

FOREWORD BY PHYLLIS M. CUNNINGHAM

The Handbook of Race and Adult Education

Vanessa Sheared, Juanita Johnson-Bailey,
Scipio A. J. Colin, III, Elizabeth Peterson,
Stephen D. Brookfield,
and Associates



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The Handbook of Race and Adult Education

**A RESOURCE FOR DIALOGUE
ON RACISM**

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and Associates

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Published by Jossey-Bass
A Wiley Imprint
989 Market Street, San Francisco, CA 94103-1741—www.josseybass.com

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Jossey-Bass also publishes its books in a variety of electronic formats. Some content that appears in print may not be available in electronic books.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Sheared, Vanessa, 1956-

The handbook of race and adult education : a resource for dialogue on racism /
Vanessa Sheared . . . [et al.].

p. cm.—(Jossey-Bass higher education series)

Includes index.

eISBN : 978-0-470-61067-1

1. Racism in education—Handbooks, manuals, etc. 2. Discrimination in
education—Handbooks, manuals, etc. 3. Adult education—Handbooks, manuals,
etc. I. Title.

LC212.5.S54 2010

374'.1829—dc22

2010006969

HB Printing

The Jossey-Bass Higher Education Series

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Doug Paxton is a learner and educator who is passionate about how we learn from our experience and connect to people and places around us. His PhD in transformative learning led to his dissertation research on how White people can work together to address racism in themselves and in organizations. He is a member of the European-American Collaborative for Challenging Whiteness. Born in Kentucky, he now lives in San Francisco with his domestic partner, Joe Vassallo.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We began this journey as five colleagues, all interested in pursuing a better understanding about how race and racism intersect with and influence our lives, our dialogue, and how we interact with and react to others of different racial identities. For the five of us, it seemed simple enough to just tell our stories—with four of us talking about how our lives had been influenced by race and racism in the United States, and one of us talking about experiences in both England and the United States, and with four of us being Black women born when African Americans were still being called *Colored* and growing up over a period of time in which that descriptor shifted to *Negro* and then to *Black* to *African American* and to *people of the African Diaspora*, and one of us being a White male of European descent, born in England and now living in the United States in the Midwest. Our coming together was a very unlikely grouping outside of our intense desire to explore the meanings and impact of race and racism as it exists in the United States.

There are now four of us, and we will take time here to acknowledge our colleague and friend Elizabeth A. Peterson, who passed away from this life in January 2009. Elizabeth played an instrumental role in bringing the five of us together, and we want to say farewell to our friend and colleague, as well as saying thank you for bringing all of us to this table and to this journey. You will be missed, but your words and your ideas will find their way into the hearts and minds of those who read and go on this journey with us, as they read through the pages of this book.

In addition to thanking Elizabeth for starting this journey with us, we'd also like to say thanks to the many authors

who gave of their time, ideas, and perspectives. Without you this book would have been just five voices, and instead it offers many more voices of those who believe, like us, that dialogue is one way of improving how individuals approach and deal with the subject of race and racism. We thank each of you for your contributions to this book.

We also thank our families and friends who have vicariously gone on this journey with us. It is your life stories and your histories that brought us this far. So we thank our parents, siblings, children, other family members, and friends. We each want to take a moment to say just a few words of thanks.

Scipio

I want to thank my beloved mother, Mrs. Mickey C. Colin (1921-1996), for her unwavering support and love and for teaching me by example the true meaning of righteous commitment. She taught me that we are representatives of our family and that daughters are their mother's legacy to the world. May those who read this endeavor say, "Well done, Ms. Mickey, well done." Promise made, and, I hope, promise kept. And I thank my brother, Curtis DuBois Colin, for always being there and keeping me grounded.

Juanita

I am indebted to the women of my family and the people of my 13th Street neighborhood who imparted a sophisticated analysis of race to me, the child who paid attention to their conversations about what was happening in and to our fragile and isolated segregated world. Thank goodness these women also shared their wisdom on how to rise above

what they called the “ignorance of prejudice and discrimination.” And I am especially grateful to Marvin and Brandice, who are there for me when the analysis and the wisdom can’t keep me from the cumulative pain of the daily racial microaggressions and openly hostile racist acts that I experience as a Black feminist woman in twenty-first-century America.

Stephen

I want to thank my coauthors for inviting me along on this journey, and in particular I’d like to thank Scipio Colin and Elizabeth Peterson for some wonderful collaborations down the years.

Vanessa

I want to thank my mother, Ida Sheared, my stepmother Daisey, and my father, James Lee—your story has made my story and life experiences possible. I thank you for showing me how to love and to think outside the box. I also thank my son, Jamil Sheared, for teaching me what it means to be a mom, a parent, and a scholar. At the age of ten he said to me when I thought about quitting the doctoral program to work, “You like school, and I like to eat, you should do both.” I thank my sisters and all my dear friends, colleagues who have supported me on this journey.

And finally, we want to conclude by thanking David Brightman for saying yes to this book and for working with us patiently for the last three years. We thank the editorial team of Robin Lloyd and Anessa Davenport at Jossey-Bass for taking us to the finish line. This has been a collaborative

effort, and we thank all who played a small or a major role in making this edition possible (Brandon Abell, Georgia Gonzales, Katy Romo, La Tina Gago, Sheng-Yun Yang, and Cynthia Vessel).

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Juanita Johnson-Bailey

Scipio A. J. Colin III

Stephen D. Brookfield

FOREWORD

This book is not limited to adult education or even to education—it shows how racism's location within our social structures causes us to become internally racist as well as entrapped in structural racism without being explicitly conscious of the situation. So this book is for all individuals working with others in formal and nonformal settings.

This exciting book is brought to us by a powerhouse of leaders in the field of contemporary adult education: Sheared, Johnson-Bailey, and Colin III (the articulate proponent of Africentrism) are three of the most quoted African American adult education professors in the United States, and Brookfield is an internationally known critical theorist. These four editors introduce us to over twenty other experientially grounded authors who understand racism from many points along ethnic and color lines.

As the senior editors invite us to join them around the kitchen table, we are plunged into the debate within the first few pages and the discussion turns deadly serious: Can an African American framing her assumptions within the Africentric paradigm escape racism? Yes, I can. No, you can't. Three days later, I don't believe the argument was ever settled. This reminds us that racism is complicated and multifaceted. Even the senior editors were deadlocked on what some consider an already solved issue in the present-day United States.

Many people today believe we have moved beyond racism, pointing to our major achievement in electing an African American president. And though we have indeed come a long way since the civil rights struggles of the 1960s, the sociopolitical and the personal structures of