University of Laurier SSW, examined what qualities made an effective social worker from the perspective of service users (Waters, Cait & Oba, 2016). Service users indicated that knowledge of international issues and having cultural awareness helped ensure that social workers were working with them with awareness and sensitivity. In addition to having that awareness and sensitivity, it was also important to service users that social workers respected and valued their knowledge and insights into their respective communities.

Another study from the US examined multicultural curriculum and how it affects MSW students' attitudes about race and diversity, especially towards African-Americans (Osteen et al, 2013). The authors emphasized that social work educators are the gatekeepers of the profession and that it is their responsibility to ensure that the students' values align with the profession's values. Findings indicated that students who were in programs that had multicultural or diversity courses as a core requirement had more positive attitudes towards African-Americans and diversity in general than those students who had these courses as optional (2013). Another finding of the study was that students who held negative attitudes towards one group also were more likely to have negative attitudes towards other groups, suggesting that systems of oppression that perpetuate prejudice are interlocking. For example, if a person held negative attitudes or prejudices against African-Americans then that person would also be more likely to have prejudices against immigrants or the LGBTQ+ community. This finding suggests that perhaps curriculum should focus more on the attitudes of students rather than on marginalized

groups themselves. This sentiment is also echoed in a study conducted by Phan et al (2009),
where they reported on the experiences of a new MSW program's attempt to design a
foundational gender, race and sexuality course. Their findings stressed that in order to critically
address racism and oppression effectively in social work education, these issues must be infused
throughout the entire curriculum and not just through one course.

Despite the acknowledgement from both CASWE and service users that competency is
needed around race and racial inequalities for social workers, SSW still take a very tokenized
approach when incorporating diversity into their curriculum. As mentioned previously, SSW
will often have one course that is optional dedicated to Indigenous knowledge and perspectives
instead of incorporating this knowledge into every aspect of the curriculum (Yee & Wagner,
2013). The same can be observed in terms of courses about gender diversity and sexuality.
These topics also tend to be offered as an optional course and is not well integrated within the
overall curriculum.   Another point to consider is the way in which these courses are taught and
by whom.

A study that was conducted about teaching about diversity within a graduate classroom
showed that participants expressed the need for the instructor to have awareness of issues
relating to multiculturalism, using different pedagogical methods, overall awareness of class
climate and dynamics, as well as the skills to practice with cultural sensitivity (Consoli & Marin,
2016). These studies ultimately highlight how race and diversity continue to be tokenized in
social work education and the need for curriculum to be transformative. Genrett and Hicks
(2004) explored their challenges of creating an anti-oppressive and transformative curriculum for
practicing teachers. They discovered that although teachers engaged in skills of self-reflection
and collaboration and demonstrated a willingness to change the way they practiced, teachers

ultimately were unwilling to take an anti-oppressive stance in halting oppressive practices perpetuated in schools.   They argue that for a curriculum to be truly transformative and anti-oppression oriented, it must create a strong link for teachers and students to feel hope and in turn having that hope inspire action against oppressive systems.

Integration of Social Justice/Anti-Oppressive Practice

The literature examines how SSW attempts to integrate social justice/anti-oppressive practices into their curriculums and the implications of that effort. In the USA, the Council of Social Work Education mandates that content on social and economic justice should be a central area of focus in social work curriculum (Vincent, 2012). This study surveyed a national sample in the USA of social work research faculty members to analyze how they conceptualize and integrate social justice into their research courses. The areas that the researchers categorized their results into were: attitudes toward integrating social justice into the research curriculum; rationale for integrating social justice; conceptualization of social justice; and specific pedagogical methods. Overall, findings showed that research faculty members support the integration of social justice into research methods courses and that their primary rationale for doing so is that they view social justice as a core professional value and ethic. Although, there was agreement that they viewed research practice as no different from direct or social policy practice, there were also faculty members that questioned the relevance and "distortive nature" of social justice as it relates to research. Another prominent finding was prominent that a majority of faculty members did not use specific frameworks of social justice to teach from but rather general notions of social justice. This finding can be viewed as significant because if faculty members' perceptions of social justice is not rooted in existing frameworks or theories but rooted in their own personal generalized beliefs, faculty members could be imparting their own

unexamined biases and prejudices into their curriculum. Social justice could potentially be another way that dominant and harmful discourses get perpetuated and reproduced into social work.

A study conducted by Bhuyan et al (2017), explored the extent to which Canadian MSW graduates' classroom and practicum learning addressed social justice and anti-oppressive practices. Their findings showed that majority of students reported positive educational outcomes and that they embraced social justice goals within their current practice. However, analysis of the written comments identified a disconnect between social justice theory, education and overall climate of the social work program and concluded that although there was explicit endorsement of social justice values by the MSW program and social work profession in general, MSW graduates commented that there was little opportunity to learn anti-oppressive practice or apply social justice theories in their practicum. The authors argue that there seems to be a "hidden curriculum" in social work education that reflects neoliberal pressures which prioritizes task-oriented goals while mainstreaming social justice rhetoric. They state that when it comes to teaching actual skills, clinical practice skills are seen as more practical, concrete and useful while skills used to confront and dismantle oppression are taught abstractly and thus deemed as less useful or impractical to implement.

Another study examined professional subjectivity in the anti-oppressive social work classroom. The researcher asked nine graduates of an undergraduate BSW program at the University of Victoria to reflect on their learning from the point of view of practitioners who are now employed in professional contexts in which their anti-oppressive academic training is being matched against actual experience in bureaucratic and client-related situations (Jeffrey, 2007). Several themes emerged from the results: in terms of the problem of power, students either

admitted or denied to privileges they own and when asked about how different identities interact

with social work, the students responded with their social locations (2007).   The researcher

argues that while on the surface level this may seem like students received sufficient anti-

oppressive education, students fail to take away the larger lesson of anti-oppressive practice

which is not merely just a code for professional practice but a thorough interrogation of the

profession itself (2007). This study reinforces the idea that even anti-oppressive education with

"good intentions" is not enough; and that social work education needs to integrate a deeper level

of self-reflexivity whereby future social workers can interrogate and implicate themselves in

terms of power and privilege.

Gaps and Research Question

Through the examination of the literature thus far, several overarching themes and gaps

have emerged. The strongest theme that appeared within the literature was how neoliberalism

guides and shapes universities, schools of social work included. From this theme, it seems that

schools of social work that push for anti-oppressive and social justice-based values need to turn

the gaze back towards themselves and critically dissect how neoliberalism is covertly shaping

their curriculum to produce social workers who end up being complicit within oppressive

systems. Another theme that emerged, was that cultural awareness and sensitivity is an

important factor in what makes a good social worker but social work curriculum is sorely lacking

in educating their students about issues of diversity in a meaningful and impactful way. It

suggests that the colonial influence on the roots of social work are still pervasive despite social

work's growing acceptance and mainstreaming of social justice and anti-oppressive theories and

frameworks. Lastly, the literature revealed that social work educational curriculum's integration

of social justice theories/values is done superficially and is potentially used to mask a hidden

neoliberal agenda. These 'roots' are clearly showing up in social work curriculum and become the vehicle in which social workers who perpetuate and are complicit in oppressive structures are reproduced.

While the literature has acknowledged social work's colonial roots and is also in agreement that neoliberalism is shaping universities and by association, schools of social work, there is a theoretical gap. In the literature I examined, there is less direct examination or analysis of how colonialism and neoliberalism are influencing social work education's curriculums, especially accreditation standards that shape these curriculums. In light of this, the question that my major research paper will attempt to answer is, "How are colonialism and neoliberalism reproduced or resisted in social work education standards in Canada?"

CHAPTER 4. METHODOLOGY

The methodology that I have chosen to examine my research question is Foucauldian discourse analysis, also known as critical discourse analysis. This MRP focuses on critically analyzing the Canadian Association of Social Work Education (CASWE) standards for Masters of Social Work (MSW) curriculum accreditation through anti-colonial and post-colonial frameworks as well as an understanding of the concept of neoliberalism. This critical analysis aims to reveal how colonialism and neoliberalism permeate curriculum standards which ultimately shape social work practice today.

Discourse can be defined as similar ideas or a particular way of thinking that can be identified in textual and verbal communications which can also be found in wider social structures (Powers, 2007). All discourses, whether they be verbal, textual or cinematic, are influenced and shaped by different intellectual desires, problems and institutional demands (Arribas-Ayllon & Walkderine, 2008). The function of discourse analysis then is to be able to provide insight and critique into how different bodies of knowledge, typically dominant discourses within society, are able to implicitly effect groups of people or structures (Powers, 2007).

Foucauldian discourse analysis (FDA) differs from other types of discourse analyses in that Foucault focuses not only on examining discourses in a present-day context but also examining their genealogy (2007). Genealogy within this context refers to the historical influences that have been reproduced within discourses (Macias, 2015). Another key concept that is important to understand when using FDA is the concept of bio-power or disciplinary power that exists at a societal level that implicitly directs the micro-practices of everyday life and influences larger social goals (Powers, 2007). Powers asserts that bio-power works to produce

willing and able bodies that support dominant power relations such as neoliberalism.

Ultimately, FDA allows for the critical examination of how power and ideology in text are

created, for the mapping of historical linkages to expose how and where these discourses were

developed and it allows for the analysis of what is present in the text as well as what is not

2015). A limitation of using FDA is that it is not immune to an author's biases and prejudices

and therefore interpretations of discourses will differ from author to author. In order to be

transparent during the FDA process, one must be critically reflexive at all time and this

reflexivity should be transparent in their analysis.

Data Collection and Analysis

In order to conduct FDA, the document that I have selected for my Major Research Paper

is a public document that is available online. As mentioned previously, the document is the

Canadian Association for Social Work Education's (CASWE) Standards for Accreditation.

Specifically, I will be focusing on Domain III, Program Content: Curriculum and Field

Education, section 3.1 Curriculum. Within this section, I will only be focusing on content that

pertains to the Masters of Social Work (MSW) curriculum and not the Bachelors of Social Work

curriculum.

My rationale for selecting this document is that it is most related to my research question,

"How are colonialism and neoliberalism reproduced or resisted in social work education

standards in Canada?" In my research, I hope to analyze the curriculum accreditation standards

for MSW programs in Canada for the purposes of gaining a deeper understanding of how

colonialism and neoliberalism are implicitly shaping our practices in social work through

curriculum. I chose to look at CASWE curriculum standards for accreditation as opposed to

looking at Schools of Social Work actual curriculums individually because I want to gain an

overall understanding of how bodies such as CASWE standards for accreditation influence all Schools of Social Work instead of how individual schools work within or around these standards.

To conduct the analysis on my selected document, I will be analyzing the document using the lens of anti-colonialism, post-colonialism and an understanding of the concept of neoliberalism. In order to uncover the dominant discourses within the text, I will follow six steps which include, familiarizing myself with the selected document, generating initial codes, searching for discourses, reviewing discourses, defining and naming discourses, and refinement of discourses through ongoing analysis and finally producing an overall report. (Braun & Clarke, 2006). More specifically, using the lens of anti-colonialism, post-colonialism and the understanding of the concept of neoliberalism, I will begin by identifying words, ideas or sentences that are related to my research question to create codes. I will then group the selected codes together to uncover any major discourses that may be present within the document and will repeat this process until I have arrived at four or five major discourses. Another part of my analysis aside from searching for underlying discourses present within the selected document, is to examine how specific words are used and how they are defined, if they are defined. My analysis will include examining concepts or ideas that are presented within the document and which of these concepts or ideas are emphasized. Another important aspect of my analysis is to also examine what is left out, what was not included into the standards especially as it relates to any major discourses and to my research question.

The results from the FDA revealed four major discourses present within the selected document. These discourses were, institutionalization, professionalism, social justice and surveillance. The analysis also revealed an emphasis on identity formation, specifically on social

workers being able to develop a professional identity. There was a clear delineation between the characterizations of service users versus the characterizations of service providers. For example, service users were described as marginalized, facing inequity, experiencing poverty etc., while service providers or social workers were described as advocates, facilitators, evaluators, competent and professional. Also, service users were not only identified as individuals, families, groups or communities within Canadian society but also internationally as there was a subtle emphasis on social workers within Canada having a duty or responsibility to carry out social justice globally. Lastly, while there were discourses of social justice values within the selected document, race, racism, racial inequality or anything speaking explicitly to anti-racism was not mentioned at all.

CHAPTER 5. FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

As mentioned in the previous chapter the major findings from the data analysis revealed discourses of institutionalization, professionalism, social justice, surveillance and the absence of race within the selected document. This chapter will go into detail of each of the overarching discourses and provide discussion and further analysis of how it relates back to colonialism and neoliberalism in social work education.

Professionalism and Surveillance

I have chosen to group these two discourses of professionalism and surveillance together because I feel that these discourses can be looked at as symptoms of Neoliberalism. As mentioned previously, Neoliberalism is defined as a theory that posits that, "human well-being can be best advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets and free trade" (Spolander et al, 2014, p. 303). Neoliberalism is prevalent in capitalist, democratic nations where economic capital and individualism take priority over collective welfare and social justice values (Yee & Wagner, 2013). One of the main findings from the literature review revealed how faculty and students are still part of neoliberal and institutional structures (Yee & Wagner, 2013). These structures shape our identities and interests, and seep into how education is delivered. Unsurprisingly, discourses related to Neoliberalism were also mirrored within the CASWE standards for curriculum accreditation.

The first discourse that was prevalent was professionalism. Within the selected document, professionalism was the most explicitly emphasized discourse, being mentioned or alluded to over nineteen times. It was clear that the standards wanted to convey that social work is a professional practice and that students would need to take on or develop a professional role

or identity in order to carry out their duties properly as a social worker. Professionalism can be defined as a profession having specific and identifiable traits, such as a mastery of specialist knowledge that can be only obtained through advanced degrees and training, a self-governing body that has control over the work and how it is done and being motivated by intrinsic rewards that stem from helping the interests of clients (Lorenz, 2012).

Professionalism in social work plays into Neoliberal logic, as there is a privileging of evidence-based practices over service user or client knowledge, reinforcing the idea of social worker as the expert knower who is the only one capable of assessing, evaluating and monitoring the needs of service users (Leung, 2010). This emphasis on obtaining knowledge that is exclusive to the field ultimately maintains a power imbalance between the social worker and the service user as the client is now expected to be the learner of how to change, heal or manage their lives. With the emphasis on exclusive knowledge obtained through evidence-based research, it delegitimizes alternative forms of knowledge and practice, effectively mainstreaming evidence-based practices. This is a direct nod back to the beginnings of social work, the values that distinguished between the helpers and the helped and gave power to the helpers to decide who was worthy or unworthy of help (Johnstone, 2018). It becomes apparent that these foundations that created social and racial inequities continue to be well-integrated within social work educational policies.

Within the selected document, professional identity was a concept that was highlighted throughout. In fact, the first core learning objective states that students must, "Identify as a professional social worker and adopt a value perspective of the social work profession" (CASWE, 2014, p. 10). In the subsequent subsection it goes on to state, "Social work students develop professional identities as practitioners whose professional goal is to facilitate the

collective welfare and wellbeing of all people to the maximum extent possible" (2014, p. 10). The emphasis on the development of a professional social work identity reiterates the previous notion of the power imbalance between the social worker and the service user. The role of the professional social worker in the context of professionalism within social work becomes an identity that is focused on having advanced accreditations validated through achievement of targets, outcomes and quantitative performance measures (Welbourne, 2011). The risk of this is that social work could become more of a, "technical activity, shaped by the tools it uses… less able to promote the social rights of service users or respond to need at a policy level." (2011, p. 404). Very subtly within this is the idea that the professional social work identity is separate from a student's own identity.

In the second subsection under the first core learning objective it states that, "Social work students acquire ability for self-reflection as it relates to engaging in professional practice through a comprehensive understanding and consciousness of the complex nature of their own social locations and identities." (CASWE, 2014, p. 10). Even though this subsection is encouraging students to examine their own social locations and identities through self-reflection, it is only as it relates to professional practice. However, if we understand the professional social worker as one that has more of a technical role, one that deploys assessments and treatments based off of evidence-based research, then it is questionable what depth of self-reflection would be encouraged within the curriculum. Also, another point of reflection is that within the definition of developing a professional social work identity, there is no room for the understanding and acknowledgment that students can be both social workers and service users at the same time.

In addition to professionalism, surveillance was another discourse that was found to be prevalent within the selected document; however, it was not as explicitly mentioned within the literature on social work education. Specific words that alluded to surveillance were, "monitor, supervision, assessments, evaluate and identify" (CASWE, 2014, p. 10, p. 13 & p. 12). Surveillance can be looked at as a tool of a Neoliberal government as a means to regulate and control citizens. In the context of social work, surveillance of clients is also a method that is used under the rationale of justifying service provision for future funding (Moffatt, 1999). Due to market pressures and precarious access to resources, social workers to a certain degree become gate keepers to the amount and type of resources that a service user has access to. An example of this is how the social assistance office is operated. Clients must first sign a number of forms before any type of documentation or assessments can be done (1999). This process identifies and individualizes the client. In order to receive any type of help or support, the client must surrender all personal information relating to themselves to justify their own needs (1999).

With their information, this process situates clients within, "a field of surveillance and within a system of documentation" which ultimately serves as means to formalize the client within the power relation that is being established (1999, p. 223). This type of power relation is what Foucault calls, "disciplinary power", which is a means for distinguishing or individualizing a person from a larger group (1999, p. 221). Surveillance allows disciplinary power to play out as it uses seemingly minor techniques such as evaluations, consent forms, assessments etc. to qualify, classify and punish an individual (1999, pg. 222). This system of surveillance is not limited to the social assistance office, as many fields of social work, for example, the child welfare system, shelters, etc., can be observed to be using a similar system.

Another important aspect to note about surveillance is that it affects racialized bodies, particularly Black bodies, more adversely. Simone Browne in, *"Dark Matters: On Surveillance of Blackness,"* speaks about racializing surveillance as a technology of social control and is used to formalize people or systems along colour lines and then used to justify discriminatory treatment of racialized bodies who are negatively coded by such surveillance (2015). The treatment of race within surveillance is an important point to make because often times race is left out of the discussion, as is the case with the CASWE standards for curriculum accreditation, which is discussed more extensively below. Browne acknowledges that these surveillance strategies, although subject to change depending on time and space, are ultimately strategies that were employed by European colonialism that sought to structure social relations and institutions to uphold whiteness (2015). Again, it is clear that the imbalance of power between the social worker and service user is embedded right into social work's educational guidelines and that this imbalance of power is clearly played out in practice.

Social Justice and Institutionalization

The last two discourses that were present within the selected document were social justice and institutionalization. I have chosen to group these two together because within the literature it was found that within social work, social justice/anti-oppressive values were being institutionalized. In institutionalization of social justice within social work education is an important discussion as it reflects Neoliberal influences.

Social justice and ideas that allude to social justice appear frequently within the selected document. Within the standards, students are encouraged to, "develop an awareness of personal biases and preferences to advance social justice" (CASWE, 2014, p. 10). Students also are required to have knowledge of the social work code of ethics with, "particular emphasis on

professional responsibilities towards vulnerable or disadvantaged groups" (2014, p. 10). While it seems that the standards are requiring students to examine their own biases and preferences with the objective of advancing social justice, the standards place emphasis on doing so within the limits of their professional roles. This trend appears several times within the standards, where students are required to, "promote human rights and social justice" but only when it relates to their, "professional role in advancing humans rights" and then are encouraged to only, "employ professional practices to ensure the fulfilment of human and civil rights" (2014, p. 11). From the earlier discussion of professionalism within social work, it is clear that it acts as tool to maintain the power imbalances between social worker and service user, which can be viewed as contradictory to the inherent values of social justice and anti-oppression.

In the 1970s due to the politicization of social work, the field shifted from individualizing social problems to the understanding that these inequalities were products of wider political and structural systems (McLaughlin, 2005). This newfound understanding allowed for the focus to move towards more anti-racist and anti-oppressive practices within social work in the 1980s and 1990s (2005). In the United Kingdom, Black activists, community groups and organizations were able to expose the ways in which their communities faced racism and social inequity by the police, legal, educational and the social work/welfare systems (2005). In order to avoid oppression hierarchies, social work shifted from having an anti-racist focus to an anti-oppressive focus to appear more inclusive of other forms of inequities besides race (2005). This led to the creation of the anti-oppressive social worker who had the, "license to intervene, highlight and minimize such power imbalances" (2005, p. 7).

From what the literature reveals about Neoliberal and Colonial influences on social work, it can be inferred that the creation of the anti-oppressive social worker armed with social justice

values was a way in which the state was able to reposition itself as, "a benign provide of welfare, and via the anti-oppressive social worker is able to enforce new moral codes of behavior on the recipients of welfare (2005, p.1). Neoliberal influences on SSW allowed for the conceptualization of race to remain a non-existent discourse and for the institutionalization of anti-oppressive and social justice values within social work education to mask white Colonial discourses (Wagner & Yee, 2011). The institutionalization of social justice and anti-oppression within social work education invariably reproduce social workers who unknowingly participate and perpetuate in systems of oppression while at the same time perceiving themselves as innocent or advancing social justice (2011). This is reflected within CASWE's standards for curriculum accreditation as the focus remains on understanding and acknowledging systems of inequities in order to change them but the knowledge and skills that are being taught are micro and evidence-based practices that focus on helping service users, "accept inequalities as inevitable and assist people to adopt to the status quo" (2011, p. 2). Neoliberal pressures prioritize task-oriented goals while mainstreaming social justice rhetoric (Bhuyan et al, 2017). When it comes to teaching actual skills, clinical practice skills are seen as more practical, concrete and useful while skills used to confront and dismantle oppression are taught abstractly and thus deemed as less useful or impractical to implement.

Absence of Race

Part of using FDA to analyze a document is not only to analyze the discourses that are present but to also examine which discourses are left out as it relates to the chosen theoretical lenses. So far, analysis of the selected document has revealed discourses of professionalism, surveillance, social justice and institutionalization. There has been a strong discourse related to the imbalance of power between and the identity formation of the social worker and the service

user. Analysis has revealed how Neoliberalism has been used as tool to allow colonialism to

manifest within the social work curriculum standards. Strangely enough, even though there has

been much description of who the service user is and the different types of systems of inequity

that a social worker must understand, race or anything related to race has failed to be mentioned.

In fact, race, racism, or anti-racism were completely absent within the CASWE standards for

curriculum accreditation. While this is not surprising, it is at odds with the Principles Guiding

Accreditation of Social Work Educational Programs; as principles Eight to Nine state,

> Standards encourage and support diversity and social justice in all aspects/domains of
>
> social work programs. Diversity throughout this document refers to a range of
>
> characteristics including, but not limited to: age, colour, culture, disability/non-disability
>
> status, ethnic or linguistic origin, gender, health status, heritage, immigration status,
>
> geographic origin, race, religious and spiritual beliefs, political orientation, gender and
>
> sexual identities, and socioeconomic status. Social work programs acknowledge the
>
> importance and complexity of Canadian society, including the dynamics affecting
>
> Anglophone, Francophone, Indigenous peoples, and newcomer populations. Social work
>
> programs acknowledge and challenge the injustices of Canada's colonial history and
>
> continuing colonization efforts as they relate to the role of social work education in Canada
>
> and the self-determination of the Indigenous peoples. (CASWE, 2014 p. 3)

The guiding principles explicitly acknowledge race and even go so far as to recognize,

"Canada's colonial history and continuing colonization efforts as they relate to the role of social

work education in Canada and the self-determination of the Indigenous peoples" (CASWE, 2014

p. 3). However, these guiding principles do not seem to translate very well into the program

curriculum content requirements. I would argue that the absence of race, racism and anti-racism

29

within the core learning objectives is not by mistake and is a result of the pervasiveness of colonial discursive ideals that still permeate social work education. I also believe that while it is obvious that race is operating within the curriculum standards, it is left unmentioned so as to avoid implicating or having discussions around whiteness and colonialism. In other words, the absence of race is used as a way to protect white colonial discourses.

Shirene Razack's book, *White Knights and Dark Threats: The Somalia Affair, Racism and the New Imperialism,* explores how racism and the denial and erasure of it through law and in national memory allowed Canadian troops to conduct mass violence against the people of Somalia while simultaneously being cast as peacekeepers of the world (2004). Razack's understanding and analysis of how racism is used not only in the construction of and justification of violence towards the Other; but also in allowing white colonial powers to be able to continue to recast themselves as the white saviours or peacekeepers. This analysis of race through a post-colonial lens examines how the Canadian social work system operates in a similar way to peacekeeping and helps to explain social work's rationale for expanding into global contexts.

Razack defines empire as, "a structure of feelings, deeply held belief in the need to and the right to dominate others for their own good… Individuals comes to define themselves within these scripts believing deeply in the 'illusion of benevolence'" (2004, p. 23). This concept directly ties into the foundations that social work was built upon, the construction of values that distinguished the helpers from the helped and gave power to the helpers to decide who was worthy or unworthy of the help (Johnstone, 2018). The illusion of benevolence is upheld through what Jansen et al (2015) in their introductory chapter in, "Unravelling Encounters: Ethics, Knowledge, and Resistance under Neoliberalism", conceptualize as white amnesia. White amnesia is the dominant group's attempt to wipe out every trace of colonialism and imperialism

in order to maintain power over a narrative in which they can view themselves and their actions favourably (2015). This also fits into the master narrative of Canada, where citizens are viewed as exalted, "responsible citizens, compassionate, caring and committed to the values of diversity and multiculturalism (Thobani, 2007, p.4). It is with this narrative that has been crafted, curated and reinforced over time that social workers are being educated.

Whiteness and an understanding of whiteness is also a discourse that is left out of the program curriculum content requirements. Frankenberg (1993) understands whiteness as having three dimensions which are, whiteness as a location of structural advantage; a standpoint in which white people look at others and themselves; and a set of cultural practices that are unmarked and unnamed. This understanding of whiteness ties back into Razack's understanding of how race and the denial of racism allowed the narrative of peacekeeping violence to be transformed into, "National and international mythologies of heroic white people obliged to make the world safe" (Razack, 2004, p. 21). By not allowing for the direct examination of how whiteness operates to make the discussion of race invisible, colonial discourses find an avenue to reproduce continuing the cycle of the construction of race and racial inequities.

While Razack's analysis of race and colonialism are in the context of Canada's peacekeeping missions in Somalia, there is a strong connection to be made to social work as another aspect of the FDA revealed that the construction of identity of the helped as being marginalized and oppressed operates not only within a Canadian context but also within a global context. In the standards it is stated, "Social work students understand their professional role in advancing human rights and responsibilities and social justice in the context of the Canadian society and internationally" (CASWE, 2014, p. 13). The trope of the exalted citizen and the illusion of benevolence are so deeply embedded within Canadian social work that it has come to

the point where educational requirements are encouraging students to take their Canadian social work values that are entrenched in neoliberalism and colonialism and enter into global contexts. From this, it is clear that Canada's national mythology has depended on race and that it is, "informed by the notion that 'we' know about democracy and 'they' do not; we have values of integrity, honesty and compassion and they do not" (Razack, 2004, p. 25). In this instance, Canadian social workers know about sources of inequity and are equipped with the necessary skills to advance social justice and thus using that logic we are capable of carrying that out in a global context. Canada has adopted post-colonial attitudes towards poorer and less powerful cultures and social work education is being used to allow culture in a post-colonial environment to dominate (Askeland & Payne, 2006).

Ultimately, knowledge and understanding about race and racial inequalities are being managed by SSW who are in turn guided by curriculum accreditation standards that have no mention of race within them. This incorporation of social justice and anti-oppressive concepts into social work education is not due to the acknowledgement that social work is harmful towards Indigenous, Black and racialized peoples but I think that it is a response to the changing demographics of social workers and another way to manage and control racial inequalities and to continue to protect white superiority. An understanding of whiteness and colonialism are also not mentioned at all within the MSW curriculum requirements which again, can seem very odd because CASWE mentions in is principles guiding social work programs that, "social work programs acknowledge and challenge the injustices of Canada's colonial history and continuing colonization efforts as they relate to the role of social work education in Canada and the self-determination of the Indigenous peoples" (CASWE, 2014, p. 3). This acknowledgement comes off as facetious because on one hand, CASWE is stating that social work programs should care

about Indigenous sovereignty and Canada's continuing colonization efforts but then they fail to center social work education in the understanding of ongoing colonization as it relates to social work and leave out anything to do with race altogether. This is unsurprising though, as it seems that the standards avoid using the word race at all costs. For example, words such as personal biases and preferences are used instead of the word racism. In order to distract from the obvious erasure of race and racism within the standards, CASWE hides behind social justice and anti-oppressive values. This is significant because anti-racism social work is different from anti-oppression social work approaches by its emphasis on racism as a key component of social life and power relations, and its use of race as the primary lens through which to view and understand racism as a force of interlocking systems of oppression (Pon, Giwa & Razack, 2016).

Anti-racism social work also includes an analysis of how whiteness operates within social work whereas anti-oppression social work does not necessarily incorporate or emphasize that analysis (Pon, Giwa & Razack, 2016). To me, this speaks to how social work in Canada started from white settler colonialism and in order to uphold the system it created, social work has favoured anti-oppression because it allowed for the gaze of social work to focus on the systems of marginalization without explicitly speaking about white dominant colonial power. Anti-racism allows for the interrogation of the processes of teaching, learning and education administration in producing schooling successes and failures for different types of people (Dei, 2011). It ultimately highlights the material and experiential realities of racialized groups in how they navigate and interact with the state and its institutions (2011). This is important because anti-racism is action oriented and broadens the discussions around identity, citizenship and belonging while bringing questions regarding the processes of colonization and racialization to the center (2011). The absence of race and anti-racism and the mainstreaming of anti-oppressive

and social justice values further reifies the protection of white colonial discourses while at the same time masking them within the standards.

CHAPTER 6. CONCLUSION

As this MRP has argued, neoliberalism and colonialism are underlying influences within the CASWE standards for accreditation and ultimately help to produce social workers who are complicit within systems of oppression. Through FDA using the lens of anti-colonialism, post-colonialism and the understanding of the effects of neoliberalism, I have argued that discourses of professionalism, surveillance, social justice and institutionalization work together to either enhance, mask or allow for the reproduction of neoliberal and colonial values within CASWE's standards for accreditation.

Throughout my degree, the question of whether social work is salvageable constantly lingers in the air, especially as we begin examine the damage that social work has done upon marginalized groups. It seems to me that social workers are caught in a colonial system that, whether they explicitly know it or not, reproduces and reinforces oppression of the marginalized. What do we do then? Do we just completely throw away social work all together? If we do, how shall it be done? For me, dismantling and throwing away a system that has existed and been ingrained in our society seems extremely daunting and I honestly would not even know how or where to begin. However, while I do acknowledge that dismantling a system definitely takes time and is difficult, I also think that there are smaller things that we can do in the meantime to help offset some of the harm. One thing I strongly believe in, is education. I think that if we are able to transform social work education then there is a better chance of changing the entire system of social work faster.

As much as I would like to believe that every social worker is committed to anti-oppression, anti-racism and social justice values that respect diversity and inclusivity, my experience within my BSW SSW has made me realize that this is not the case. Even more

discouraging, my experiences within my Masters of Social Work have not been dissimilar either. I think that there are some social workers who believe that upholding the current systems, whether they realize it themselves or not, is their idea of practicing "good" social work. When you live in a society where you are part of the dominant group and where structures benefit you, it is easy to go through life and through your social work practice not questioning or challenging anything. This is where the power of education comes in and I think social work education has to start with self-reflexivity. Heron (2005) argues that the possibility of resisting the reproduction of dominant power relations lies in how we analyze our own subjectivity and subject positions (2005). The article breaks down critical reflexivity into questions about, "the world in which we live in", "our own world", and, "contradictions and correspondences" between the two worlds (2005). This notion of self-reflexivity goes beyond social location because it does not just state who you are but how who you are interacts with the world and people around you in terms of power relations.

Another aspect of social work education that needs to be critically incorporated is anti-racism education. In my experience, social work education tends to favour anti-oppression over anti-racism rather than having both these lenses complement each other. To me, this preference speaks to how social work started from white settler colonialism and in order to uphold the system it created, social work has favoured anti-oppression because it allowed for the gaze of social work to focus on the systems of marginalization without explicitly speaking about white dominant colonial power. Anti-racism allows for the interrogation of the processes of teaching, learning and education administration in producing schooling successes and failures for different types of people (Dei, 2011). It ultimately highlights the material and experiential realities of racialized groups in how they navigate and interact with the state and its institutions (2011).

36

This focus is important because SSW seem to think that because they have adopted principles of anti-oppression into their mission statements that that is enough. What ends up happening is that SSW focus on how the school is being marketed and forget to interrogate their policies and practices. Anti-racism is action oriented and broadens the discussions around identity, citizenship and belonging while bringing questions regarding the processes of colonization and racialization to the center (2011).

Admittedly, while this MRP has only begun to scratch the surface of examining the education of social workers, future research considerations could include examining individual SSW's curriculum content across Canada. By examining individual SSW and their educational policies, curriculum content, etc., there can potentially be a more thorough analysis of how geographical location and individual histories of each institution influence their social work programs.

I hope that this MRP was able to shed light on the ways in which neoliberalism and colonialism are still major forces that are shaping social work's educational system and ultimately producing new generations of social workers who will remain complicit in systems of oppression. With that acknowledgement, I still have much hope for this profession. I think that we often forget that social work has existed across time in many different cultures and in many different ways. This white colonialist settler version of social work is just one version. I envision in the future, a social work where all knowledges are held in the same space, where neoliberalism and colonialism are no longer in the center but compassion and relationality are instead. I envision a social work that actually allows for the healing of people and communities and the earth. As I continue on in my social work practice, in whatever capacity that may be, this is something I will not forget.

REFERENCE LIST

Arribas-Ayllon, M. & Walkerdine, V. (2008). Foucauldian discourse analysis. In C. Willig

& W. Stainton-Rogers, *The sage handbook of qualitative research in psychology* (pp. 91-

108). London: SAGE Publications Ltd.

Askeland, G. A., & Payne, M. (2006). Social work education's cultural hegemony. *International*

Social Work, 49(6), 731-743.

Bhuyan, R., Bejan, R., Jeyapal, D. (2017). Social Workers' perspectives on social justice in

social work education: when mainstreaming social justice masks structural inequalities.

Social Work Education, 36(4), 373-390.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology. *Qualitative Reasearch*

in Psychology, 3, 77-101.

Browne, S. (2015). *Dark Matters: On Surveillance of Blackness.* Duke University Press.

Canadian Association for Social Work Education (2014). Standards for Accreditation. Ottawa,

ON: CASWE. https://caswe-acfts.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/CASWE-

ACFTS.Standards-11-2014-1.pdf

Cesaire, A. (1955). *Discourse on Colonialism.* Editions Presence Africaine.

Consoli, M. L. M., Marin, P. (2016). Teaching Diversity in the Graduate Classroom: The

Instructor, the Students, the Classroom, or All of the Above? *Journal of Diversity in*

Higher Education, 9(2), 143-157.

Courville, M. (2007). Genealogies of post colonialism: a slight return from Said to Foucault back

to Fanon and Satre. *Studies in Religion, 36*(2), 215-240.

Davidson-Harden, A. (2013). What is social sciences and humanities research worth? Neoliberalism and the framing of social sciences and humanities work in Canada. *Policy Futures in Education, 11*(4).

Dei, G.J.S. (2011). In defense of official multiculturalism and recognition of the necessity of critical anti-racism. *Canadian Issues,* 15-19.

Dei, G. J., & Kempf, A. (2006). *Anti-colonialism and education: The politics of resistance.* Rotterdam, The Netherlands: Sense Publisher.

Felkner, W. J. (2009). Poor Rigor and Political Obduracy: Which is the Horse and which is the Cart in Social Work Education? *Research on Social Work Practice, 19*(1), 121-123.

Frankenburg, R. (1993). *White women, race matters: The social construction of whiteness.* University of Minnesota Press.

Genrett, G. G. & Hicks, M. A. (2004). Beyond reflective competency: teaching for audacious hope in action. *Journal of Transformative Education, 2*(3), 187-203.

Heron B. (2005). Self-reflection in critical social work practice: subjectivity and the possibilities of resistance. *Reflective Practice, 6,* 341-351.

Janzen, C., Jeffery, D, & Smith, K. (2015). *Unravelling Encounters: Ethics, Knowledge, and Resistance under Neoliberalism.* Wilfred Laurier Press.

Jeffrey, D. (2007). Managing Race in Social Work Education. *Journal of Education Policy. 22*(4), 4229-454.

Jeffery, D. (2007). Radical problems and Liberal selves: Professional Subjectivity in the anti-oppressive social work classroom. *Canadian Social Work Review, 24* (2), 125-139.

Johnstone, M. (2018). Settler feminism, race making and early social work. *Journal of Woman and Social Work, 33*(3), 331-345.

Klassen, J. (2005). Peacekeeping: The New White Man's Burden. *Canadian Dimension, 39*(9), 44-50.

Lee, E. OJ. & Ferrer, I. (2014). Examining social work as a Canadian settler colonial project: colonial continuities of circles of reform, civilization and in/visibility. *Journal of Critical Anti-Oppressive Social Inquiry,* 1.

Lorenz, C. (2012). If you're So Smart, Why are you under surveillance? Universities, Neoliberalism and New Public Management. *Critical Inquiry, 38*(3).

Leung, T. F. (2010). Social Work Professionalism in Self-Help Organizations. *International Social Work, 53*(4), 74-488.

Macias, T. (2015). "On the footsteps of Foucault": Doing Foucauldian discourse analysis in social justice research. In S. Strega & L. Brown (Eds*.). Research as resistance: Revisiting critical, Indigenous and anti-oppressive approaches* (2nd ed.), pp. 221-242. Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press.

McLaughlin, K. (2005). From ridicule to institutionalization: anti-oppression, the state and social work. *Critical Social Policy, 25*(3).

Mitchell, T., Thomas, D., & Smith, J. (2018). Unsettling the settlers: principles of decolonial approach to creating safe(r) spaces in post-secondary education. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 62*, 350-363.

Moffatt, K. (1999*). Reading Foucault for Social Work*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.

Ontario Human Rights Commission (2018). *Report: Interrupted childhoods: overrepresentations of Indigenous and Black children in Ontario child welfare.* http://cwrp.ca/sites/default/files/publications/en/interrupted_childhoods_over-representation_of_indigenous_and_black_children_in_ontario_child_welfare_accessible. Pdf

Osteen, P., Vanidestine, T. J, & Sharpe, T. L. (2013). Multicultural Curriculum and MSW Students' Attitudes about Race and Diversity. *Journal of Teaching in Social Work, 33*(11), 111-128.

Phan, P., Woods, D. R., Vugia, H., Chu, M., Wright, P. & Jones, T. (2009). A Social work program's experience in teaching about race in the curriculum. *Journal of Social Work Education, 42*(2).

Pon, G., Giwa, S., Razack, N. (2016). *Diversity and Social Work in Canada*. Don Mills: Oxford University Press.

Powers, P. (2007). The philosophical foundations of Foucauldian discourse analysis. *Critical Approaches to Discourse Analysis across Disciplines, 1*(2), 18-34.

Razack, S. (2004). *Dark Threats & White Knights: The Somalia Affair, Peacekeeping and the New Imperialism.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Spolander G., Martin, L., Engelbrecht, L., Strydom, M., Pervova, I., Marjanen, P., Tani, P., Sicora, A., & Adaikalam, F. (2014). The implications of neoliberalism for social work: reflections from a six-country international research collaboration. *International Social Work.*

Stokes, J. (2016). Competencies: A Unifying Thread for Education, Practice and Public

    Protection. *Canadian Social Work Review, 33*(1), pg. 125-131.

Thobani, S. (2007). Introduction: Of exaltation. In *Exalted subjects. Studies in the making of*

    race and nation in Canada, (pp. 2-29; 257-266). Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Vincent, N. J. (2012). Exploring the integration of social justice into social work research

    curricula. *Journal of Social Work Education, 48*(2).

Wagner A., Yee, J. Y. (2011). Anti-oppression in Higher Education. *Canadian Social Work*

    Review, 28(1), 89-105.

Watters, E. C., Cait, C., Oba, F. (2016). Social Work Curriculum Review Case Study: Service

    Users Tell Us What Makes Effective Social Workers. *Canadian Social Work Review*.

    33(1), 27-44.

Welbourne, P. (2011). Twenty-first Century Social Work: the influence of political context on

    public service provision in social work education and service delivery. *European Journal*

    of Social Work, 14(3).

Yee, J. Y, Wagner A. (2013). Is Anti-oppression Teaching in Canadian Social Work Classrooms

    a Form of Neoliberalism? *Social Work Education, 32*(3), 331-348.

Young, R, J. C. (2003). *Post-colonialism: A very short introduction.* Oxford University Press.