Residence Life Managers’ Engagement with Race and Privilege

by

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Abstract

This research employed the methodological approaches of Collaborative Developmental Action Inquiry (CDAI) and Participatory Action Research (PAR) to facilitate conversations about race and privilege within the Residence Life and Administration department at the University of British Columbia. The research question guiding this study was: “How can the Residence Life Management team build capacity to meaningfully engage with the subject of race and privilege in an effort to contribute to the university’s purpose of advancing a just society?” Study participants indicated that capacity building for engaging with race and privilege can be enhanced in two key ways. First is an explicit organization-wide commitment that informs performance management metrics and second is intentionally designed spaces for learning through dialogue. This action inquiry study provided an opportunity to transform a leadership challenge within the Residence Life and Administration (RL&A) team into an organizational learning opportunity. This study also contributes to the current literature on race and privilege by identifying both barriers and factors that enable engagement with the complex and necessary dialogue about race and privilege in a Canadian university context.

Keywords: race, privilege, Canadian higher education, transformational learning
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List of Acronyms

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AR</td>
<td>Action Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAP</td>
<td>Creative Analytical Practice</td>
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<td>CDAI</td>
<td>Collaborative Developmental Action Inquiry</td>
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<td>CoP</td>
<td>Community of Practice</td>
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<td>DD</td>
<td>Deep Democracy</td>
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<td>LS</td>
<td>Liberating Structures</td>
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<td>PAR</td>
<td>Participatory Action Research</td>
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<td>POC</td>
<td>People of Colour</td>
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<td>RA</td>
<td>Residence Advisor</td>
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<td>RL&amp;A</td>
<td>Residence Life and Administration</td>
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<td>RLM</td>
<td>Residence Life Manager</td>
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<td>UBC</td>
<td>University of British Columbia</td>
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<td>White Participants</td>
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Preface

In 2017 and 2018, I had the opportunity to attend a few student affairs conferences and was struck by how prevalent the topic of race and prejudice on university campuses was in conversations and discussions. I found myself reflecting on the instances over the last five years where Residence Life Managers (RLMs) have come to me asking for support to address a racially-charged issue that had arisen in their community. In addition, I noted the number of times students of colour sought me out to share a story about something they experienced on campus, asking if I thought the experience was discriminatory or if they were overreacting. What seemed evident to me was that difficult experiences around race occurred frequently on our campus and as administrative staff, we had a responsibility to respond to it in a way that honoured the commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion we purport. In follow-up conversations with RLMs, the notion that came up continually was the idea of not feeling equipped, and the worry of saying or doing something that caused more harm than good. I was left wondering how RLMs could be better equipped to engage with the complex and difficult subject of race.

Conducting research on race, a topic that felt so deeply personal because of my identity and experiences, as a racialized woman felt risky. I knew consciously and unconsciously, my experiences and insights would need a place in the conversation. I also felt strongly that the research process itself needed to model the type of effective engagement I hoped for our team in the future; I couldn’t afford for it to go badly. With lots of contemplation, reflection and a healthy dose of trepidation I took the plunge.

This journey taught me much more than I could have anticipated when I started. Before this experience, I was not aware that I too hesitate to engage directly in conversations about race; particularly conversations where I might have to speak to the difficult experiences I face as a
woman of colour. This was most evident when my white friends and colleagues asked me what the
topic of my thesis was. At the beginning of my research journey, I would answer “capacity
building for residence life managers to engage in difficult conversations”. I spent a great deal of
time wrestling with myself, in my research journal, about why I did not just say “race and
privilege” and I realized it was because I was afraid of the response it might elicit. Even though I
am called upon in my work to support staff and students when they encounter difficult race-related
issues, my engagement was typically reactive. I rarely, if ever, initiated conversations about race
and privilege and certainly not at work with colleagues. I recognized that despite my willingness
and ability to respond to individual race-based issues as they arose, I too did not feel equipped to
engage in authentic, meaningful conversations about race and privilege. This inquiry offered an
opportunity for my development and transformational learning as well. Most notable evidence of
my growth was that over time, I became increasingly comfortable speaking about my research on
race and privilege. Additionally, when conversations about my research led to curious questions
about my experiences as a racialized person at UBC and in Vancouver, I found the courage to
share my stories vulnerably and authentically.

In closing, I am so grateful to have walked this year-long journey alongside the RLMs at
UBC. I am hopeful that the lessons we learned and the insights gained will result in a campus
environment that is more welcoming and benefits from the rich diversity that makes up our
communities.
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Chapter One: Focus and Framing

I conducted my thesis project in collaboration with the Residence Life and Administration (RL&A) department at the University of British Columbia (UBC). I currently work in RL&A as Associate Director Residence Life.

How This Inquiry Came to Be

According to UBC’s strategic plan, UBC seeks to: “[Pursue] excellence in research, learning and engagement to foster global citizenship and advance a … just society across British Columbia, Canada and the world” (University of British Columbia, 2018, p. 1) Through intentional effort to support its commitment to fostering global citizenship, UBC has increased its international student population from approximately 10% in 2008 to approximately 25% in 2017 (University of British Columbia, 2017). With a total student population of 65,000 across two campuses, UBC’s international student enrolment is at an all-time high with 16,188 students. Further, eight out of the top ten countries represented by its international students are non-white countries – China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Mexico, and the Republic of Korea (University of British Columbia, 2017). In addition to an 1 anecdotal increase in the number of non-white Canadian students, this international student population increase illustrates a significant shift in the racial diversity represented on the UBC campuses. However, with this increase, there is a question about whether Canadian post-secondary institutions, including UBC, are sufficiently equipped to create a welcome, respectful and supportive learning community for a racially diverse student body. Milem, Chang and Antonio (2005) highlighted that when a campus views compositional diversity as an end goal, “they often neglect the racial dynamics that surround

1 This is an anecdotal reference because UBC does not collect information about the racial identities of students.
interactions among different groups” (p. 19). Racial diversity on a campus offers important opportunities for learning, and also presents challenges that must be addressed if the educational benefits of a diverse campus are to be realized (Milem, et al., 2005, p. 16). McIntyre and Hamilton-Hinch (2016) cited a 2011 assessment by the Canadian Federation of Students that documented increasing incidents of racism on Canadian campus. Recognizing university campuses are not exempt from societal patterns of power, privilege and prejudice connected to race, the increase in racial diversity of the UBC campus and other Canadian campuses (McIntyre & Hamilton-Hinch, 2016) necessitate a campus community with capacity to meaningfully engage with race-related issues and effectively respond to race-related conflict as they emerge. Additionally, there is a societal awakening around systemic racial inequity connected to historical patterns of colonization, and as an institution of higher education, UBC has a responsibility to thoughtfully engage with the complexity of these subjects that carry such weight in society’s conflict and discourse today.

The need to effectively engage in tension and discourse around race, power, privilege, and prejudice is further amplified in UBC’s student residence, where 51% of the 12000-person student residence population are international students. Specifically, over the last few years, a number of conversations and incidents related to race have occurred where senior members of the Residence Life team have felt ill-equipped to address or engage with. Examples include: critical conversations with students about UBC’s curriculum on power, privilege, prejudice, and intercultural understanding; and race-related conflicts like a white student singing the “n-word” at a community-wide karaoke event because the word was part of the song lyrics. In such instances, Residence Life Managers have indicated they did not engage because they did not believe they had
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the tools to do so effectively (Residence Life Manager, H. Dysserink, Personal Communication, April, 2018). Consequently, a pattern has emerged in Residence Life, where another senior manager and I, both people of colour (POC), have been tasked with facilitating all critical race-related conversations and conflict with staff and students. Although unintentional, this current approach is in direct contradiction with the University’s articulated purpose to foster global citizenship and advance a just society. In Residence Life, we believe that if the university community must pursue learning and engagement that “advances a just society” (UBC, 2018, p. 1), it is important that individuals in positions of leadership and influence are equipped to navigate meaningful learning and engagement around challenging topics such as systemic racial inequity.

Recognizing this gap within the Residence Life Management Team, my thesis initially sought to explore this primary question:

- How can the Residence Life Management team build capacity to meaningfully engage with the subject of race, power, privilege, and prejudice in an effort to contribute to the university’s purpose of advancing a just society?

However, early on in this study, participants narrowed the focus of their responses and insights to two topics: race and privilege. While I recognize the interconnection between race, privilege, power and prejudice, it is important to honour participant’s contributions to this study by focusing specifically on the topics that participants spoke to. As such, in practice, my thesis explored this question:

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2 All personal communications in this thesis are cited with permission.
• How can Residence Life Management team build capacity to meaningfully engage with the subject of race and privilege in an effort to contribute to the university’s purpose of advancing a just society?

Significance of the Inquiry

The goal of this engaged, action research project was to enhance the learning our staff experience from living and working in a diverse community, and to provide opportunity for leadership development among the Residence Life Management team. Capacity building for Residence Life Managers could have a profound impact on creating positive change because of the direct influence they have on the learning experience of 240 residence life staff and 12000 students. Our research design modeled meaningful engagement with race and privilege and served as an experiential learning opportunity for the Residence Life Management team. As an outcome of our study, Residence Life Managers are better equipped engage in dialogue across racial differences; contributing directly to UBC’s purpose of advancing a just society.

This topic of study is a particularly timely contribution to scholarship and praxis in the field of student affairs in higher education. Within the last 12 months, race and prejudice have been the subjects of discussion at a number of student housing professional association conferences in the United States\(^3\). However, the same has not been true in the Canadian context, despite the increase in racial diversity and racial conflict many Canadian colleges and universities are experiencing. Our study offered an opportunity to identify and address the barriers to talking about race, power

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\(^3\) I had the opportunity to attend three student housing conferences based in the United States in 2018: The Association of Colleges and University Housing Officers International (ACUHO-I) conference, The Pacific Affiliate of Colleges and University Residence Halls (PACURH) leadership conference and PACURH business conference. At each conference, the keynote speakers, case study competitions and a number of concurrent sessions were focused on race and prejudice on university campuses.
and privilege on a Canadian campus, and to contribute literature to a currently underexplored aspect of Canadian higher education.

Further, there is growing discourse and conflict about race and privilege, particularly as it manifests on university campuses. Increasingly, attention is being called to racist incidents on campuses and questions are being asked about how campuses are responding to these discriminatory actions. This study therefore contributes to the evolving conversation on race and privilege on university campuses.

**Organization Context**

The RL&A department at UBC supports the largest student residence operation in Canada. Our 12000 students live across thirteen residence areas; and with a 51% international student population, represent 140 countries around the world (Student Housing and Hospitality Services, n.d.). The RL&A team is comprised of five associate directors, one director, 11 Residence Life Managers, 250 Residence Life student staff, and 75 front line service representatives and 12 administrative clerks. Together, this 350-person team delivers the living environment, educational opportunities and related co-curricular programs that make up the residence experience.

RL&A uses a decentralized model of service delivery. Each residence area has its own Residence Life Manager and staff who work to deliver an experience tailored to the members of their community. Residence Life Managers directly supervise teams of 18 to 50 peer support staff and 17 to 25 elected student representatives in their efforts to build safe, secure and social learning communities for 1300 - 2000 students in their residence area. To that end, the Residence Life Management team recruits, hires and trains all 250 peer support staff that work in residence. They implement the residence curriculum that supports the university’s priorities and educational goals,
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they are a primary point of contact for students in distress and they assume a judicial role in managing student conduct. The students in residence view their Residence Life Managers as a trusted adult in their community. For further clarity, see Appendix A for the Residence Life Manager job description.

Systems Analysis

A systems approach to addressing a complex issue “requires [understanding] the whole system that generates the issues” (Senge, 2006, p. 66). As such, I have used a systems analysis to consider factors acting on the student housing system and its current engagement with power, privilege and prejudice connected to race. A systems analysis involves looking at evolving non-linear relationships, bi-directional influences, and feedback loops (Senge, 2006) created by various factors acting on a system. In examining the RL&A department within the context of this study, three factors stand out as contributing to the issue of inquiry. First, is the increase in diversity of racial identities that make up the residence community. This increased diversity sheds light on the inequitable experiences and varied perspectives that members of different identity groups bring. Race Relation theory predicts that as the representation of minority identities increase, the likelihood of conflict also increases (Milem, 2003, p. 32). Second, is the discourse inherent in an academic environment. Knowledge in an academic context is advanced through critique, challenging ideas and offering diverse perspectives. Third and finally, there is a societal awakening to, and discourse around historic patterns of colonization and its implications for today’s social injustices. While these factors coupled with UBC’s articulated commitment to diversity and a just society has increased instances of tension connected to race on campus, it has not increased the capacity for meaningful engagement with race. UBC’s Director of Dialogue and Conflict Engagement accurately offered that this “tension and conflict is not a deficit to be managed; it is
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instead a resource to be engaged with for personal growth, developing and sustaining healthy communities and fostering collaboration and innovation” (A. Erfan, Personal Communication, August 27, 2018). There is therefore an opportunity for leaders within student residence and the campus at large to meaningfully engage, and effectively respond when race-related conflict emerges. Challengingly, the existing decentralized model of service delivery used by RL&A has not supported this change opportunity because team leaders feel unprepared to engage with discourse and conflict involving race.

Embracing change as an opportunity means an organization has to be willing to practice a “deep learning cycle” by critically examining beliefs, assumptions, practices that express those beliefs in action, informal networks within the organization, and the levels of awareness of those beliefs, and practices (Senge, 2006, pp. 284-285). This inquiry is intended to facilitate a deep learning cycle connected to race and privilege for the residence life team at UBC. Two systems principles will inform this inquiry: leverage and readiness for change. The systems change principle of leverage as articulated by Senge (2006) suggests that a small, well-placed intervention in a complex system can yield significant and long-lasting impact. I believe that capacity building for Residence Life Managers reflects a leverage point in the student housing system because of the direct influence they have in shaping the learning of 70% of the department’s workforce. Additionally, the Residence Life Managers directly impact the experience of our twelve thousand residents.

Stroh’s (2015) four-stage change process will serve as the change framework for my inquiry because of its adherence to a second systems change principle: readiness for change. Armenakis, Harris and Mossholder (1993) described two necessary components of creating change-readiness among organizational members. First is communicating “the discrepancy
between the desired end-state and the present-state” (p. 684) and the second is increasing efficacy or the “perceived ability to change” (p. 685) of the individuals and/or group impacted by the change effort. Stroh’s process does this by leveraging the gap between what you want – your vision, and what you have – your current reality. The four stages are: building a foundation for change, facing current reality, making an explicit choice, and bridging the gap. To build capacity for meaningful engagement with race and power/privilege, I believe that Stroh’s approach offers the best opportunity for change in the UBC context. Stroh’s model emphasizes mutual understanding of why the current reality needs to shift, and the development of an explicit shared vision for the future. The benefit of the collective vision that Stroh argued for is reflected by Kouzes and Posner’s (2012) assertion that individuals will be more enthusiastic about working towards a vision or future state that appeals to their shared aspirations. In my view, enthusiasm that fuels collective action is a critical element of creating transformative change within an organization. Noting this, we built a foundation for change and a clear understanding of the current reality with the following subquestions:

- How is the Residence Life Management team currently engaging with the subjects of race and privilege?
- How would the Residence Life Management team ideally engage with the subjects of race and privilege?

We then facilitated a process of making an explicit choice and bridging the gap between current reality and the ideal future state with the following sub questions:

- What does the Residence Life Management team need to learn in order to better engage with race, power, privilege and prejudice?
- What supports are needed to facilitate this learning?
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Thesis Overview

This first chapter of my thesis provides an overview of the primary research question and sub-questions. It outlines the significance of the inquiry, and provided an overview of the organizational context within which the study is situated. Chapter one then closed with a systems analysis that illustrated the interrelated factors impacting this change process.

Chapter two explores the current academic literature and focuses on two key topics: defining race and privilege and an analysis of how race is currently experienced on university campuses. This situates our inquiry within the broader academic literature.

Chapter three outlines the methodological approaches used in this study. In this chapter, I also describe the inquiry team, the participants and the data generation methods we used. It concludes with an overview of how data was analyzed, a discussion of trustworthiness as the measure of validity in this research and a discussion of relevant ethical issues.

Chapter four presents the findings of the study based on the data generated by participants. Referring back to the literature in chapter two, I discuss the key conclusions that can be drawn from this study.

Chapter five highlights three recommendations for consideration by the RL&A department at UBC. These recommendations are grounded in participant insights as well as relevant literature. Chapter five also highlights the scope and limitations of this inquiry as well as ideas for future study. This chapter concludes with a summary of the thesis.

Throughout this thesis I oscillate between using the pronouns “we” and “I”. I use “we” when describing the inquiry process and findings as this inquiry is the outcome of a collective – my co-facilitator Aftab Erfan, the ten RLMs who contributed their stories, thoughts and insights,
and my inquiry partner, Janice Robinson. By contrast, I use the term “I” to reflect my opinions, thoughts and choices and these do not necessarily reflect the views of the collective.
Chapter Two: Relevant Literature

This literature review begins by defining race and privilege, the two primary concepts addressed in this study. I then synthesize theoretical frameworks and perspectives that provide context for our primary research question: How can the Residence Life Management team build capacity to meaningfully engage with the subjects of race and privilege in an effort to contribute to the university’s purpose of advancing a just society? In particular, I identify how race-related tension and discourse is currently showing up on university campuses in both Canada and the United States and how campus leaders are currently engaging with race.

Privilege Defined

In their review of academic literature on the concept of privilege, Black and Stone (2005) identified five widely accepted components that comprise the definition of privilege:

1. “Privilege is a special advantage that is only readily available to some people (Lucal, 1996; McIntosh, 1992; Robinson, 1999).
2. Privilege is granted, not earned through individual effort or talent (Lucal, 1996; McIntosh, 1992; Robinson, 1999).
3. Privilege is an entitlement that is linked to a preferred social status (Lucal, 1996; McIntosh, 1992; Robinson, 1999).
4. Exercising privilege benefits the recipient to the exclusion or detriment of others (Lucal, 1996; McIntosh, 1992; Robinson, 1999).
5. A privileged status is often outside the awareness of the individual(s) benefiting from it (McIntosh, 1992; Robinson & Howard-Hamilton, 2000)” (p. 244)

Historically, the literature on privilege has focused primarily on race and gender (Crenshaw, 1997; Dyer, 1988; Jackson, 1999; McIntosh, 1992; Pappas, 1995; N. M. Rodriguez & Villaverde, 2000);
however more recently, scholars have sought to expand the definition of privilege to include sexual orientation, age, ability, and class. Expanding the definition of privilege to include these additional domains of identity provides a more complex, intersecting and fulsome view of sources of privilege that can have exclusionary and detrimental impacts on others (Black & Stone, 2005). Additionally, this expanded definition brings to lights the sometimes-conflicting nature of privileged identities (Black & Stone, 2005); for example, a racially privileged man with a disability. The definition of privilege used in this study draws on the expanded domains offered by Black and Stone and is understood as unearned access to resources and special advantages that are only readily available to some people because a particular aspect of their identity (i.e. race, gender, class, sexual orientation, age, or ability) holds a preferred social status.

**Race Defined**

The term race was first used to describe groups of people in the way ethnicity and national identity is now understood (Clair & Denis, 2015). However, as Europeans began to colonize non-European lands, the term race was given a biological meaning and used to establish European superiority over people racialized as non-white (Clair & Denis, 2015). Most social scientists still distinguish between race and ethnicity. Races are identified by perceived common physical characteristics (e.g. skin colour) while ethnicities are defined by perceived common ancestry and cultural practices (Cornell & Hartmann, 2006). Both race and ethnicity are tied to social constructs that have significant implications for the privileges and oppression experienced by groups of people (Clair & Denis, 2015). Recognizing the link between race and privilege, critical race scholars and Indigenous scholars add complexity to the definition of race with their work and literature on “white presenting” or “white appearing” racialized people. In this regard, there is a self-identification aspect of racial identity that intersects with the perception of racial identity.
informed by if and how a person embodies physical features that fit particular racial stereotypes. While white presenting racialized people may self-identify and actively engage with a particular racial identity, the perception of race based on their skin colour has a great deal of impact on the privileges they experience. Consequently, the experiences of a white presenting racialized person can be significantly different from that of a person who could never be mistaken for white. The well documented concept of white privilege (McIntosh, 1988; Boatright-Horowitz, Frazier, Harps-Logan, & Crockett, 2013; Wilson, 2017) explains this difference in the experiences of white presenting racialized people as compared to visibly racialized people (Lawrence 2004). White privilege, which is often extended to white presenting racialized individuals, grants access to opportunities and special advantages that in turn increases the likelihood of favourable outcomes experienced by white people (McIntosh, 1992).

In the context of this study, we use race –both self-identified and perception of race- and ethnicity/ethno-cultural identity in tandem to reflect the socially constructed factors that are used to classify people based on skin colour, and impact the privileges individuals are granted.

**Race and University Campuses**

A foundational framework to understanding racial climate on university campuses is Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pedersen and Allen’s (1998) conceptualization of the internal and external components of campus climate. Hurtado and colleagues (1998) identify two external domains: government policy/programs/initiatives and the socio-historical context and four internal domains: the institution’s “historical legacy of inclusion or exclusion” (p. 283) of various racial groups, it’s “structural diversity” (p. 286) – the numerical and proportional representation of various racial groups, the “psychological dimension” (p. 289) that includes perceptions and attitudes between and among groups, as well as “behavioural dimension” (p. 293) that is
exemplified by the nature of interactions between diverse racial groups on campus. Campus leaders that focus on intentionally addressing multiple domains in their approach to diversity maximize positive outcomes in their communities. However, Hurtado and colleagues (1998) argued that most institutions ignore the dynamic relationship between external and internal domains of campus racial climate and tend to focus only on the structural diversity of their institutions. Challenging, as predicted by race relations theory, the increase in representation of minority identities without the corresponding focus on the psychological and behavioural climates of post-secondary institutions results in increased race-related conflict.

With Hurtado and colleague’s framework as a foundation, I found a large number of studies on the experiences of African-American students in predominantly white post-secondary institutions in the United States (Loo & Rolison, 1986; Radloff & Evans, 2003; Rankin & Reason, 2005). However, the experiences of racialized students in a Canadian context appear largely unexplored with the exception of a few Master’s level thesis projects (McIntyre & Hamilton-Hinch, 2016). As such, to understand the Canadian campus experience of race, I relied on reputable media reports of race-based conflicts that have surfaced on campuses over the past few years. Three key themes emerged from my literature review on race and university campuses (1) there are benefits to campus climates that facilitate intentional cross-racial engagement; (2) racialized students report challenging, prejudicial interactions on campus and (3) race is an avoided topic on many Canadian campuses.

**Benefits of campuses that facilitate meaningful cross-racial engagement.** The literature on racial diversification on college and university campuses identified several positive learning and social outcomes connected to a diverse student body (Gurin, 1999; Milem, 2003). Milem (2003) in their study of race on university campuses found that high quality interactions between
students from different backgrounds was directly connected to positive learning outcomes and an enhanced university experience. A critical qualifier is that the interactions have to be intentional and designed to maximize cross-racial interactions and encourage on-going dialogue. To illustrate the impact of high-quality interactions, some of the literature made reference to specific in-classroom experiences that foster dialogue on race. By example, an academic course that addresses issues of diversity was linked to a decrease in racial bias (Milem, 2003), an increase in critical thinking skills (Nelson-Laird, 2005) and social action engagement outcomes (Nelson-Laird, Engberg, and Hurtado 2005). Outside of classroom experiences were also cited as having a positive impact on the learning experience. In a large study of 2800 white students across seventeen institutions, participating in a racial or cultural awareness workshop had a positive impact on the students’ approach to race and the subsequently, an improved campus climate on racial and cultural diversity (Springer, Palmer, Terenzini, Pascarella, & Nora, 1996). In summary, students who had the opportunity to engage meaningfully with peers from different backgrounds and diverse perspectives, both inside and outside classroom, experienced positive learning and social outcomes and held fewer biases toward persons of racially different identities during their university experience.

**Racialized students report prejudicial treatment.** Racial diversification without intentional attention to existing perceptions and attitudes towards persons of colour can result in negative interactions and consequences. Rankin and Reason’s (2005) study that looked at the experiences of over 7000 students from across 10 campuses found that students of colour reported more experiences with harassment and reported the campus climate as less accepting than their white peers. Further, an assessment of the Canadian campus landscape surfaced instances of racially discriminatory graffiti (CBC, 2018; Bueckert, 2016) racist posters (Alam, 2016) and
prejudicial interactions with faculty and peers (Canadian Federation of Students as cited in McIntyre & Hamilton-Hinch, 2016) indicating similar patterns of increased racial conflict.

**Race is an avoided topic on Canadian campuses.** Data on experiences of racialized students are limited in Canadian Higher education literature (McIntyre & Hamilton-Hinch, 2016, p. 42). Race appears to be an unpopular topic and is generally considered unmentionable in most spaces on campus. As summarized by Dr. Laura Mae Lindo, Director of Diversity and Equity at Wilfred Laurier University in Ontario “there is something about talking about race and racism that scares us…” (Bueckert, 2016). Most of the largest institutions in Canada, including UBC, do not collect data on the racial or ethno-cultural identity of their students (McDonald & Ward, 2017). Further, the qualitative realities of race are largely unexplored in institutional assessments – very few institutions are asking students about their lived experiences of racial diversity on Canadian campuses. The significant limitation of this current practice in most Canadian institutions is in the “contradiction inherent in expecting students to interact with a racially diverse community on campuses where race is deliberately unacknowledged in classrooms and other structured venues” (Harper & Hurtado, 2007, p. 16). Experiences of racial discrimination or race-based conflict are recorded as isolated anecdotes with no formal structures for investigating whether the experiences more broadly permeate the culture of the institution (McDonald & Ward, 2017). Consequently, there is an incomplete understanding of race-based inequities on Canadian campus. In effect, there are no tangible measures in place for whether or not the educational objectives connected to increased diversity on Canadian campuses are being achieved.

To address the current silence around conversations about race, DiAngelo (2018) in her book *White Fragility* examined factors that create barriers for white people in particular to engage in conversations about race. She articulated three consistent patterns that emerge for white people
when talking about race. First, there is a feeling of discomfort around the subject, and in mixed-race groups, white people often wait for the person of colour to model the way. Second, white people often have difficulty speaking about race with depth and nuance. Finally, their response tends to be focused on experiences with or about people of colour. DiAngelo argued that these patterns are a product of the problematic view that there isn’t a racial perspective associated with whiteness and the tendency to situate people of colour as the sole experts of race knowledge. However as previously noted, meaningful and transformational engagement with race and privilege includes ongoing cross-racial dialogue (Milem, 2003; Nelson-Laird et al., 2005) where parties are aware of the interactions between, and impact of, their diverse racial identities. Our study therefore explores the conditions that will disrupt the silence around race and privilege and enhance capacity for effective cross-racial engagement with the subject of race and privilege within the context of a Canadian campus.

Transformational Learning Theory

Transformational learning theory emerged as a third literature review topic during the course of our study. Transformational learning theory was identified as a possibility to support learning and capacity building around engagement with the subjects of race and privilege. Transformative learning theory is described as a process of transforming some aspect of how a person makes meaning of the world through engagement with new experiences and intentional critical reflection (Cranton, 2002). Transformational learning theory offers a particularly effective framework for teaching and learning on the topic of race and privilege because it results in the shift in mindset, attitudes and beliefs required for authentic and meaningful engagement with race and privilege. In investigating the conditions required for transformational learning, Cranton argued
that an environment of challenge coupled with safety and support was a necessary factor for yielding transformational learning. Using the example of an individual who moved to a different country for the first time, Taylor (2008) identified three additional factors that they described as central to the transformative learning process: first is the new experience, second is a critical reflection on their experience, and finally the opportunity to dialogue with others. Taylor hones in on the opportunity to dialogue with individuals with varied perspectives as the catalyst for questioning deeply held assumptions that ultimately leads to transformation.

**Summary.** In sum, the literature on race and college campuses is clear that the learning and social benefits of a racially diverse campus is predicated on institutional policies and programs that facilitate high quality cross-racial interactions. Diversification without the necessary attention to the psychological and behavioural domains of campus climate leads to increased conflict. As racial diversity increases on Canadian campuses, there is opportunity to increase capacity for campus leaders to purposefully engage with the subject of race and create educational experiences, both inside and outside of the classroom, for students to engage with race. Transformational learning theory presents one possible approach to support learning and build capacity for meaningful engagement with race and privilege. Understanding the current literature on race and university campus offered the necessary foundation for our research. We explored factors that create barriers to engagement and investigated the conditions that support learning and enhance capacity for engaging with the subjects of race and privilege.
Chapter Three: Methodology

Introduction

We engaged in an Action Research (AR) project focused on collaborating with Residence Life Managers (RLMs) at UBC to address the current lack of capacity identified by RLMs for them to meaningful engagement with race and privilege. Two AR methodological approaches informing our study were Collaborative Developmental Action Inquiry (CDAI) and Participatory Action Research (PAR). In this chapter I describe CDAI and PAR, as well as the research design used to conduct our study. I begin by restating our research goals and key research questions. I then discuss why CDAI and PAR were appropriate methodological approaches to address our research goals. This is followed by a detailed overview of the research design including a description of project participants, the sequencing of data collection methods and approach to data analysis. Finally, I explore ethical issues connected to this inquiry and the actions we took to mitigate these concerns. Each topic addressed in this section is grounded in relevant literature and/or organizational context to support the approaches we chose.

Research Objective and Questions

The primary goal of this inquiry was to actively engage Residence Life Managers (RLMs) at UBC to develop a contextually appropriate strategy for building capacity of the Residence Life Management team to meaningfully engage with the complex subjects of race and privilege. A second objective was to explore the environment, conditions and approaches that could lead to learning and development around the complex subject of race and privilege for RLMs.

Specifically, this study addressed the following questions:

1. How do Residence Life Managers currently engage with the subject of race and privilege? (E.g. where, with whom, in what situations, and with what outcomes?)
2. How could Residence Life Managers ideally engage with the subject of race and privilege? (E.g. where, with whom, in what situations, and with what outcomes?)

3. What does the Residence Life Management team need to learn in order to better engage with the subject of race and privilege?

4. What supports are needed to facilitate learning on the subject of race and privilege?

After the first participatory research session, we realized it was important to also consider how an individual’s social location (i.e. race/ethno-cultural identity) impacts their engagement with the subject of race and privilege. Resultantly, the following emerged as a fifth question:

5. How does one’s social location influence confidence and agency to engage in conversations and/or take action around race and privilege?

**Collaborative Developmental Action Inquiry and Participatory Action Research**

There are many articulations of the concept of AR which the SAGE Handbook of Action Research describes as: a “family of practices of living inquiry that aims, in a great variety of ways, to link practice and ideas in the service of human flourishing” (Reason and Bradbury, 2001). In essence, the distinguishing elements of AR are: research in action rather than about action; requires a collaborative, democratic partnership, and involves a sequence of events/approach to problem solving (Coghlan & Brannick, 2014). As noted previously, CDAI and PAR are the two AR methodological approaches employed for this research study. CDAI is research “which is simultaneously conducted [with attention to] oneself, the first-person action inquirer, the second-person relationships in which one engages, and the third-person institution of which one is an observant participant” (Torbert, 2004). PAR is summarized by Heykoop (2014) as “research done with people, rather than on people (Reason & Bradbury, 2006), to develop knowledge and actions to facilitate social change (Greenwood & Levin, 1998; Reason and Bradbury, 2006)” (p. 44). Used
together, these two methodological orientations supported and informed the goals and objectives of our study.

**Principles and embodiment of CDAI.** CDAI has much in common with other action-oriented methodologies in that it stresses collaboration, research in action, and reflective practice (Torbert, 2004). However, as articulated by McGuire, Palus and Torbert (2007), there are two distinctive aspects of CDAI:

1. **CDAI requires an awareness of the interaction between subjectivity (first-person), intersubjectivity (second-person) and objectivity (third person).**

2. **CDAI integrates the ongoing development and transformation of its subjects/participants, including the researcher themselves.**

CDAI was selected as a fitting methodology for our research because it recognizes that the researcher is not an objective outsider observing the issue they are studying; instead, the researcher influences and is influenced by the inquiry process. As noted in the definition above, CDAI requires researchers to explore first- and second-person inquiry alongside the traditional third person inquiry mode of research. In this project, the first-person mode of inquiry was focused on what *I* experienced in my dual role as researcher/inquirer and research subject and what information my experiences contributed to understanding the issue of inquiry. In effect, the change and development I experience throughout the research was considered a subject of inquiry. The subject of second person inquiry is the *I-You* relationship and is defined by “the intent of people in relationship to inquire into their actions and into what is between them” (Sherman & Torbert, 2000). Within the context of this research, the second person focus supported the inquiry team to investigate and answer the question: what are we experiencing and learning in relationship with one another? In a review of race in action research literature, Foldy (2015) identified the
importance of including first and second person elements in all race-related research: “reflexivity matters not only because it helps us better understand the main focus of inquiry but because it can tell us whether as researchers, we are part of the problem” (p. 2) we are seeking to address. As a researcher of colour, my racialized identity would undoubtedly impact and be impacted by our research study; it was therefore important to interrogate and document changes to self-understanding and self-development throughout the process. Finally, third person inquiry is focused on the I-It relationship between the researcher and the research subjects who are viewed as knowledgeable informers about the subject of inquiry. In the third person mode of inquiry, we studied the experience of the RLMs throughout the research process, identifying patterns and drawing conclusions that would contribute to knowledge beyond the immediate context of the study. The value of gathering and triangulating data across these three modes of inquiry – self, in relationship, and others – is that it enhances the researcher’s understanding of the complexity of the issue they are engaging with (Chandler & Torbert, 2003). More specifically, with this three-pronged approach to inquiry, CDAI surfaces relationships between ideas, perspectives and insights that would otherwise be inaccessible (McGuire et al, 2007).

Finally, recognizing our desire to develop capacity for residence life managers, the “rigorous developmental emphasis” (McGuire et al, 2007) of CDAI made it a beneficial methodological orientation. CDAI approaches aim at this developmental goal by employing mutually transforming power through the inquiry process. Erfan and Torbert (2015) described this mutually transforming power as the process where two parties influence one another in the course of doing something together; both offer feedback to the other on their progress and both listen and respond with openness. It is through this feedback loop that capacity development and
transformation occur ((Erfan & Torbet, 2015). This research sought to address first, second and third-person inquiry- and strived to support the feedback loop of mutually transforming power.

**Principles and embodiment of PAR.** As noted above, PAR was the second action-oriented methodology selected for this research. In particular, PAR oriented our approach to problem solving throughout this study. Three key aspects of PAR informed our choice. First, PAR with its social justice roots (Greenwood & Levin, 2007), is considered an especially fitting orientation to race-related research (Torre, 2009) and research where power imbalances may be at play (Heykoop, 2014). In discussing race and privilege, it was important to consider the social dynamics of power that might emerge and to avoid replicating the very structures we are attempting to interrupt with this research. PAR approaches help mitigate power imbalances (Reason & Bradbury, 2006) making it a suitable methodology to address this challenge. Second, PAR recognizes participants as knowledge holders and experts of their own experiences. As such should be involved in shaping the research process, questions, data collection, data analysis, and emergent recommendations and actions (Heykoop, 2014; Torre, 2009). Our desire to yield contextually appropriate change actions for RLMs made PAR a suitable choice because it values the unique knowledge, experiences, and perspectives that participants bring to an action-oriented research process. Finally, PAR as a process aims to empower participants to examine a social issue and change it for the better (Greenwood & Levin, 2007). In this study we aimed to embody the principles of PAR by actively engaging the RLMs throughout the research process and encouraging them to identify and implement solutions to increase their capacity for meaningful engagement with race and privilege.
**Project Participants**

Participants for my inquiry were members of the Residence Life Management team at UBC. There are 11 members of the Residence Life Management Team and their work and scope of influence is described above in the Organizational Context section of this thesis. The inclusion criteria for both data collection methods is being a current Residence Life Manager within the RL&A department and having access to email. All 11 managers meet these inclusion criteria and as such all were invited to participate in both data collection methods. For both data collection methods, participants were asked to answer two types of demographic questions that will be relevant in data analysis and discussion. Participants were asked to self-identify their racial/ethno-cultural identity because meaningful engagement with race and privilege begins with awareness and reflection on one’s relationship with their own racial identity.

As previously stated, with a decentralized model of service delivery within student housing, Residence Life Managers directly influence training and ongoing personal and professional development for 70% of our staff team. They also lead the implementation of programs for twelve thousand students that address the educational goals of the department and university. With the authority and strategic direction of my inquiry partner and the framework and support offered by my inquiry team, the Residence Life Managers will have the opportunity and ability to implement the recommendations that surface from my project.
Data Gathering Methods

Prior to engaging participants in the process of data gathering, inquiry team member and co-facilitator Aftab Erfan and I met to discuss the purpose and key objectives of the study, refine the research questions, and select our data gathering tools. In addition to our chosen methodological framing, two questions served us guideposts for our design and preparations: (a) *how do we design a process that models effective engagement with a subject we know people have a hard time talking about?*; and (b) *how can we invite participants to step into an embodied experience that draws out stories, emotions, and intuition?* We wanted to move beyond a rational discussion of race and privilege into a space that would allow us to access both conscious and unconscious ways of knowing. The data gathering tools used in this study were our best attempts at responding to these questions in a manner that embodied the principles of PAR and CDAI. Below is a summary of the data generating methods used in this study and these methods are further elaborated upon in the section “Rationale for Data Gathering Methods”.

**First person.** I kept a reflexive research journal and wrote in it following conversations with my inquiry partner, my thesis supervisor, after each data gathering method, and throughout the research process. I also noted my personal reflections about significant events related to race and privilege on campus, in British Columbia and Canada.

**Second person.** Within my journal, I kept track of interactions and conversations I had with people about my research. I noted the lessons gleaned from the conversation and the impressions the conversation made on me. I also audio recorded both pre-engagement

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4 I chose the phrase “data generation” to describe our engagement methods because it more accurately reflects the collaborative and participatory process of co-creating knowledge with participants. This is in contrast to the typical “data collection” process where the researcher appears to be mining data from their research subjects.
conversations and post-engagement debrief conversations I had with Aftab. I also reflected on these pre- and post-engagement conversations with Aftab in my journal.

**Third person.** To meaningfully engage with RLMs, we conducted two participatory research sessions using a tool called the 1-2-4-All Liberating Structure (Lipmanowicz and McCandless, n.d.) and a Deep Democracy group process activity (Lewis, 2008). Both sessions were audio recorded. Following each participatory research session, participants were invited to share additional thoughts, insights, perspectives that might not have surfaced during the group session through a follow-up survey.

**Rationale for Data Gathering Methods**

**Reflective journaling.** A widely accepted tool for data collection in the first person mode of inquiry is reflective journaling (Ortilipp, 2008). Reflective journaling focuses on the subjective experiences and reactions of the researcher and uses writing as a method of inquiry to clarify, explore, and articulate real time changes to the researcher’s perspective (Ortilipp, 2008), insights and learning (Erfan, 2013). The literature on race-related action-oriented research offer some examples of integrating first person elements in the form of researcher reflective journaling. Specifically, England and Brown (2001) in their action-oriented research study on how African American teenage boys construct identity, used researcher journaling as a method for developing their practice and engaging in a process of reflexive inquiry. Similarly, Gordon (2000) in her study on cultivating bicultural competence used journaling as a tool for systematic self-interrogation. Since I began the Masters of Arts in Leadership, reflective journaling has been a daily practice that has supported my learning and leadership development. My familiarity with this method, and its suitability evidenced in the literature on first person action-oriented research, makes it the most instinctive self-inquiry tool for me to employ in the context of my study.
1-2-4-All liberating structure. To encourage participation in groups, Lipmanowicz and McCandless (n.d) developed a menu of thirty-three liberating structures (LS) or simple rules to include and engage groups of varying sizes in the process of generating or uncovering knowledge. Specifically, the LS 1-2-4-All is designed to “engage everyone simultaneously in generating questions, ideas, and suggestions” (Lipmanowicz & McCandless, n.d.). 1-2-4-All is facilitated in four sequential steps:

1. Individuals silently self-reflection on a question posed by the facilitator.
2. Individuals pair up to build on the ideas and responses that emerged from self-reflection.
3. Participants share and further develop ideas and responses in groups of four. Particular attention is given to similarities and differences in the responses shared.
4. Each group of four is invited to share one or two ideas that stood out from their conversation with the whole group.

There are two distinct advantages to the 1-2-4-All LS when compared to other participatory research strategies. First, I would argue that the 1-2-4-All mitigates perceived power over issues by embedding an individual data generating opportunity into a group dialogue session. Second, this method ensures participants feel ownership over the ideas and responses generated and each person has the opportunity to integrate their individual thoughts into the collective outcome. To embody the participatory principles of PAR, it was important to prioritize participants’ voice and ensure they have ownership over the ideas and insights generated. Finally, we saw tremendous benefit to a process that supports leaders to leverage collective wisdom as a means of generating knowledge about a complex problem (Senge, 2006).

Deep Democracy. To contextualize the design of our second participatory research session, it is important to describe Deep Democracy, including where and why the method was
developed. Myrna and Greg Lewis developed the Deep Democracy (DD) method while they were serving as consultants to a large public firm in post-apartheid South Africa. During that time, they observed that embedded patterns of racism and related tensions made it challenging for employees to work together in a productive way. In response, Myrna and Greg established a facilitation approach adapted from the principles of American psychologist Arnold Mindell’s Process Work (Erfan, 2013) to engage with, and address the tensions at the firm. The DD approach “is "democratic" because it emphasizes that every voice matters, and that decisions are wisest when majority and minority voices are both valued. It is "deep" because it extends communication between people beyond a rational discussion of ideas to work also with emotions, intuitions, attachments and patterns, supporting self-development” (“About The Lewis Method”, n.d.). The Lewis method has since spread to over twenty countries and is used in businesses, governments, schools, hospitals, etc. Recognizing the issue of inquiry for this project, it seemed particularly appropriate to use a method that was specifically developed for engaging with race.

There are two additional aspects of Deep Democracy as a group facilitation approach relevant to my project. First is the belief that the group has, within itself, the resources to address its own challenges (Erfan, 2013). Consequently, the facilitator’s role is simply to hold space and context for the dialogue that leads to group learning. The second is the method’s orientation towards tension and conflict. The process of DD involves guiding participants through the following steps outlined by Lewis (2008):

1. Ensure everyone is included by communicating clearly that all views are welcome.
2. Create safety and search for the “No” by encouraging alternate views and actively inviting participants to express views that vary from, or oppose the majority position.
3. Spread the “No” by inviting others to consider any connection they may have to the alternate or opposing view that has been introduced.

4. Once polarity within the group is surfaced, establish a group agreement to argue.

5. Invite participants to say everything from one side of the argument, and then the other.

6. Invite participants to identify insights that emerged through the process of considering both the majority position and the alternate or opposing position.

7. Put the group insights into action.

As illustrated by the steps above, the method “provides a structured way of leading people into tension and engaging with conflict, knowing that innovative solutions, sustainable decisions, wisdom and transformational growth lie in their exploration” (“About The Lewis Method”, n.d.). A DD facilitator actively searches for dissent within a group and guides the group through a process that equally honours the majority and minority voices, ideas and perspectives. Deep democracy is about engaging with conflict for the purpose of learning and self-development. Knowing an objective of this inquiry was to develop capacity for effectively engaging with race, a topic that is often fraught with internal and external conflict (Foldy, 2015), DD offered a unique opportunity to model effective engagement.

**Study Conduct**

**Ethics approvals.** Before this project began, we applied for, and were granted ethics approval, from the RRU Ethics Board and the UBC Ethics Board. See Appendices B and C for copies of the letters of ethics approval. Details of the ethical issues and the actions we took to mitigate them are outlined in the “Ethics” section of this thesis.

**Participant recruitment.** Participants for our inquiry were members of the RLM team at UBC. The inclusion criteria for both participatory research sessions were being a current RLM
within the Residence Life and Administration (RL&A) department and having access to a UBC staff email address. All 11 managers met these inclusion criteria and all were invited to participate in both participatory research sessions. A colleague who is external to the RL&A department sent invitations via email on November 21, 2018 to all 11 RLMs. Having invitations come from an external party was a strategy to communicate a clear distinction between RLM job expectations and this research study. This approach further affirmed for participants that could choose not to participant in the study without fear of consequence for their job. With organizational permission, email addresses were accessed using the RLM mailing list internal to UBC; no personal email addresses were used. The invitation emails outlined the purpose and structure of the study, the risks and benefits of participating as well as any real or perceived conflict of interest. RLMs could indicate their willingness in participating by replying to the email invitation directly. RLMs who responded with a yes then received a copy of the corresponding informed consent forms to review in advance of the data gathering sessions. For a copy of the invitation letters and informed consent forms, see appendices D, E, F and G.

Ten RLMs chose to participate in our study. Participants were given the opportunity to self-identify their racial and/or ethno-cultural identity but were not required to. All participants choose to offer a racial and/or ethno-cultural identity. A breakdown of participants according to self-identified racial/ethno-cultural identity is included in table 1. Given that an individual’s social location could impact their confidence and agency to engagement with race and privilege, it was beneficial to record this demographic detail for participants.

Table 1

*Summary of Participants by Category of Self-identified Racial/Ethno-cultural Identity*
RESIDENCE LIFE MANAGERS’ ENGAGEMENT WITH RACE AND PRIVILEGE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>White</th>
<th>POC: All identified as POC but some included a further breakdown of their ethno-cultural identity</th>
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Data gathering methods.

Phase one: Current reality and future possibility. The focus of phase one was to explore how RLMs currently engage with race and privilege to understand what challenges and barriers they experience in their engagement, and to begin to develop a vision for a future where their engagement with the complex subjects of race and privilege is enhance. 1-2-4-All LS was the primary data gathering method for phase one. Following 1-2-4-All LS group session, participants were invited to complete a follow up survey to shared additional thoughts, perceptions, and ideas in short answers in confidence.

The group session was hosted on November 25th, 2018. Prior to introducing the focus of the session, we facilitated a check-in activity where participants were invited to share the origin of their name and how they were feeling about the conversation we were about to engage in. The facilitated check-in activity took approximately 45 minutes for all ten participants and two facilitators to share responses, and was an important way to foster trust between participants and facilitators. It also offered a low risk entry point to surface participants’ awareness and reflections on their ethno-cultural identity and social position. Finally, it gave an opportunity for participants to share any fears they had about stepping into this conversation.
Following the check-in activity, we provided a description of the 1-2-4-All LS and began the process. In rounds one (individual) and two (pairs) of 1-2-4-All LS, we invited participants to share a story that reflected their experience engaging with race and privilege in their work as a RLM at UBC. Using the story as an example, participants were asked to describe how they believe the RLMs are currently engaging with the topic of race, power, privilege and prejudice. Further discussion in round three (two groups of 5) facilitated a deeper understanding and reflection on the results from the previous rounds and concluded with a summary of key themes that emerged. In the final round, the whole group was invited to describe a future state where RLMs were engaging more effectively with race, power, privilege and prejudice. We ended the session with a recap and verification of key themes and information about how RLMs could continue to participate in the next phases of the research study should they choose. With the goal of a second person inquiry, Aftab and I engaged in an unstructured conversation immediately following to debrief the session. We reflected on our experience, observations and insights and identified any lessons we wanted to integrate into the design of the next session.

Following the group session, a reflective questionnaire was sent to participants using a UBC-based online survey tool. The survey posed the same questions that were asked during the 1-2-4-All LS and participants were invited to share additional responses to the questions they had explored in the group session. This was done in recognition that there may be responses and insights that participants may have found difficult to share in a group setting. To ensure participants had the opportunity to share authentic, safe and uncoerced input into the inquiry we choose to offer the option of an anonymous survey. Using both a group method and a survey to inquire into the same questions provided a mixed-method data set that surfaced the breath of thoughts, perspectives and experiences of how RLMs are currently engaging with race and
privilege and what they hope for in their future engagement with these topics. As noted by Golafshani (2003) the use of multiple methods allows for increased validity, reliability and diversity in constructing current and future realities.

**Phase two: action and evaluation.** The first phase of data gathering highlighted a few approaches that RLMs believed might contribute to enhanced engagement with race and privilege. The second phase was designed to further investigate and develop one of these recommendations. Specifically, we endeavoured to share knowledge and offer a tangible skill that would support engagement with race and privilege. Similar to phase one, we gathered data using both a group engagement session and a post session survey.

The second group session was hosted on January 25, 2019 and was three hours in length. We opened the session with a brief (15 minute) check-in activity to welcome and reconnect participants to the conversation. We then framed the session as an opportunity to action out one of the recommendations that surfaced from the previous session. This was followed by a 45-minute lesson on both the historical context and core tenants of Deep Democracy as a facilitation tool. We then introduced a topic that emerged from the previous session for further discussion and modelled Deep Democracy in action: Depending on who you are and especially your race, the topic/conversation of race may be easier or harder for various reasons. Last session, the group indicated that “It seems like people of colour get more grace” when engaging with this subject. That there’s more forgiveness if a person of colour says something and it’s not quite right. There isn’t the same pressure or fear of making a mistake or saying the wrong thing. Is this true and what does it mean in terms of what roles we each play in conversations about race and privilege? We used the Deep Democracy process to facilitate a 75-minute dialogue on this topic. For a detailed description of the instructions provided to participants, see appendix I. With each
response, we explored similarities and differences by self-identified racial/ethno-cultural identities and considered generalizability. We concluded the session by asking participants to identify an insight they gained through the lesson and/or the dialogue that would impact their practice moving forward.

**Survey.** Participants were invited to complete a survey approximately two-weeks following the group session. The survey addressed the following: what aspects of the experience and insights remained with participants two weeks later? What was effective and what could be improved about the session? What else should be considered as we work to articulate recommendations about capacity building for RLMs to engage with race and privilege? The responses from the survey were overlaid with the data gathered during the group session.

**Data Analysis and Presentation**

Together with participants we identified key themes at the end of each group session. These themes served as a framework for the more formal analysis of the research data. First, I transcribed the audio recordings, read through each transcript and organized the data by themes on large flip chart papers posted around the room. I then grouped the themes according to each research questions using thematic analysis (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). The data for the research question: *How does one’s social location influence confidence and agency to engage in conversations and/or take action around race and privilege?* was further clustered by participant’s self-identified racial identity. Responses from the survey were themed using the same framework as the group session transcripts. In presenting our research findings and key themes in chapter four, I offer quotes, stories, and insights shared by participants. Informed by Creative Analytical Practice (CAP), I use a variety of literary devices including short stories, dialogues, and reflections to share a narrative – or series of narratives - of what surfaced over the course of the research project and
our collective process of meaning making. This approach to presenting data is referred to in the literature on qualitative research methods as mixed genres Creative Analytical Practice (CAP), in which “the scholar draws freely in his or her production from literary, artistic, and scientific genres, often breaking the boundaries of each of those as well” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p. 934). I choose this approach for two reasons: first, it honours the narrative and storytelling focus of critical race theory (Berbary, 2015) and second, it was a particularly effective way to juxtapose different and sometimes opposing viewpoints on particular topics.

Validity

Validity in qualitative research has been defined by a number of different measures including trustworthiness (Glesne, 2016), credibility (Saldana et al., 2011; Stringer, 2014), and reliability (Saldana et al., 2011). For this inquiry, trustworthiness was the validity measure we used because it is a widely accepted measure of quality in qualitative studies (Glesne, 2016). The approach we used to build trustworthiness into our research design was member checking. Member checking is the process of providing participants a chance to review and validate or question data and analysis (Stringer, 2012). We gave participants the opportunity to review the themes from the 1-2-4-All session as a starting point for the Deep Democracy conversation. We also shared initial drafts of study findings with participants in the evaluative survey we conducted following the second group session.

Ethical Issues

Ethical issues requiring attention in this study were connected to the guiding principles for ethical research identified in the Tri Council Policy statement: respect for persons, respect for welfare and justice.
Respect for persons. The principle of respect for persons emphasizes free and informed consent from research participants (TCPS2, 2014). The participants of this research project report to me in my role as Associate Director Residence Life; consequently, there were issues of power relationships and undue influence to consider and mitigate. The participants were informed that they were not compelled to participate in the research project and that they had the right to withdraw from it at any time in the invitation letters (Appendix D & E). All participants were informed of my role as a learner and a facilitator in the invitation letters (Appendix D & E) and informed consent forms (Appendix F & G) that were provided in advance of each data collection method. In particular, I informed participants of my methodological orientation, and noted that the learning I experience as a facilitator had implications for the data generated in this inquiry. All anticipated risks from participating in this research project as well as real or perceived conflicts were outlined for participants in the letters of invitations (Appendix D & E) and informed consent forms (Appendix F & G). The manner in which the data will be collected, analyzed, stored, and reported will also be detailed to all prospective participants.

Respect for welfare. The principle of respect for welfare addresses a commitment to the wellbeing of all participants. This principle considers elements such as employment, community membership and social participation that might be impacted by participation in a given research project (TCPS2, 2014). Given that my partner is the director of the RL&A department; my research had support from the senior leadership team and as such, there was no negative impact to the employment status or reputation of colleagues who choose to participate in this inquiry project.

Justice. The principle of justice invites reflection on fairness and the equitable sharing of costs and benefits that might arise through participation in the research study (TCPS2, 2014). I provided equal opportunity for all members of the UBC Residence Life Management team to
participate in my project. With regards to sharing the benefits of the research, I will ensure that all participants receive an electronic copy of the executive summary of the final report; and upon request, provide an electronic copy of the full report. Finally, I recognize that the completion of a Master’s degree upon finishing this research project may be perceived as an added benefit for me in terms of professional reputation within student housing and at UBC in general. It is however important to note that it will not have any monetary implications for me in my current role as Associate Director Residence Life.
Chapter Summary

This chapter explored the two methodological orientations that governed this research project – CDAI and PAR. It described the project participants, the data gathering methods, study conduct, data analysis, strategies used to ensure trustworthiness and validity, as well as the ethical issues we attended to throughout this inquiry process. The following chapter presents the findings and conclusions that resulted from this study.
Chapter 4: Residence Life Managers Perspectives on Engagement with Race and Privilege

“I write to explore lives unfamiliar… readers of my writing are invited into fellowship with others…and empathy is the result” – Esi Edugyan, 2019

Introduction

This chapter begins with an exploration of the research findings emerging from this study. I offer quotes, stories, and insights of participants to share the research findings and identify key themes. To further emphasize the voice of participants, I have italicized their words in block quotations. Each quote is coded according to the specific session/method the quote emerged from and when relevant, to the self-identified racial identity of participant(s). The research findings are organized in three parts. Part 1: The Here and Now address the question of how Residence Life Managers are currently engaging with race and privilege. In particular, it explores how racial identity and socio-cultural position impact how individuals dialogue about and take action around race and privilege. Part 2: Beyond Now addresses the question of how Residence Life Managers would ideally engage with race and privilege. It specifically focuses on what learning conditions the RLM team needs to support enhanced capacity for engaging with race and privilege. Finally, in Part 3: Living the Future Now, I discuss the change action we took during this research project and the associated impacts on and within the RLM team. I conclude this chapter with an articulation of a set of five conclusions. These conclusions emerge from the findings of our study and are situated within existing literature on race and privilege.
Table 2

Summary of Descriptors used to code quotations from Residence Life Managers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Descriptor of Method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Session 1</td>
<td>1-2-4-All Session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey 1</td>
<td>Survey following 1-2-4-All session using the same questions used during the session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 2</td>
<td>Deep Democracy session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey 2</td>
<td>Evaluating Deep Democracy session</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Descriptor of participant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>POC</td>
<td>Person of Colour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WP</td>
<td>White Participants</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Part One: The Here and Now – When and How Do We Currently Engage

This section presents research finding on how residence life managers are currently engaging with the topics of race and privilege in their work context. Participants identified four scenarios within their role as residence life managers where they engage with the subject of race and privilege. Presented in the order of frequency to which these scenarios occur within the scope of residence life manager’s work, the four scenarios include:

1. Navigating race/culture-centred roommate and neighbour conflicts
2. Supporting staff/students/colleagues who experience difficult racial interactions
3. Staff hiring
4. Facilitating equity, diversity and inclusion training in the annual staff orientation program
RESIDENCE LIFE MANAGERS’ ENGAGEMENT WITH RACE AND PRIVILEGE

Below, I summarize the key findings related to each of these scenarios. I end each scenario summary with one short story from participants to further illustrate how RLMs currently engage with race in this facet of their work. It is important to note that while not all participants provided an example of all four scenarios; all 11 participants affirmed, during member checking at the end of the first group session, that these four scenarios accurately captured their most frequent engagement with race in the context of their work.

Navigating race/culture-centred roommate and neighbour conflicts. One of the responsibilities of RLMs is to maintain a safe and secure living/learning environment for students living in residence, and this includes navigating disruptive conflicts as they arise. Five out of ten participants involved in this study shared stories about navigating race and culture-centred conflicts between roommates and neighbours in their role. In most cases, the students involved were explicit about the racial and/or cultural tension underpinning the conflict they were experiencing. However, although not explicitly identified as a race or culture-centred conflict by the students involved, the RLM described an instance where they had a strong feeling that race and cultural tensions were an implicit layer to the conflict they were asked to mediate: “the student in my office kept referring to their “international roommate” and “very different lifestyles”; I couldn’t help but feel that race and culture were playing a role in this roommate conflict” (Session 1). In all cases of mediating conflicts amongst students, participants described these conflict situations as complicated and challenging to address. As with many complex issues, the race and culture-centred conflicts described had no simple solutions, which made them difficult to engage in. The short story below illustrates the difficulty RLMs have to play when responding to student conflicts related to race and culture.
Last year I had a Residence Advisor (RA) bring a roommate conflict to my attention. A conflict had arisen in a 4-person unit where one roommate, who identified as Jewish, seemed to be in frequent conflict with her other three roommates, who were of Asian descent. Following a particularly heated argument one afternoon, the roommate who identified as Jewish, noticed that another roommate had placed a picture of a Buddha with an upside-down swastika on its belly on their shared bathroom door. The roommate who put up the picture indicated it was an expression of their Buddhist faith, a sign of peace, and the roommate who identified as Jewish reported it as an anti-semitic attack. As a residence life manager, I had to navigate the conflict between these roommates and provide coaching and support to the RA responsible for that community (Session 1).

Supporting staff/students/colleagues who experience difficult racial interactions.

Providing care by way of emotional support to student/staff/colleagues is an important aspect of the residence life workplace culture; it is therefore not uncommon for staff to come to their RLM for support when they experience personal and/or professional difficulty. Three out of ten participants shared stories about supporting a staff member or a student who had experienced a negative racial interaction. Two out of the three stories were told by POCs who indicated that staff and students often come to them with their negative experiences of race and prejudice because there is often an assumption that such negative experiences are shared. All three participants expressed that it was easy to empathize with the disappointment and upset expressed by the people they were supporting.

A couple of years ago, one of the RAs on my team showed up to my office upset. A resident had used a racial slur to address her and she wasn’t sure how to respond. Of course, I listened to her and did my best to empathize and console. This situation was particularly
complicated because that resident was registered with our Centre for Accessibility because he was on the Autism spectrum (Session 1). Because of the student’s diagnosis, we did not have the ability to use our typical judicial process to hold the student accountable for their conduct and that was difficult for me to explain to my upset staff member. It’s in situations like this that I become so aware of the complexity of race-issues.

Staff hiring. Every year, RLMs facilitate a hiring process to select 250 student staff for a variety of positions within residence. During hiring decision making, the team is asked by their Associate Directors to consider a number of demographical factors that will contribute to building diverse teams. Four out of ten participants shared stories about their first time participating in this hiring process and being asked to thoughtfully and consciously hire a racially/culturally diverse staff team. In particular, the stories focused on the first time these RLMs engaged in a dialogue about hiring staff that reflect the diversity of the students who live in residence. When discussing this particular scenario, two perspectives emerged, best summarized by the following quotes:

- “It was so obvious why this was important once it was brought to my attention, I can’t believe I didn’t think of it on my own.” (Session 1)
- “I still struggle a bit with this idea actually, shouldn’t we be hiring based on how well people did in our process? It often feels a bit difficult for me to skip a higher scoring person in order to hire an international student.” (Session 1)

All participants identified these two competing perspectives as an opportunity for future conversation and further exploration in advance of their next hiring period. The story below summarizes the learning that many participants described during their first hiring cycle as part of the RLM team.
My first time hiring staff was really eye-opening. I had gone through the applicants and selected who I thought was my perfect team and then one of the Associate Directors pointed out that my international versus Canadian student ratio was terrible. This was definitely not something I had considered previously but I see now that a staff team that is similar to our student population is important (Session 1).

Facilitating equity and inclusion training in the annual staff orientation program.

Each fall, residence life managers implement a 10-day training and orientation program for the residence life student staff. Built into this 10-day training experience is a two-part equity, diversity and inclusion workshop series that was developed by colleagues in the Equity and Inclusion Office at UBC. These two workshops—Community Building Through Understanding and Community Building Through Action—are required training content for University-run student leadership programs across campus. Given the volume of student leadership groups on campus, a train-the-trainer model is used to deliver these workshops. In our context, RLMs receive training on this equity, diversity and inclusion curriculum and are then required to deliver the content to 250 residence advisors. Two out of ten participants shared stories about the experience of delivering these training workshops. Both described the difficulty in being seeing as the expert at the front of the classroom imparting knowledge about power, privilege, and social justice to others. In both cases participants indicated they felt unprepared to answer questions and engage staff in dialogue beyond the content of the session they were facilitating. While only two participants shared stories of this particular experience, all other participants through non-verbal cues like nodding and verbal affirmations like “so true” and “yup, suggested collective agreement to this scenario being a challenging one for RLMs. The short story below illustrates the difficulty RLMs experience answering questions that require knowledge beyond the content of the workshops.
During RA training in August, I was facilitating the Community Building through Understanding workshop with another colleague. One of the topics we cover in this training is the idea that with diversity comes multiple frames of reference. To demonstrate this concept, we usually show a picture and ask participants to describe it, first from their frame of reference and then to embody a different frame of reference and notice if something different stands out to them. For this particular session, the photo we were using for the exercise was a photo of a large group of people protesting something, and police officers with dogs creating a barrier to keep protestors from crossing a line. In the middle of this 40-person session, one staff member interrupted and said “given the current political climate and the black lives matters movement, it is wrong to put up a photo that could be seen as police brutality. Also, who cares about frame of reference when you really should be training us on anti-oppression.” As the RLMs at the front of the room, all eyes were on us to navigate that very difficult call-out. All I could do was say, thank you for your feedback, I’d be happy to chat about it some more at the end of the session (Session 1).

Exploring RLM comfort and discomfort in responding to issues of race and privilege.

In sharing stories about their most frequent engagement with race in the context of their work, the residence life managers who participated in the research expressed varying degrees of comfort and discomfort when responding to the scenarios they faced. In particular, participants distinguished between situations where they were engaging in one-on-one interactions and situations where there were engaging with groups. Participants articulated greater comfort in responding to one-on-one situations as compared to group discussions. In one-on-one settings, participants relied on their existing skillset as empathetic and non-judgmental listeners and did not feel specific knowledge or
experience around race or privilege was needed to be supportive to staff, students or colleagues in those scenarios. As one participant summarized:

*I am always prepared to listen to an individual’s stories or experiences even if those are not things I have experienced myself* (Session 1).

In contrast, scenarios that involved groups were described as more difficult to navigate and as a result are often evaded or avoided all together by RLMs. When distinguishing between individual and group interactions, participants also identified that while they may individually encounter and respond to racially-charged situations in their daily work, the collective residence life management team rarely engaged each other in the subject of race and privilege. On this topic, there was limited sharing and learning from one another’s experiences to enhance individual and collective capacity development:

- *We don’t really talk about race and privilege in the context of our work.* (Survey 1)
- *I’m uncomfortable talking about race and privilege with the RLM team because it’s just not something we do* (Survey 1).
- *We so rarely intentionally engage in such conversation that it leads to a feeling of a major gap in our professional awareness* (Survey 1).
- *We expect RLMs to intervene and support when difficult issues around race come-up, for example in a roommate conflict, but we don’t do anything to build knowledge or skill around it* (Session 1).
- *We seem to only talk about this topic as a team twice a year, once when we talk about hiring international students to increase diversity on our staff teams and once during staff training when we have to discuss UBC’s [indigenous] land acknowledgment* (Session 1).
Two survey participants attributed this to a limited sense of vulnerability in the workplace, particularly around topics that feel deeply personal:

- There is a general lack of vulnerability when it comes to this team and that trust is important when engaging with this topic (Survey 1).
- The dynamic of our current team does not foster vulnerability to be able to share with each other on this topic (Survey 1).

The theme of vulnerability emerged again as an enabling factor when participants were asked to reflect on conditions that facilitate learning and enhance engagement with the topic of race and privilege.

Three other survey participants noted a sense of being “inclusively-minded” that gives the team the illusion of engaging with issues of diversity:

- There is the blanket statement that our identities have an impact on our perspectives on things but the specifics I don’t hear from folks (Survey 1)
- I think there’s an assumption that because we are "inclusively"-ly minded we are well-versed on issues relating to race and privilege but I don’t think that’s actually true (Survey 1)
- We often acknowledge that our job is to create an “inclusive living environment” but there’s no explicit expectation to meaningfully engage with what that requires (Session 1).

In summary, although residence life managers may encounter situations where they need to engage with race and privilege in their work, they rely only on their existing skills and lived experiences to respond. There is no mechanism in place to evaluate the effectiveness of their efforts and support further learning as needed. Additionally, there is limited engagement with the
collective team on the subject of race and privilege; consequently, there is currently little to no opportunity for team learning and collective capacity building on the topics of race and privilege.

Barriers to collective engagement. Recognizing the potential advantages of collective engagement around topics of race and privilege, we explored key factors that residence life managers believed either enhanced or hindered their engagement. Participants indicated that social position, race and cultural identity have significant implications on their willingness and ability to engage with race and privilege. In group settings, particularly groups where multiple racial and cultural identities are present, individuals experience a heightened awareness of their social position and this impacts their thoughts on what role they ought to play in the conversation. The insights that emerged on this particular topic came from the unresolved tensions in the ideas and thoughts shared by participants. To honour the unique perspective of all participants and give the reader a sense of the dynamic and emergent nature of this conversation, I have chosen to present this data in the format of a scripted dialogue.

Non POCs, Session 2

A: I feel that for issues of race, as a white person, I don’t deserve the platform to step in because of the privilege I hold.

B: But racism is a white person problem and white people have to get comfortable thinking that they do have a place to talk about this especially to other white people.

Facilitator: So, would this conversation be easier if it was just white people in the room?

B: It wouldn’t be a full conversation, so not really… it would lose a ton. When I’m in a mixed-race conversation, there is richness. I do think my role is different if I’m in a mixed-race conversation versus if it’s just other white people. In a mixed-race conversation, I feel like my role is mostly to listen. It’s different with other white folks where I feel like I have more of a voice.
C: hmm, interestingly for me it’s not so much about voice, it’s more about how much space am I willing to take up? If I’m with other white folks, I am willing to take up as much space as needed. However, if we are talking about race and I am the loudest person in the room then that is not a good thing. Because I need to be learning and I need to make sure I am not making it all about me.

A: I’ve also been reflecting on a recent statement I heard from an indigenous artist. She said indigenous literature was historically written by non-indigenous people and in order to change that moving forward, we need to create space for indigenous voices. So, I guess for me it doesn’t feel quite right that I as a white person should be starting a conversation on race, I don’t deserve that platform. I think that platform should be given to the person with the identity and experience.

C: I hear what you are seeing A, but I feel a bit conflicted because on one hand, I think the individuals with the identity and experience should be leading these conversations but on the other hand, I don’t want to over burden them and I don’t want to put all that responsibility on them. I feel like why is it the marginalized person’s responsibility to educate us all? So I don’t know how to negotiate that conflict.

A: maybe it’s less that POCs need to be the only ones to start and lead conversations but at the same time, it would not be right for a group of white people to be gathering around talking about and making decisions about POCs or identities they don’t hold.

B: Maybe in summary it’s that there needs to be all voices at the table contributing to these conversations to decide together how to move forward.

POC’s Session 2

D: I feel like I need contribute to these conversations because it is important for people of colour to be represented in those conversations.
E: I agree, I find especially in moments of conflict that my voice as a person of colour typically diffuses the situation.

F: There’s also been this push to have more people of colour in positions of power to equalize things so if I’ve been put in this leadership position, then I have a responsibility to respond and contribute to the conversation. If we are going to criticize things for being “so white” then we have to step up so that the conversations are not “so white”

D: you mean, like “be the change we want to see…”

All: exactly!

F: But also, it’s a huge responsibility. I need to be seen as doing well by my people so if they don’t like the outcome of a conversation that I was representing on, then I might lose relationships.

D: There’s also this feeling that I am complicit in homogenizing the “people of colour” voice. Somehow, I have to be able to relate to any person of colour from anywhere in the world when that’s not necessarily the case.

E: I know, I also feel conflicted about how my other privileges come into play when I’m stepping into these conversations. For example, I am a man in addition to being a POC so how does that intersectionality come into play?

D: As a staff person, you are representing that minority voice but you are also part of an institution with flaws. It’s hard to defend and empathize and keep your own views separate.

F: But until there’s more representation, it really is up to me/us to step in.

As illustrated in these dialogue sessions, all participants, both POCs and WPs expressed an experience of internal conflict that impacts their confidence and agency to engage in conversations and/or take action around the subject of race and privilege. WPs expressed two main sources of conflict. First, engagement with the subjects of race and privilege is hindered by a lack of clarity
and assuredness about their role and ability to participate in conversations about race and privilege. This personal conflict is best articulated by once participant as follows: “I feel that for issues of race, as a white person, I don’t deserve the platform to step in because of the privilege I hold” (session 2, WP). Secondly, WPs indicated that there is conflict that arises from their desire to ensure the voices of people of colour are amplified and centralized in conversations about race and privilege without burdening POCs with the responsibility: “I feel a bit conflicted because on one hand, I think the individuals with the identity and experience should be leading these conversations but on the other hand, I don’t want to over burden them and I don’t want to put all that responsibility on them. I feel like why is it the marginalized person’s responsibility to educate us all? So I don’t know how to negotiate that conflict” (Session 2, WP). Participants who identified as POCs voiced one primary source of conflict in their engagement with race and privilege: although they often choose to engage in these conversations, they wrestle with the responsibility of being seen as a representative or spokesperson. This conflict is best described with the following: “I feel like I need contribute to these conversations because it is important for people of colour to be represented in those conversations... But also, it’s a huge responsibility... There’s also this feeling that I am complicit in homogenizing the “people of colour” voice. Somehow I have to be able to relate to any person of colour from anywhere in the world when that’s not necessarily the case” (Session 2, POCs). In sum, racial identity appears to have distinct implications for how participants step into conversations about race and privilege.

Part Two: Beyond Now

Following the dialogue exploring factors that hinder engagement with the topics of race and privilege, we discussed factors that could enable engagement. This section explores what residence life managers need to learn and what supports are needed to enhance their engagement
with race and privilege. Participants began with a focus on increasing their theoretical knowledge, access to academic literature and understanding of critical frameworks on the subject. This was indicated through questions like: “What is the current discourse on race and privilege?” (Session 1); “How does the literature currently describe race and privilege issues?” (Session 1) and “Is language use shifting in conversations about race and privilege?” (Session 1). Participants then indicated the importance of skill building as an important component of their learning process. The emphasis on the skill building is best summarized in these three questions from participants: “What tools exist to effectively facilitate dialogue about race and privilege?” (Session 1); “Are there different approaches to conflict engagement when race and privilege is a catalyst for the conflict?” (Session 1) and “Might there be more effective 1-on-1 coaching techniques that recognizes and centres the impact of race and privilege on an individual’s experiences?” (Session 1)

In the member checking that occurred during the session two closing and post-session evaluative survey, all participants affirmed that opportunities to further their knowledge and skills would enhance their capacity to engage with race and privilege as part of their professional practice.

**What supports are needed for learning?** To facilitate learning amongst the RLM team, participants expressed a need for a team culture where engaging with the subject of race and privilege is considered the norm. In particular, participants sought a commitment and intention to frequently engage in team conversations about race and privilege and learn from one another’s experiences in order to build collective team capacity through reflection, increased self-awareness, and a willingness to be vulnerable and confront challenging and/or uncomfortable scenarios and topics. As summarized by one participant, “I want to be able to bring up a situation I’m dealing
with and ask the question ‘Is it me? Could I have done something different? Is it the community we’ve created? Or is it the institutional system that’s leading to this outcome?’” Another participant furthered this sentiment by saying, “The more we engage, it will slowly become a thing we do and we will feel more comfortable about talking about and bringing it up.” In effect, all participants indicated that belonging to a network of professionals with a shared commitment to self and mutual inquiry around race and privilege would motivate and empower individual action. Additionally, participants indicated vulnerability and trust as necessary conditions for engagement and learning when it comes to the subject of race and privilege. Participants suggested that in order to step into the discomfort that often accompanies discussions around race and privilege, it is important for the environment to be one that builds trust and encourages vulnerability.

In summary, to enhance the RLM Team’s engagement with the subject of race and privilege, participants indicated a need for additional theoretical knowledge, the opportunity to cultivate tangible skills and a team culture that supports engagement through critical reflection and increased self-awareness for individuals and the team as a whole.

**Part 3: Living into our future now**

The principles of CDAI and PAR provided an opportunity to implement and evaluate change actions as part of our research design. As such, phase two of our study consisted of a second group session and an evaluative survey. Phase two served as a reinforcing function and allowed us to further validate the findings in phase one. Further, phase two gave participants and the inquiry team a chance to embody the learning that emerged from the research in phase one.

As outlined in the methodology chapter, we used Deep Democracy (DD) as a facilitation tool in the second group session. In this context, DD allowed us to dialogue about race and privilege while respecting the conditions that were identified as enabling factors in phase one.
Specifically, in teaching participants about DD, the session facilitators were able to both offer new knowledge about the impact of race on conflict engagement, and provide participants a chance to learn and practice a tangible skill that they could employ when responding to future race-centred conflict. As noted previously, knowledge and skills were among the key factors participants identified could contribute to capacity building for enhanced engagement with the topic of race and privilege. The responses participants shared in our evaluation survey and the closing activity of the second group engagement method shed light on the specific ways that new knowledge and tangible skills enhanced engagement for the residence life managers who participated in this research. Below, I highlight three main themes from phase two of our study and highlight these with quotes from participants. I conclude this section with a summary of findings from both phases of our research.

**Increased comfort with discomfort.** Reflecting on the DD process in phase two of our study, participants expressed an increase sense of comfort navigating challenging situations of race and privilege as illustrated by these two quotes from participants:

- *I felt more vulnerable (in a positive way) this session, and being more willing to really speak from my feelings even if I'm still in the middle of a thought. I also felt there's more "shared" vulnerability in the room, which made the conversations both more challenging but rewarding to have, which I appreciated (survey 2).*

- *It was uncomfortable, but not in a bad way. It was both challenging and enlightening to see the emotional impact it had on my colleagues (survey 2).*

**Recognize the importance of engaging with conflicting/polarizing perspectives.**

Participants also expressed benefit from the opportunity to engage in dialogue where conflicting perspectives were offered. For example:
• To actually have a topic of possible contention being brought up was good - I don’t think we would learn anything if we only keep on building off and agreeing with each other’s points (session 2).

• I think it made me more aware of how different my perspectives are compared to many around the RLMT table when it comes to such topics, which is great (survey 2).

Practical knowledge and skills. Finally, participants indicated value in learning about Deep Democracy and expressed a desire to apply the new knowledge and skills to their professional practice moving forward. This idea is captured in the following quotes from participants:

I really appreciated the Deep Democracy theory we talked about and have been keeping that at the back of my mind as I manage interpersonal relationships (survey 2).

I learned some tools to use in any sort of mediation from Deep Democracy. One that I think we try to use in roommate conflicts but could better utilize within the RLMT (Residence Life Management Team) is the idea of giving people a space to say everything they want to say before others can react (survey 2).

A summary of findings. The precipice for this research was the current lack of capacity for meaningful engagement with race and privilege on the Residence Life Management team. Through this research, we identified four scenarios that best illustrate the opportunities RLMs have in their current work to dialogue and take action around issues of race and privilege. We noted that RLMs felt more comfortable engaging with race and privilege in one-on-one interaction compared to mixed-race group interactions. We also surfaced that racial identity poses internal conflicts that have a distinct impact on how individuals choose to engage with race and privilege in group contexts. Finally, participants indicated that the teaching tools and learning conditions trialled in
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this research offered an effective approach to capacity building for enhanced engagement with race and privilege. The RL&A department at UBC now has the chance to amplify the work that began with this research using the insights surfaced by the RLM team.

Study Conclusions

Higher education institutions are becoming increasingly diverse, and conversations around race and privilege are integral to strengthen and enhance the learning community, yet such conversation are often lacking and even excluded from day-to-day-interactions. Our participatory action research aimed to understand factors that hinder and enable meaningful engagement with the subject of race and privilege with Residence Life Managers at the University of British Columbia. The research also sought to inform how RLMs could be better equipped to meaningfully engage around race and privilege in their work.

The primary question guiding this study was: “How can the Residence Life Management team build capacity to meaningfully engage with the subject of race and privilege in an effort to contribute to the university’s purpose of advancing a just society?”

This question was supported by five interrelated sub-questions:

2. How does one’s social location influence confidence and agency to engage in conversations and/or take action around race and privilege?
3. How would Residence Life Managers ideally engage with the subject of race and privilege?
4. What does the Residence Life Management team need to learn in order to better engage with the subject of race and privilege?
5. What supports are needed to facilitate learning on the subject of race and privilege?
To situate our inquiry in the context of relevant academic literature, we conducted a literature review exploring how race and privilege currently manifest on university campuses. The literature review highlighted three key ideas:

- Increasing the compositional diversity of a campus without attention to cross-racial interactions can lead to conflict and discrimination on campuses.
- The learning and social benefits of a racially diverse campus requires intentional high quality cross-racial interactions.
- There is a current gap and therefore opportunity to increase the capacity of campus leaders to engage with and take action around issues of race and privilege on campuses.

Reflecting on the key themes that emerged from the literature review and investigating our sub-questions through our inquiry design led to five research conclusions:

1. Race based conflict exist on Canadian University campuses; however staff have few structures and processes in place to discuss and take action in response to these incidents.
2. People of colour often feel burdened with the responsibility of speaking on behalf of their communities.
3. White people often feel limited by a lack of understanding that they have a role and responsibility to actively participate in dialogue about race and privilege.
4. Ideally, staff on university campuses would have the skills, capacities and mindsets to engage in critical racial dialogue regardless of their race and privilege.
5. For transformational change to occur around issues of race on university campuses, individuals need to transform self through transformative learning practices.

Below I discuss these conclusions in more detail, drawing on literature from the literature review and other scholarship on race, and approaches to teaching and learning. Recognizing the
interconnection between our sub-questions, I have opted present these as overarching research conclusions rather than discussing them in response to particular sub-questions.

1. Race-based conflicts exist on Canadian University campuses; however, staff have few structures and processes in place to discuss and take action in response to these incidents.

Race-based conflicts exist on Canadian university campuses; however, staff have few structures and processes to discuss and take effective action in response to these incidents. As noted in chapter two, increasing compositional diversity on campuses without attention to existing perceptions and attitudes towards people of colour can lead to conflict and discrimination on campuses (Rankin and Reason, 2005). In recent years, Canadian campuses seem to be experiencing instances of such conflict and discrimination. Several reputable Canadian media outlets report instances of racially discriminatory graffiti (Bueckert, 2016); racist posters (Mertz, 2016; CBC 2014) and prejudicial interactions with faculty and peers (CFS as cited by McIntyre & Hamilton-Finch, 2016) on Canadian campuses. The types of race-based conflicts described in these reports mirror many of the stories that residence life managers shared when discussing their current engagement with race and privilege. When students report or disclose these difficult race-related experiences, individuals in administrative roles (e.g. residence life managers) are in a position to respond by providing support to the impacted student(s) or negotiating conflict between people or groups. However, as described in the literature review, these incidents and corresponding responses are treated and recorded as isolated anecdotes. There are limited structures and processes in place to investigate whether those experiences permeate the broader culture of the institution (McDonald & Ward, 2017); or whether the actions taken in response to these instances are effectively addressing the issue. Our study surfaced a similar trend in the context of the Residence
life managers at UBC: difficult race issues emerge in their community and require them to take action; however, each incident is treated in isolation with no structures in place for assessing trends or evaluating individual and collective response.

Contributing to this challenge is the culture of hesitation and avoidance when it comes to conversations about race and privilege on Canadian campuses. Most of the largest institutions in Canada do not collect data on the racial or ethno-cultural identity of their students (McDonald & Ward, 2017) and very few Canadian institutions formally investigate how students are experiencing race on campus. The choice to not include race as a variable in institutional assessment fosters a system that limits opportunity for dialogue and engagement about the impact of race on the experiences of students, staff and faculty on campus. This observation was affirmed by our research as residence life managers consistently expressed a lack of intentional opportunity for team and institutional reflection and dialogue about the impacts of race and privilege on their work and community. Most aptly summarized by a participant “[race] is just not something we talk about”. To privilege conversations around race we need to intentionally design opportunities for cross racial engagement and ongoing dialogue on Canadian campuses. This will in turn catalyze development of the structures and processes administrative staff need to build capacity for responding to the complex race-related conflict they experience in their work.

2. **People of colour are burdened with the responsibility of speaking on behalf of their communities.**

   Our study surfaced that people of colour feel a sense of responsibility to step into conversations around race and privilege. In particular, people of colour, who are seeking equity at the university, feel an obligation to work for it; however, this sense of responsibility and obligation can feel burdensome. Additionally, tokenization in predominantly white spaces is one of the ways
that the prejudice experienced by people of colour manifests (Henry, Dua, James, Kobayashi, Li, Ramos & Smith, 2017). The challenge with being the only, or one of very few people of a colour in a particular context means those few individuals are often relied on to provide the “diversity” perspective (Henry et al., 2017). People of colour describe this experience as troubling because it ignores the diversity of experiences and perspectives that exists within their communities. While people of colour generally describe facing some kind of oppression due to the colour of their skin; other aspects of identity means there are also unique sets of privileges and opportunities that don’t apply broadly across all members of their community (Oluo, 2018). As one POC participant in our study articulated, “I feel conflicted about how my other privileges come into play when I’m stepping into these conversations. For example, I am a man in addition to being a POC so how does that intersectionality come into play?” (Session 2, POC). The tension of being seen as the representative voice of POCs and the awareness that perspectives are limited by individual experiences makes this responsibility burdensome for people of colour. Additionally, it is important to clarify that while people of colour may choose to step into conversations about race, it does not necessarily mean people of colour find it easier than white people to talk about race. As discussed in Oluo (2018) and Eddo-Lodge (2017), conversations about race and racism can be difficult and emotionally costly to people of colour. This is particularly true when people with privilege respond defensively or attempt to minimize or trivialize stories of structural racism experienced by people of colour. In an effort to get a difficult message across without appearing to implicate any individual white person in the role they play upholding systems of racial oppression, people of colour are often required to step into conversations about race with a great deal of “self-censorship” (Eddo-Lodge, 2017). Talking about race and privilege can therefore be difficult and often exhausting work for people of colour and
yet, as expressed by participants in this study, they do this work because they feel an obligation and responsibility to do so. As stated by one participant, “until there’s more representation, it really is up to me/us to step in” (Session 2, POC). Recognizing this, it is important for white people to share the responsibility of addressing issues of race and privilege so that the burden does not fall solely to people of colour. I discuss below the factors that are seem to limit how white people currently engage with race and privilege.

3. White people are limited by a lack of confidence in the role and responsibility they have to actively participate in dialogue about race and privilege.

Literature that attempts to answer the question of why white people have difficulty talking about race often cite two common reasons: one is the concern or worry that they might say something wrong and offend someone, the other is the desire to focus on sameness and equality that results in the problematic notion of “colour blindness” (Henry et al., 2017). However, in the context of our study, the more prevailing rationale for difficulties around talking about race and privilege related to the question of whether or not white people have a role to play in stepping into or leading conversations about race. As described by one participant: “I feel that for issues of race, as a white person, I don’t deserve the platform to step in because of the privilege I hold”. Oluo (2018) expressed a similar notion in her recent book examining her first-person experience attempting to engage white people on the topic of race: “My white friends… would not say a word about the racial oppression facing people of colour… ‘It’s not really my place’, they’d explain…” (p. 4). As noted in chapter two, DiAngelo’s (2018) work offers the most thorough analysis of the white experience engaging with race. She articulates three consistent patterns that emerge for white people when talking about race reinforces the lack of confidence in role and responsibility that surfaced in our study. First, there is a feeling of discomfort around the subject and often in
mixed-race groups; white people wait for the person of colour to model the way. Second, is that white people often have difficulty speaking about race with depth and nuance. Finally, that the response tends to be focused on experiences with or about people of colour. We saw similar patterns emerge in our study. Participants expressed feelings of discomfort with the topic, and white participants tended to organize their responses around their understanding of the experiences of people of colour. In DiAngelo’s analysis, she highlighted the problematic tendency to associate race only with people of colour and the limiting view that there isn’t a racial paradigm and perspective associated with whiteness. In effect, she argued situating people of colour as the guardians/experts of race knowledge creates a barrier to meaningful discourse/action around race because it puts white people in a passive role instead of challenging them to consider how they actively contribute to systems of oppression and how they can actively work to change those systems. DiAngelo’s arguments are reflected in the statement offered by one participant in our study: “racism is a white person problem. White people have to get comfortable with the idea that we have a place in the conversation [about race]”(Session 2, WP). In a recent interview, DiAngelo indicated that she “wants to build the stamina to handle the discomfort [of engaging with race] so we don’t retreat in the face of it, because retreating holds the status quo in place and the status quo is the reproduction of racial inequality”. In this way, DiAngelo’s work places value on building capacity for dialogue about race; which strongly affirms the focus of our study. The ideal future state for RLMs at UBC is the capacity and skill to dialogue about race regardless of their social location. I discuss the implications of this ideal future below.

4. Ideally, staff on university campuses would have the skills, capacities and mindsets to engage in critical racial dialogue regardless of their race and privilege.
A recent nation-wide study of race, and equity on Canadian universities argued that equity policies on university campuses are largely non-performative because the individuals tasked with making change have not experienced the learning and mindset shift that enables transformative change on the ground (Henry et al., 2017). The literature however does not speak to the conditions needed to build individual capacity, develop skills, and orient mindsets towards enhanced engagement and action around race. The findings in our study begin to address this gap in the literature by demonstrating that it is possible to create the conditions required for learning by offering new knowledge and providing opportunity to practice relevant skills using the principles of transformative learning described in section six below. This has significant implications as increasing capacity for dialogue about race makes it possible to surface the existence of systemic racial inequities which in turn can disrupt the problematic status quo. I, however recognize that more research is required to further validate the outcomes we observed in our study.

5. For transformational change to occur around issues of race on university campuses, individuals need to transform self through transformational learning practices.

As noted in the conclusion above, for transformational change to occur, individuals facilitating change need to experience the learning and mindset shift that will orient them differently to issues of race and privilege and enhance their capacity to engage. Drawing on the literature review in chapter two, transformational learning theory offers an opportunity to explore the conditions required to facilitate such change because it results in a shift in mindset, attitudes and beliefs. Cranton (2002) identified that an environment of challenge coupled with safety and support is needed for transformative learning. In the context of our study, when asked to reflect on, and evaluate the learning experience, participants were able to articulate the positive impact that a challenging environment had on their learning:
It was uncomfortable, but not in a bad way. It was both challenging and enlightening to see the emotional impact it had on my colleagues (survey 2).

As noted in chapter two, Taylor (2008) identified three additional factors that contribute significantly to the transformative learning process: first is the new experience, second is a critical reflection on their experience, and finally the opportunity to dialogue with others. Of these three factors, Taylor further emphasizes dialogue with individuals who present diverse perspectives as a key to transformation in the learning process. Participants in our study identified the value of this in action; specifically, diverse perspectives surfaced in dialogue as an important contributor to the learning that they experienced:

To actually have a topic of possible contention being brought up was good - I don't think we would learn anything if we only keep on building off and agreeing with each other's points (session 2).

I think it made me more aware of how different my perspectives are compared to many around the RLMT table when it comes to such topics, which is great (survey 2).

**Summary.** As illustrated by participant reflections and the literature cited, challenging experiences, critical reflection and an opportunity to dialogue with individuals with diverse perspectives are the conditions required for transformational learning. When it comes to race and privilege, the shift in beliefs, attitudes, and meaning making structures inherent in transformational will enable individuals to facilitate change in their unique contexts. In the context of UBC and the RLM team, this means using the principles of transformational learning as a framework for designing intentional learning and skill building opportunities to enhance their engagement with race and privilege in the context of their work.

In the next chapter, I discuss recommendations based on the findings and conclusions outlined above.
RESIDENCE LIFE MANAGERS’ ENGAGEMENT WITH RACE AND PRIVILEGE

Chapter Five: Inquiry Implications

Our research questions and methodology were aimed at revealing a better understanding of the conditions required for difficult yet necessary dialogues around race and privilege. This chapter begins with a summary of the study findings and conclusions, followed by three recommendations which are grounded in participant feedback and ongoing dialogue with my inquiry partner. These recommendations represent change actions that can help attain the ideal future state described by participants in this study; specifically, a future where all residence life managers have the skills and capacity to engage in critical dialogue about race and privilege regardless of their race and social location. In this chapter, I then discuss the implications of these recommendations for the RL&A team and UBC at large. Finally, I conclude this chapter with a discussion of the study implications within the academic community and identify opportunities for future research.

Study Recommendations

The research question explored in this study was, “How can the Residence Life Management team build capacity to meaningfully engage with the subject of race and privilege in an effort to contribute to the university’s purpose of advancing a just society?”

Key Findings:

1. Residence Life Managers indicated their role as administrators and educators requires them to respond and take action when race-based conflicts arise.

2. Participants described being more comfortable engaging with race and privilege in one-on-one interactions compared to mixed-race group interactions.

3. Participants expressed that their own racial identity has an impact on their confidence and ability to engage with race and privilege in group contexts.
4. Finally, participants noted that enhanced theoretical knowledge, practical skills, and a team culture that fosters trust and vulnerability are critical to build capacity to support RLMs to engagement more effectively and confidently with race and privilege. These four key findings are supported the following study conclusions:

1. Race-based conflict exists on Canadian University campuses; however staff have few structures and processes in place to discuss and take action in response to these incidents.

2. People of colour often feel burdened with the responsibility of speaking on behalf of their communities.

3. White people often feel limited by a lack of understanding that they have a role and responsibility to actively participate in dialogue about race and privilege.

4. Ideally, staff on university campuses would have the skills, capacities and mindsets to engage in critical racial dialogue regardless of their race and privilege.

5. For transformational change to occur around issues of race on university campuses, individuals need to transform self through transformative learning practices.

The aforementioned study findings and conclusions serve as the foundation for our three study recommendations. These action-oriented recommendations stem from participant feedback and suggestions and ongoing conversations with my inquiry partner.

**Recommendations**

**Recommendation one: explicitly commit to acknowledging and engaging in ongoing dialogue about race and privilege and the associated impacts within the work the RL&A team.** Silence around race and privilege has been documented as a factor that maintains the status quo of inequity experienced by people of colour (Henry et al., 2017; Oluo, 2018; DiAngelo, 2018).
As such, a significant first step for the RL&A team is an explicit departmental commitment to acknowledge and frequently engage with the impacts of race and privilege on the work and community. Specific recommendations include the development of hiring and performance metrics and incorporating race-related cases into the monthly case review system.

**Hiring and performance metrics.** In discussing this recommendation with the RL&A senior leadership team, an Associate Director suggested that one way to be explicit about the department’s priorities and commitments to race and privilege would be to consider the competencies we look for when hiring new staff and what we measure during performance evaluations: “It is a really clear way to communicate what is important to us; and the values, skills and competencies we want to nurture in our staff” (S. Ryan, June 5, 2019). Specifically, one change action would be to develop explicit equity, diversity and inclusivity competencies that are assessed in hiring and performance evaluations of professional staff within RL&A. Explicitly creating competencies and job expectations related to engagement with difficult race and privilege issues will bring a different level of attention to it. Further, as with other job expectations within RL&A, individuals will work with their managers to identify learning opportunities related to race and privilege and managers will provide opportunities to their teams to further knowledge and skill development to meet the job expectations. In essence, integrating equity, diversity, and inclusion competencies into the hiring and performance management practices provides an opportunity for RL&A to make a concrete commitment to the importance of developing and honing individual and collective capacities to engage with race and privilege.

**Learning from experience: Monthly case reviews.** An existing practice on the residence life management team is to review difficult student cases on a monthly basis. The goals of these monthly case reviews are to learn from difficult experiences and identify and address gaps in
processes/capacity that will enhance responses to similar situations in the future. Currently, the monthly care reviews focus on challenging conduct issues and crises/emergency issues. However, moving forward it will be beneficial to include difficult race-centred issues arising for the RL&A team in these monthly case reviews. This type of intentional reflection and evaluative practice around race and privilege is best captured by the following participant quote “I want to be able to bring up a situation and ask the question ‘is it me? Could I have done something different? Is it the community we’ve created? Or is it the institutional system that’s leading to this outcome. Educator David Kolb’s experiential learning cycle (1984) affirms the value of reflecting on experience noting that through reflection learners are able to form abstract conceptualizations that inform future actions and experiences. Building reflection into the RL&A monthly case reviews will support the team to develop skills and capacities to engage with the subject of race and privilege and continue to inform their future actions. Furthermore, a built-in structure such as monthly case reviews will support frequent and ongoing engagement with the subject of race and privilege. As one participant described, “The more we engage, it will slowly become a think we do and we will feel more comfortable talking about and bringing it up”. In effect, integrating race-related situations into monthly team case studies can support the RL&A department to build individual and collective capacity for enhanced engagement with race and privilege.

**Recommendation two: Provide intentional learning opportunities to share relevant theoretical knowledge and practice skills.** Recommendation two is a direct request from the residence life managers who participated in this study. Specifically, RLMs expressed a desire for more intentional opportunities to gain theoretical knowledge and practice relevant skills to enhance engagement with race and privilege. Below, I explore two ways this could be implemented within
the RL&A team. Further opportunities could be identified through additional conversations with the RLMs.

**Annual speaker series with a faculty member from the Race and Social Justice Institute at UBC.** As an academic institution, UBC has a network of faculty members whose academic background and research is dedicated to the study of race and social justice. Specifically, the Race and Social Justice Institute presents a unique and beneficial partnership opportunity to provide intentionally learning opportunities for the RL&A team. Through an annual speaker series Race and Social Justice Institute faculty could highlight emerging literature, academic discourse, and scholarly practices that are informing knowledge construction on the topic of race and privilege. As participants pointed out in our study, engaging with scholarship around race and privilege is an important step to enhancing their theoretical understandings and practice.

**Build on successes: Deep Democracy training.** The residence life managers who participated in this study indicated that a tangible action to enhance their engagement with race and privilege would be the opportunity to learn and practice skills relevant to addressing the tension, conflict, and discomfort that often accompanies discussions about race and privilege. Specifically, following phase two of our research, participants expressed a desire for further engagement with Deep Democracy – a method used in our research. Deep Democracy is a facilitation tool that was specifically developed to address race-based conflict. The unique element of Deep Democracy is its orientation towards tension and conflict – Deep Democracy invites participants to mine difficult situations for insight and to create knowledge by exploring points of divergence within a group. Participants indicated that having the opportunity to engage in a difficult and contentious conversation using Deep Democracy was a valuable aspect of the research design and learning experience. As described by one participant, “*to actually have a topic of possible contention being*
brought up was good - I don't think we would learn anything if we only keep on building off and agreeing with each other's points (session 2)”. Others expressed a desire to embed Deep Democracy into their interpersonal and professional practice. Providing the RL&A team with additional training in Deep Democracy (as well as other skill-based trainings) offers RLMs to enhance their skills and awareness to help navigate the variety of race-based conflicts that arise in their daily work.

Recommendation three: Establish a UBC-wide community of practice that will provide both support and accountability to individuals and the team on their learning journey. UBC’s mandate to foster global citizenship and advance a just society requires collective action from all members of the UBC community. With this in mind, we saw an opportunity to expand the learning from this study to a broader network of UBC administrators by establishing a community of practice. A community of practice (CoP) is a group of people who share a common concern, a set of problems, or interest in a topic and who come together to fulfil both individual and group goals (McDermott, Snyder & Wenger, 2002). CoPs focus on sharing best evidence-based practices and co-creating new knowledge to advance a domain of professional practice (Cambridge, Kaplan & Suter, 2005). In the findings of this inquiry, participants suggested that it would be helpful to bring race-based issues they encounter to a team of colleagues for discussion and learning. For participants the idea of a CoP was connected to having non-judgemental, dialogue-based, and practice-oriented opportunities to learn from the experiences of their colleagues in a safe and supportive manner. A CoP at UBC also provides an opportunity for RL&A to expand this growth opportunity beyond the residence life management team to student services colleagues across the campus. A university-wide CoP with student affairs professionals will allow RLMs and other student services colleagues to capture and share existing knowledge,
and generate new knowledge to help members transform their practice and accommodate changing community needs on the subject of race and privilege. As community building experts on campus, RL&A can lead the way by designing the CoP and facilitating members joining; however, as noted by Cambridge and colleagues (2005), it will be up to members to sustain the CoP over time. This would entail sustaining the means to cultivate the knowledge co-created by the community to inform new goals, structures and strategies to further capacity building and enhance engage with race and privilege for the future. Successfully facilitating a CoP will require conscious and intentional planning, communication and collaborative action on the part of the RL&A team and UBC more broadly.

**Organization Implications**

This section describes the implications that this study, our findings, conclusions and recommendation have on the RL&A team at UBC and the scholarship and literature.

**RL&A team at UBC**

*Impact of Engagement.* Our inquiry process included emergent actions that resulted in changes that have implications for the RL&A team moving forward. Our inquiry design allowed us to successfully engage RLMs in a meaningful conversation about race and privilege. As noted in chapter four, when asked to reflect on their experience participating in the study, the RLMs highlighted some of the learning that had already occurred for them as a result of their engagement in the research. Specifically, the RLMs who participated in the study indicated increased comfort with discomfort, an appreciation for the value of engaging with conflicting/polarizing perspectives, and new knowledge and skills that they plan to implement in their professional practice. It is encouraging to note that the changes described by participants were largely positive and the RL&A team has the opportunity to build on this progress with future actions.
Future Actions. As this was an applied inquiry project, there is an expectation that the study outcomes will inform future actions that may lead to a desired change within the organization. Consequently, the findings, conclusions, and recommendations that emerged from this study can yield the desired capacity for engagement with race and privilege that will support the effort to contribute to the university’s purpose of advancing a just society. As described in chapter one, the intentional effort to increase the population of international students on the UBC campus has resulted in a corresponding increase in the racial diversity of students on campus. However, like many other Canadian post-secondary institutions, UBC needs to ensure that its administrative staff are sufficiently equipped to foster respectful communities and meet the educational goals of teaching and learning in a diverse community. As illustrated by the findings in this study, and other literature that document the experiences of racialized students, (McIntyre & Hamilton-Hinch, 2016; Rankin & Reason, 2005; Bueckert, 2016; Mertz, 2016; CBC, 2014) a racially diverse community presents challenges that necessitates frequent and thoughtful engagement with the subjects of race and privilege. Unfortunately, our study highlights a current culture of hesitation and avoidance when it comes to race and this hesitation and avoidance is described in the literature as a key contributor to the patterns of racial inequity experienced on university campuses. If we want our campus to be an inclusive place for all community members, then it is imperative that we take steps to build capacity for our administrators to dialogue about the impact of race and privilege on their work and take effective, evidence-based action to address difficult issues when they arise. Implementing the recommendations of this study provides the RL&A team the opportunity support and sustain the capacity building required to dialogue about and take action around race and privilege.
My inquiry partner, Director Residence Life and Administration was engaged and provided support throughout the project. Preliminary findings were shared with the RL&A leadership team in February 2019, and follow-up conversations continued throughout spring of 2019. Additionally, the Director Student Development and Services was invited into conversations about preliminary findings as we anticipated recommendations might include the broader community of student affairs professionals on campus. The RL&A leadership team has also reviewed and discussed the study recommendations. The recommendations in this inquiry require the RL&A team and the Student Development and Services department within the broader university community to be champions to bring an intentional focus to race and privilege at UBC.

**Contribution to Literature**

Literature on race and university campuses highlights many benefits of campus structures that facilitate intentional and on-going cross-racial engagement (Gurin, 1999; Milem, 2003). Despite the evidence that supports intentionally designed opportunities for cross-racial engagement, race is still an avoided topic on many Canadian campuses. The literature however does not speak to the conditions needed to build capacity, develop skills, and orient mindsets towards enhanced engagement and action around race. Recognizing this gap, our study offers two major contributions to the current scholarship and literature.

1. We explore and identify barriers to cross-racial engagement. Through direct engagement with RLMs we learned that barriers to engagement were impacted by the individual’s racial identity. White people are limited by an uncertainty about the role and responsibility they have in conversations about race and people of colour feel burdened by the responsibility to be the sole representative of their community in conversations about race.
2. We identify conditions that support effective engagement with race and privilege.

Engaging RLMs in a meaningful conversation helped us identify that providing timely theoretical knowledge and skills using the principles of transformative learning offers a beneficial advantage to capacity building for meaningful and effective engagement with race and literature.

In many ways, the existing literature outlines the current reality of inequity and avoidance of race in Canadian higher education and describes an ideal future where equity, diversity and inclusion are embodied. By seeking to identify and document barriers and enabling factors for engagement, our study offers an important bridge to move the current reality of inequity and culture of avoidance to a the desired future state of robust engagement that informs thoughtful policy and practice around race and privilege in the context of Canadian Higher Education.

**Scope and Limitations of Study**

This research project was a participatory action research study with the aim of engaging with, and learning from, dialogue about race and privilege with residence life managers at the University of British Columbia. It was not designed as a longitudinal study to assess how perceptions and practice may have transformed over time. The study also does not offer a comprehensive comparative analysis of how engagement with race and privilege manifests in higher education institutions within or outside of Canada.

Participants were selected based on the inclusion criteria of being a current residence life manager with UBC and with access to email. The inclusion criteria were race neutral; however, reflective of the total population, there were more white participants in the study that people of colour (WP = 6; POC = 4). Acknowledging that racial-ethnic identity impacts how individuals engage with the subject of race and privilege it is possible that the disproportionate representation
of white participants in this study may have affected the focus and study findings. Further, reflecting on the push from critical race scholars to disaggregate data on “visible minorities” (Henry, F. et al, 2017), it is also prudent to acknowledge that three out of four POC participants in this research identified as East Asian/Chinese and as such we have to be careful not to homogenous the experiences of all people of colour based on the findings of our study.

Additionally, as an insider, senior manager in the organization and a woman of colour, my frame of reference and point of view may have been a limitation of this study. The literature on conducting research in one’s own organization highlights that there are a variety of unknown effects that an insider researcher might have on their research (Schwalbe & Wolkomir, 2001; Yost & Chielewski, 2013). In the context of this study, my understandings of what participants offered have been coloured by my experiences on the team as well as my experiences as a POC. To address this, I have chosen to share as much data as possible in participants own words using direct quotations before discussing my analysis. Further, as outlined in chapter three, I employed various strategies to mitigate the impacts of my presence as lead researcher and to ensure trustworthiness of the data and findings of the study.

**Implications for Future Inquiry**

There is much left to be researched about building capacity for dialogue and engagement with race and privilege. Given the culture of hesitation and avoidance around these topics, any future research around this subject can contribute to further disrupting the status quo. Drawing on the findings of this inquiry, I outline several ideas for further study.

**Further exploration of conditions that enable engagement with race and privilege.** The existing literature on race and privilege is focused primarily on creating more equitable and inclusive experiences for POCs that often experience marginalization. Recent studies and literature
discuss the need for thoughtful and frequent dialogue (Oluo, 2018; DiAngelo, 2018) and mindset shifts to manifest the wide-scale change required for equity, diversity and inclusion. Our research aimed to explore and document the learning conditions required to build capacity for engaging in dialogue about race and privilege and concluded that this can be achieved by offering new theoretical knowledge and providing opportunity to practice relevant skills using the principles of transformative learning. There is an opportunity for future inquiry exploring this question to either affirm or offer variance to our study findings.

Are there specific contexts that privilege the voice of POCs? In addition, an idea emerged from participants whom identify as POCs that would make for an exciting future inquiry. Two out of four POCs indicated that “people of colour get more grace when engaging in conversations about race”. They spoke to there being more forgiveness if a person of colour says something that is not quite right and that they don’t experience the same pressure or fear of saying the wrong thing and this makes it easier for them to step-into and address race-centred conflict. We attempted to dig deeper into this puzzling notion by using this idea as a catalyst for our second dialogue session. However, participants shifted the focus of the conversation within the first few minutes of the session. As such we were unable to develop further understanding to draw any conclusions about this idea. Inquiry member and co-facilitator, UBC’s Director of dialogue and conflict engagement indicated to me during our post session debrief that in her many years of facilitating conversations about race; this was the first time that “truth has been spoken” (A. Erfan, Personal Communication, January 23, 2019). I am fascinated by this because it presents the perspective that there are certain contexts that seem to privilege the voices of POCs and offers a unique inquiry opportunity to explore a narrative where the voice of POCs carry more influence than is typical of a marginalized group.
**Further exploration in contexts outside of higher education.** Finally, this inquiry took place in an educational institution with participants who place significant value on learning; consequently, the conclusions we drew and the recommendations we outline lean heavily on teaching and learning theory. I wonder how the focus of this study might be impacted if the organizational context was different. Race and privilege impact all aspects of society and the capacity for meaningful engagement extends beyond colleges and universities. If the intention is to contribute to further equity, diversity and inclusion with the aspirational goal of contributing to a just society, then I will argue that it is imperative to continue this research in different contexts to provide a broader variety of approaches for this work.

**Thesis Summary**

Together with the RLM team at UBC, I engaged in this inquiry to explore the following question: “How can the Residence Life Management team build capacity to meaningfully engage with the subject of race and privilege in an effort to contribute to the university’s purpose of advancing a just society?” To provide context for this inquiry, I conducted a literature review that focused on two key topics: one was defining race and privilege, the second was understanding how race currently manifests on university campuses. In the first topic, we defined race as the socially constructed factors that are used to classify people based on skin colour, and impact the privileges individuals are granted; and privilege was defined as unearned access to resources and special advantages that are only readily available to some people because a particular aspect of their identity (i.e. race, gender, class, sexual orientation, age, or ability) holds a preferred social status. The second topic of the literature review identified three ways that race manifests on university campuses First, the learning and social benefits of a racially diverse campus requires intentionally designed high quality cross-racial interactions. Second, diversification without attention to these
intentional cross-racial interactions leads to conflict and discrimination on campus. Finally, there is a significant opportunity to build capacity within campus leaders to meaningfully engage and take action around race and privilege in the context of their work.

Using PAR and CDAI as our methodological orientations, we designed an inquiry process that shed light on how RLMs are currently engaging with race and privilege, an ideal future state and the learning and organizational supports that would bridge the gap between the current reality and the future possibility. The key findings from this inquiry were:

1. RLMs indicated their role as administrators and educators requires them to respond and take action when race-based conflicts arise.
2. Participants described being more comfortable engaging with race and privilege in one-one interactions compared to mixed-race group interactions.
3. Participants expressed that their own racial identity has an impact on their confidence and ability to engage with race and privilege in group contexts.
4. Finally, participants noted that enhanced theoretical knowledge, practical skills, and a team culture that fosters trust and vulnerability are critical to build capacity to support RLMs to engagement more effectively and confidently with race and privilege.

These key findings supported the following conclusions:

1. Race based conflict exist on Canadian University campuses; however staff have few structures and processes in place to discuss and take action in response to these incidents.
2. People of colour often feel burdened with the responsibility of speaking on behalf of their communities.
3. White people often feel limited by a lack of understanding that they have a role and responsibility to actively participate in dialogue about race and privilege.

4. Ideally, staff on university campuses would have the skills, capacities and mindsets to engage in critical racial dialogue regardless of their race and privilege.

5. For transformational change to occur around issues of race on university campuses, individuals need to transform self through transformative learning practices.

The literature review, key findings, and conclusions taken together with insights gained through dialogue with the RL&A senior leadership team led to three recommendations:

1. Explicitly commit to acknowledging and engaging in ongoing dialogue about race and privilege and the associated impacts within the work the RL&A team.

2. Recommendation Two: Provide intentional learning opportunities to share relevant theoretical knowledge and practice skills.

3. Recommendation three: Establish a UBC-wide community of practice that will provide both support and accountability to individuals and the team on their learning journey.

This chapter closed with a discussion of the organizational implications including emerging actions from this inquiry. It also identified the scope and limitations of this research and discussed contributions to academic literature in this field of study. Finally, the chapter identified areas for future study.

This was a valuable inquiry to engage in because I see a desire for this level of authentic and meaningful engagement with race and privilege within the RL&A team, UBC and the Canadian Higher Education community at large. My vision is for healthy campus communities where members are willing to step into challenging dialogue about complex issues in order to call attention to and address patterns of inequity and injustice facing racialized staff, faculty and
students. To realize this vision, all members of the community need to acknowledge their role and responsibility within these conversations and develop the capacity to engage. I imagine a future where we interact with members of our communities with a true understanding of the role that we play in shaping each other’s experiences and a commitment to enhance that experience. I believe that is how we will accomplish UBC’s purpose of advancing a … “just society across British Columbia, Canada and the world”.

References


RESIDENCE LIFE MANAGERS’ ENGAGEMENT WITH RACE AND PRIVILEGE


RESIDENCE LIFE MANAGERS’ ENGAGEMENT WITH RACE AND PRIVILEGE


RESIDENCE LIFE MANAGERS’ ENGAGEMENT WITH RACE AND PRIVILEGE


RESIDENCE LIFE MANAGERS’ ENGAGEMENT WITH RACE AND PRIVILEGE


Appendix A: Residence Life Manager Job Description

BUSINESS TITLE: Residence Life Manager
EMPLOYMENT GROUP: Management & Professional (AAPS)
JOB FAMILY: Residence Life Management
VP/FACULTY: VP Students
DEPARTMENT: Student Housing

JOB SUMMARY
This position is responsible for providing support services that foster student learning, success and strong student communities through meaningful orientation and transition experiences. Establishes a climate that supports and facilitates student-focused approach to customer service and support. Supports and contributes implementation of the UBC Student Residential Experience such as residence life program curriculum development, staff recruitment, supervision, training and development, and student leadership development. To be responsible for all aspects of student life in an on-campus residence area and live in assigned accommodation. To manage the overall program and the residence life budget in their assigned area. To coordinate the delivery of all Residence Life services to residents to accomplish departmental goals.
Residence Life is a 24-hour operation providing support to students and responding to all resident crises and residence emergencies as well as inquiries from students, parents, emergency services and other university personnel.

This position is responsible for providing a residence life program that furthers student recruitment, retention, academic success, personal, and community and leadership development. The Residence Life Manager is required to live in an assigned apartment in their residence area, and is highly visible, works flexible hours, and is on-call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and participates in a rotating on-call schedule for residence facilities emergencies. Frequent irregular hours including extended workdays; attendance at evening and weekend meetings, programs, functions; and overnight retreats are required. Work has sessional peaks and an annual cycle. The Residence Life Manager is expected on a regular basis to dine in the residence dining room and to interact with staff and students.

ORGANIZATIONAL STATUS
This position provides supervision to a team of Residence Coordinators, Residence Advisors, and Senior Residence Advisors and Community Assistants.
Reports to the Associate Director Residence Life. Works in cooperation with Facilities and Building Services team, Residence Front Desk and other area administrative staff. Acts as Advisor to the student residence governments. Regularly liaises with Food Services personnel, Campus Security staff, RCMP, Fire Department, and campus Student Development and Service units.

WORK PERFORMED
To be responsible for residence management in the following areas:

Employee Management
• Builds, motivates and supervises a team of part-time student staff. Leads and coaches towards effective performance and service excellence.
RESIDENCE LIFE MANAGERS’ ENGAGEMENT WITH RACE AND PRIVILEGE

- Conducts performance management processes of Residence Life student staff which includes performance evaluations, discipline and terminations.
- Responsible for full cycle recruitment of Residence Life student staff which includes job descriptions, interviews, training and onboarding.
- Organizes and implements the orientation, training, and ongoing development of Residence Life student staff responding to current needs as necessary throughout the year.
- Provides 24 hour on-call support of staff responding to students in distress, fire systems and facilities emergencies.
- Ensures all employees work in a correct, safe manner, and are trained in regard to all necessary safety and environmental regulations, standards, practices and procedures. Ensures safety practices are in compliance with applicable WorkSafeBC regulations, UBC Student Housing and Hospitality Services policy and UBC policy.

**Community Development**
- Assist in budget preparation for residence life in assigned residence area and approves and dispenses departmental programming funds at area level.
- Develop a year-long outline of educational, recreational, social and wellness programs and manages the programming in an assigned residence area.
- Implement programs through advisory staff that contribute to personal and community growth of residents.

**Residence Conduct**
- Promotes, regulates, and supports residence behavioural standards process.
- Manages administrative judicial process (residence standards) in assigned residence area.
- Decides all judicial sanctions, and communicates decision to appropriate person(s).
- Assists with appeals of standards decisions.
- Reviews and revises residence behaviour standards, annually

**Crisis Management**
- Respond to crisis incidents and determine how best to support students to ensure the impact is mitigated and all involved are supported through the interpretation, implementation and administration of departmental policies. A densely populated community of vulnerable youth means significant volume (weekly) of crisis incidents.
- In coordination with Associate Directors Residence Life liaise with parents, faculty, staff who may be impacted by critical incidents to ensure they are appropriately supported and works with VP Students’ Office, Campus Security, RCMP, emergency services to support broader investigations.
- Provide ongoing post-incident support of residents impacted.
- Maintain building security and safety.

**Student Support**
- Act as a resource person for students and staff on personal, academic, and social concerns and advise students on a group and individual basis, including providing personal crisis support,
guidance and referral, assistance to students on administrative and procedural requirements and Act as a mediator and resource on issues between and among students in residence.

- Liaise with and refer students to other student services departments, examples include Student Health Services, Counseling Services, Equity and Inclusion Office, International Student Development and Access and Diversity etc.
- Available daily to students and staff, during posted office hours and on call 24 hours a day to Residence Life and Administration and student staff, seven days a week.

Project Development and Management

- Act as Advisor to elected student council in assigned residence area. Provides critical guidance continuity across academic years; is an information resource and educates and advises regarding departmental protocols, policies, perspectives.
- Review and assess all aspects of student life in residence including assessing the effectiveness of previous years’ policies and programs. Researches and writes reports with recommendations.
- Assist in the review and development of departmental policies and procedures and as necessary, implement changes to improve quality of residence living.
- Initiate, develop and implement orientation programs that support new students in their transition to residence and university.
- Assist in revising departmental literature such as: Residence Contract, Residence Advisor Orientation Manual, Licensed Events Planning Guide etc.

Partnerships

- Represent the Department with non-residence groups; including parents and campus organizations, regarding to residence policies, student issues and concerns.
- Participate in other university committees as requested by the Associate Director Residence Life.
- Liaise with other area staff including Front Desk staff, Facilities Building Services staff and Food Services staff.

Facilities

- Investigate and make decisions regarding damage assessment appeals.
- Develop and administer procedures for facilities/equipment reservations and use.
- Respond to reports of after-hours facilities emergencies. Investigate; decide appropriate course of action; authorize over-time for tradestaff or make alternate arrangements for residents.

CONSEQUENCE OF ERROR

Residence Life Managers represents the University and Residence Life department. Incorrect decisions/judgments will directly affect the University's reputation with the professional community, community groups, students and faculties. Incorrect decisions would have an impact on the University's current and future ability to recruit and retain students, hiring and supervisor of student staff, the operation of the programs and services, and the reputation of the department, and the University.
Poor judgment or failure to maintain policies and standards could result in poor public relations, loss of property or injury to residents or staff, loss of revenue, damage to building and equipment, loss of prestige and potential legal liability for the University. Department and university credibility and image are strongly impacted by ongoing interactions with students, parents, campus organizations and the community at large. Poor performance could result in failure to provide a comprehensive residential educational experience for students, as mandated by the University and the Department of Student Housing & Hospitality Services.

SUPERVISION RECEIVED
Reports to the Associate Director, Residence Life. Works independently in accordance with general directives and goals in implementing and administering departmental policies. Work is reviewed in terms of achievement of goals and overall effectiveness in management of services. Meets regularly with the Associate Director Residence Life to provide information, assess current and future student housing procedures and concerns.

SUPERVISION GIVEN
Directly supervises of 20 to 50 part-time residence life staff. Accountable for the conduct management and residence environment of 1100 to 2200 residents.

QUALIFICATIONS
Undergraduate degree in a relevant discipline. Minimum of four years’ experience or the equivalent combination of education and experience. Satisfactory Criminal Record Check. Ability to be thorough, accurate, and have a high level of attention to detail. Ability to communicate effectively verbally and in writing. Proficiency with standard office software required. Ability to develop and deliver effective presentations and workshops. Ability to work effectively independently and in a team environment. Ability to analyze problems, identify key information and issues, and effectively resolve issues. Ability to deal with a diversity of people in a calm, courteous, and effective manner. Oral fluency in a second language an asset. Ability to exercise tact and discretion.
Appendix B: Letter of RRU Ethics Approval

18 October 2018

Ethical Review – Tiffany Mintah

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter confirms that the Royal Roads University Research Ethics Board (RRU REB) has approved research for the project: Engaging with Race, Power, Privilege and Prejudice in Student Residence, in accordance with TCPS 2 (2014) Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans and RRU Research Ethics Policy.

Approval was granted on 17 October 2018, pending any additional approvals required by the sponsoring organization or any other organization.

Should you require any additional information, please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Research Ethics Reviewer, Office of Research Ethics
Royal Roads University
Appendix C: Letter of UBC Ethics Approval

The University of British Columbia  
Office of Research Services  
Behavioural Research Ethics Board  
Suite 102, 6190 Agronomy Road, Vancouver, B.C. V6T 1Z3

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL - MINIMAL RISK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:</th>
<th>INSTITUTION / DEPARTMENT:</th>
<th>UBC BREE NUMBER:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cheryl Heykoop</td>
<td>Others/Other University/Hospital</td>
<td>H18-03152</td>
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INSTITUTION(S) WHERE RESEARCH WILL BE CARRIED OUT:

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<tr>
<td>Vancouver</td>
<td>(excludes UBC Hospital)</td>
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Other locations where the research will be conducted:

- N/A

CO-INVESTIGATOR(S):

- Tiffany Mintah

SPONSORING AGENCIES:

- N/A

PROJECT TITLE:

Engaging with Race, Power, Privilege, and Prejudice in Student Residence

CERTIFICATE EXPIRY DATE: November 19, 2019

DOCUMENTS INCLUDED IN THIS APPROVAL:  

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<th>Document Name</th>
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<th>Date</th>
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The application for ethical review and the document(s) listed above have been reviewed and the procedures were found to be acceptable on ethical grounds for research involving human subjects.

This study has been approved either by the full Behavioural REB or by an authorized delegated reviewer.
Appendix D: Invitation to Participate in 1-2-4-All

Dear Participant,

Please respond by Monday November 26th.

I am writing on behalf of Tiffany to invite you to participate in a research project she is conducting, titled Engaging with Race, Power, Privilege and Prejudice in Student Residence. This project is being completed as part of Tiffany’s requirements for a Master’s degree in Leadership Studies at Royal Roads University. Tiffany Mintah’s credentials with Royal Roads University can be confirmed by calling Catherine Etmanski, Director, School of Leadership Studies.

Below is important information for you to know as you consider participating in this study.

Research Inquiry Team: Members of the research inquiry team include Deb Capps, Masters of Arts in Leadership student; Aftab Erfan, UBC Director of Dialogue and Conflict Engagement, and Joey Auffray Associate Director Residence Admissions and Administration.

This project has been approved by the Organizational Partner, Janice Robinson and the Residence Life and Administration Senior Leadership team.

**Why are we doing this study?**
This inquiry project is designed to explore how the Residence Life Management team UBC can build capacity to meaningfully engage with race, power, privilege and prejudice in an effort to contribute to the university’s purpose of advancing a just society.

**What can you expect if you choose to participate in this study?**
Your name was selected as a potential participant because you are currently a Residence Life Manager at UBC and as a residence life manager, you have direct influence on the learning experience of 240 residence life staff and 12,000 students in residence.

You are invited to participate in a Structured Interview Matrix group workshop that will be held on Wednesday November 28th. This method begins with one on one interviews conducted by participants. Participants ask specific questions to each other and document responses. Following the one on one interview, participants form small groups (of 3-4 people) to compare and contrast the responses they received, summarizing common themes and/or striking differences. Finally, each small group presents their top themes to the entire room and participants from other groups are invited to comment on the summaries offered. The following video offers a further overview of the structured interview matrix: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ZwGymP3rtM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ZwGymP3rtM)

This group will consist of up to eleven of your peers and will be facilitated by Tiffany Mintah and Aftab Erfan.

This session will last approximately 2 hours – from 1pm – 3pm at Cedar House 18th Floor Lounge

**What are the limits of confidentiality and how will my privacy be maintained?**
Participants will document information shared during the structured interview matrix in written format. Only inquiry team members will have access to these written notes. All data will be summarized and depersonalized in the final research report. Specific comments will not be attributed to any individual unless agreement has been provided in advance. All documentation will be kept confidential. All raw data will be securely stored with appropriate security measures to ensure participant confidentiality.

Consent forms and documentation that can be linked to the identity of the participants will be secured in a locked cabinet. Per UBC policy, all documents will be kept securely for 5 years and then deleted.

Due to the nature of group data collection methods, it is not possible to keep the identity of participants anonymous from the inquiry team members or other participants. Participants are asked to respect confidentiality by not sharing names, or discussing stories outside the group however the researcher is not able to monitor or enforce this.

Study Results and Dissemination
In addition to submitting the findings to Royal Roads University in partial fulfillment of requirements for a Masters of Arts in Leadership, the report will be shared with the Residence Life and Administration leadership team at UBC. The findings may also be used in a conference presentation or a professional journal article.

Are there any risks to participating in this study?
Given the complex nature of the subject of inquiry, there is potential for conflict due to differing perspectives on the subject of inquiry. Additionally, some of the questions we ask may seem sensitive or personal. You are not required to answer any questions you don’t want to.

What are the benefits of participating in this study?
There are a variety of potential benefits should you choose to participate in this study. You will have the opportunity to share your perspective on how Student Housing is currently engaging with race, power, privilege and prejudice. You will also have the opportunity to contribute to idea generation that may inform the department’s strategic priorities and actions in the future. Because the data collection methods are intended to model engagement with race, power, privilege and prejudice, you will have the opportunity to experience and practice strategies for meaningful learning and engagement with a difficult and complex topic. You will have the opportunity to review a draft report of findings and help identify recommendations for the department to undertake changes regarding the inquiry subject. You will also receive a summary of the final report and will have the opportunity to use the information in your work if you choose.

Are there any potential conflicts of interest?
I recognize that the completion of a Master’s degree upon finishing this research project may be perceived as an added benefit for me in terms of professional reputation within Residence Life and Administration and at UBC in general. It is however important to note that it will not have any monetary implications for me in my current role as Associate Director Residence Life.

Who can you contact if you have questions about the study?
If you have questions about this study, you can contact me at name@ubc.ca

**Who can you contact if you have complaints of concerns about the study?**
If you have any concerns or complaints about your rights as a research participant and/or your experiences while participating in this study, contact the Research Participant Complaint line in the UBC Office of Research Ethics at 604-822-8598 or if long distance e-mail RSIL@ors.ubc.ca or call toll free 1-877-822-8598.

If you choose to participate, you are free to withdraw from the project at any time without giving a reason and without any negative impact on your employment. However, note that the removal of data provided up to the point of withdrawal might not be possible due to the interactive and generative nature of group data collection processes. The removal of individual data from a group dataset can compromise the understanding of the remaining pieces of data.

We recognizes that as Associate Director Residence Life, Tiffany Mintah has positional authority with the Residence Life Management Team. Please note during the course of the research, Tiffany’s role will only be that of a facilitator and learner. You are not compelled to participate in this study. Choosing not to participate will not have any negative impact on your employment.

If you would like to participate, please contact me at: name@ubc.ca

Sincerely,

Karla Carreras
Appendix E: Invitation to Participate in Focus Group

Dear Participant,

Please respond by Wednesday January 23rd, 2019.

I am writing on behalf of Tiffany to invite you to participate in a research project she is conducting, titled Engaging with Race, Power, Privilege and Prejudice in Student Residence. This project is being completed as part of Tiffany’s requirements for a Master’s degree in Leadership Studies at Royal Roads University. Tiffany Mintah’s credentials with Royal Roads University can be confirmed by calling Catherine Etmanski, Director, School of Leadership Studies.

Below is important information for you to know as you consider participating in this study.

Research Inquiry Team: Members of the research inquiry team include Deb Capps, Masters of Arts in Leadership student; Aftab Erfan, UBC Director of Dialogue and Conflict Engagement, and Joey Auffray Associate Director Residence Admissions and Administration.

This project has been approved by the Organizational Partner, Janice Robinson and the Residence Life and Administration Senior Leadership team.

Why are we doing this study?
This inquiry project is designed to explore how the Residence Life Management team UBC can build capacity to meaningfully engage with race, power, privilege and prejudice in an effort to contribute to the university’s purpose of advancing a just society.

What can you expect if you choose to participate in this study?
Your name was selected as a potential participant because you are currently a Residence Life Manager at UBC and as a residence life manager, you have direct influence on the learning experience of 240 residence life staff and 12,000 students in residence.

You are invited to participate in a focus group workshop on January 25th, 2019. Focus groups are a form of group interview that encourage communication between participants in order to generate conversation and gather in-depth information on specific topics. This group will consist of up to eleven of your peers and will be facilitated by Aftab Erfan. This session will last approximately 3 hours – from 10am – 1pm at Cedar House 17th floor lounge.

What are the limits of confidentiality and how will my privacy be maintained?
Information shared during the focus group will be documented using an audio recording devise. Following the focus group, the recordings may be sent to a third party transcription service for transcription. The data will remain on Canadian servers at all times. The raw audio files will be securely stored by a member of the inquiry team for 5 years (per UBC policy) and then deleted.
All data will be summarized and depersonalized in the final research report. Specific comments will not be attributed to any individual unless agreement has been provided in advance. All documentation will be kept confidential. All raw data will be securely stored with appropriate security measures to ensure participant confidentiality. Consent forms and documentation that can be linked to the identity of the participants will be secured in a locked cabinet. Per UBC policy, all documents will be kept securely for 5 years and then deleted.

Due to the nature of group data collection methods, it is not possible to keep the identity of participants anonymous from the inquiry team members or other participants. Participants are asked to respect confidentiality by not sharing names, or discussing stories outside the group however the research is not able to monitor or enforce this.

**Study Results and Dissemination**
In addition to submitting the findings to Royal Roads University in partial fulfillment of requirements for a Masters of Arts in Leadership, the report will be shared with the Residence Life and Administration leadership team at UBC. The findings may also be used in a conference presentation or a professional journal article.

**Are there any risks to participating in this study?**
Given the complex nature of the subject of inquiry, there is potential for conflict due to differing perspectives on the subject of inquiry. Additionally, some of the questions we ask may seem sensitive or personal. You are not required to answer any questions you don’t want to.

**What are the benefits of participating in this study?**
There are a variety of potential benefits should you choose to participate in this study. You will have the opportunity to share your perspective on how Student Housing is currently engaging with race, power, privilege and prejudice. You will also have the opportunity to contribute to idea generation that may inform the department’s strategic priorities and actions in the future. Because the data collection methods are intended to model engagement with race, power, privilege and prejudice, you will have the opportunity to experience and practice strategies for meaningful learning and engagement with a difficult and complex topic. You will have the opportunity to review a draft report of findings and help identify recommendations for the department to undertake changes regarding the inquiry subject. You will also receive a summary of the final report and will have the opportunity to use the information in your work if you choose.

**Are there any potential conflicts of interest?**
I recognize that the completion of a Master’s degree upon finishing this research project may be perceived as an added benefit for me in terms of professional reputation within Residence Life and Administration and at UBC in general. It is however important to note that it will not have any monetary implications for me in my current role as Associate Director Residence Life.

**Who can you contact if you have questions about the study?**
If you have questions about this study, you can contact me at name@ubc.ca
Who can you contact if you have complaints of concerns about the study?
If you have any concerns or complaints about your rights as a research participant and/or your experiences while participating in this study, contact the Research Participant Complaint line in the UBC Office of Research Ethics at 604-822-8598 or if long distance e-mail RSIL@ors.ubc.ca or call toll free 1-877-822-8598.

If you choose to participate, you are free to withdraw from the project at any time without giving a reason and without any negative impact on your employment. However, note that the removal of data provided up to the point of withdrawal might not be possible due to the interactive and generative nature of group data collection processes. The removal of individual data from a group dataset can compromise the understanding of the remaining pieces of data.

We recognizes that as Associate Director Residence Life, Tiffany Mintah has positional authority with the Residence Life Management Team. Please note during the course of the research, Tiffany’s role will only be that of a facilitator and learner. You are not compelled to participate in this study. Choosing not to participate will not have any negative impact on your employment.

If you would like to participate, please contact me at: name@ubc.ca

Sincerely,

Karla Carreras
Appendix F: 1-2-4-All Method Informed Consent Form

Dear Participant,

This letter of consent provides you with information to help you decide whether or not you wish to participate in this research project, which is in partial fulfillment of requirements for a Masters of Arts in Leadership at Royal Roads University (RRU). My credentials with Royal Roads University can be confirmed by calling Catherine Etmanski, Director, School of Leadership Studies.

Your signature on this document constitutes an agreement to participate in my research project.

This inquiry project is designed to explore how the Residence Life Management team UBC can build capacity to meaningfully engage with race, power, privilege and prejudice in an effort to contribute to the university’s purpose of advancing a just society. A copy of this form will be provided to you for your records. The Residence Life and Administration department at the University of British Columbia (UBC) has partnered with me on this research project.

This inquiry will include a group workshop using a facilitation tool called the 1-2-4-All liberating structure. This workshop will involve open-ended questions to explore participants’ experience engaging with race, power, privilege and prejudice. We will also gather perspectives on how to enhance meaningful learning and engagement with race, power, privilege and prejudice in student residence at UBC.

This is a consent form to participate in the 1-2-4-All group session.

As a participant you will receive an electronic copy of the executive summary of the final report; upon request an electronic copy of the full report will also be provided. In addition to submitting my findings to RRU in partial fulfillment for a Master of Arts in Leadership, I will also be sharing my report with the Student Housing and Hospitality Services Leadership team at UBC. I may also use the findings in a conference presentation or professional journal article.

Information provided during the course of the 1-2-4-All group session will be audio-recorded and, where appropriate, summarized in an anonymous format in the body of the final report. The audio recording of the 1-2-4-All session will be transcribed to facilitate data analysis for this study and may be completed by a member of my research team. Research team members are bound by confidentiality agreements.

No specific comments will be attributed to any individual and pseudonyms will be used where required to maintain the anonymity of the participants. Disclosure of data will have all personal identifiers removed. All documentation will be kept strictly confidential and secured for the duration of the project in a password protected USB in a locked cabinet or in password protected electronic files in a locked office.

Consent forms and documentation that link your identity to an assigned pseudonym will be secured, as noted above, and in a separate location. All documents will be destroyed upon
completion of the research. Audio-files and electronic versions of transcripts will be deleted with paper copies of notes and transcripts to be shredded.

As a current Associate Director Residence Life, I will know the participants of this inquiry. Please note that during the course of this research inquiry I will be acting solely as an facilitator and learner. You are not compelled to participate in this research project. If you do choose to participate, you are free to withdraw at anytime. However, note that the removal of data provided up to the point of withdrawal might not be possible due to the interactive and generative nature of group data collection processes. It can be difficult to identify individual participants within an audio recording and the removal of individual data from a group dataset can compromise the understanding of the remaining pieces of data.

If you choose not to participate in this research project, this information will be maintained in confidence. Your choice will not affect our relationship or your employment status in any way.

Finally, I recognize that the completion of a Master’s degree upon finishing this research project may be perceived as an added benefit for me in terms of professional reputation within Residence Life and Administration and at UBC in general. It is however important to note that it will not have any monetary implications for me in my current role as Associate Director Residence Life.

I can be contacted by e-mail at [REDACTED] or by phone at [REDACTED] if you have any questions about this inquiry.

By signing this letter, you:

• Give free and informed consent to participate in this project.
• Agree to uphold the principles of respect and respectful behaviour in the group session
• Agree to respect the privacy of other participants
• Commit to the confidentiality of the focus group discussion

Signature: _____________________________ Date: ____________________________

Name: (Please Print): ________________________________
Appendix G: Focus Group Informed Consent Form

Dear Participant,

This letter of consent provides you with information to help you decide whether or not you wish to participate in this research project, which is in partial fulfillment of requirements for a Masters of Arts in Leadership at Royal Roads University (RRU). My credentials with Royal Roads University can be confirmed by calling Catherine Etmanski, Director, School of Leadership Studies.

Your signature on this document constitutes an agreement to participate in my research project. This inquiry project is designed to explore how the Residence Life Management team UBC can build capacity to meaningfully engage with race, power, privilege and prejudice in an effort to contribute to the university’s purpose of advancing a just society. A copy of this form will be provided to you for your records. The Student Housing & Hospitality Services department at the University of British Columbia (UBC) has partnered with me on this research project.

This inquiry will include data collection via focus group. The focus group will involve open-ended questions to explore participants’ experience engaging with race, power, privilege and prejudice. We will also gather perspectives on how to enhance meaningful learning and engagement with race, power, privilege and prejudice in student residence at UBC. The research will take place from October 2018 to May 2019.

This is a consent form to participate in the Focus group session.

As a participant you will receive an electronic copy of the executive summary of the final report; upon request an electronic copy of the full report will also be provided. In addition to submitting my findings to RRU in partial fulfilment for a Master of Arts in Leadership, I will also be sharing my report with the Student Housing and Hospitality Services Leadership team at UBC. I may also use the findings in a conference presentation or professional journal article.

The focus group will be co-facilitated by a member of my research team – UBC’s Director of Dialogue and Conflict Engagement – because of their extensive experience with facilitation and the research subject. Information provided during the course of the focus group will be audio-recorded and, where appropriate, summarized in an anonymous format in the body of the final report. The audio recording of the focus group session will be transcribed to support data analysis for this study. A member of my research team may complete transcription of the audio recording. Research team members are bound by confidentiality agreements.

No specific comments will be attributed to any individual and pseudonyms will be used where required to maintain the anonymity of the participants. Disclosure of data will have all personal identifiers removed. All documentation will be kept strictly confidential and secured for the duration of the project in a password protected USB in a locked cabinet or in password protected electronic files in a locked office. Consent forms and documentation that link your identity to an assigned pseudonym will be secured, as noted above, and in a separate location. All documents
RESIDENCE LIFE MANAGERS’ ENGAGEMENT WITH RACE AND PRIVILEGE

will be destroyed upon completion of the research. Audio-files and electronic versions of transcripts will be deleted with paper copies of notes and transcripts to be shredded. As a current Associate Director Residence Life, I will know the participants of this inquiry. Please note that during the course of this research inquiry I will be acting solely as a facilitator and learner.

**You are not compelled to participate in this research project.** If you do choose to participate, you are free to withdraw at anytime. However, note that the removal of data provided up to the point of withdrawal might not be possible due to the interactive and generative nature of group data collection processes. It can be difficult to identify individual participants within an audio recording and the removal of individual data from a group dataset can compromise the understanding of the remaining pieces of data. Your choice will not affect our relationship or your employment status in any way.

Finally, I recognize that the completion of a Master’s degree upon finishing this research project may be perceived as an added benefit for me in terms of professional reputation within Residence Life and Administration and at UBC in general. It is however important to note that it will not have any monetary implications for me in my current role as Associate Director Residence Life.

I can be contacted by e-mail at [tiffany.mintah@gmail.com](mailto:tiffany.mintah@gmail.com) or by phone at [778.875.5006](tel:778.875.5006) if you have any questions about this inquiry.

By signing this letter, you:
- Give free and informed consent to participate in this project.
- Agree to uphold the principles of respect and respectful behaviour in the group session
- Agree to respect the privacy of other participants
- Commit to the confidentiality of the focus group discussion

Signature: _____________________________ Date: ____________________________

Name: (Please Print): _____________________________________________________
Appendix H: Questions for Methods

1-2-4-All Method Questions
Round 1:

- Please share a story that reflects your experience of race, power, privilege, and prejudice in your work as a Residence Life Manager.
- How would you describe the Residence Life Management team’s current engagement with the subject of power, privilege and prejudice connected to race?

Round 2:

- Imagining an ideal future state, how would the Residence Life Management team engage with the subject of power, privilege and prejudice connected to race?

Round 3:

- What currently gets in the way of that ideal future state?

Group Session Two:

- Deep Democracy Topic:

“Depending on who you are and especially your race, the topic/conversation of race may be easier or harder for various reasons. It seems like people of colour get more grace. That there’s more forgiveness if a POC says something and it’s not quite right. There isn’t the same pressure of knowing exactly what to say and for it to be right. Is this true and what does it mean in terms of what roles we each play in this conversation?”

- Debrief Questions
  
  o Reviewing the preliminary data from the 1-2-4-All group session, what does the Residence Life Management team need to learn in order to better engage with race and privilege
  o What priorities can we identify to support our meaningful learning?
  o What supports are needed to facilitate this learning?
  o What steps can we take today to facilitate this learning
Facilitator: I’m going to show you what the Deep Democracy steps look like in practice. And usually when I am working with a group of this size or bigger, I choose to do it in this style. We are going to be walking around having the conversations. It makes it more engaging and if there’s a polarity, we will be able to see it. So the method is this, we are going to have topic of conversation.

You might have an opinion about the topic so you say what you want to say and physically walk to a spot in the room. If people agree with you, they will come and stand next to you. And if they don’t agree, they will go somewhere else. It could be an extreme movement to the very opposite end of the room, or it could be just slightly away from you depending on how much they disagree.

Then someone who felt differently and is standing elsewhere in the room might say something and people might move towards them if they agree or move elsewhere.

After each statement, it’s the question of: “Does anybody else feel this way or share this opinion? Does anybody feel differently?” And we’ll see if it polarizes.

It is really good in this method not to be attached to your own opinion. You are encouraged to disagree with yourself… so maybe you say something but someone who disagreed with you offers a statement that rings true for you too, feel free to move towards them.

It’s also really helpful to be fairly brief.

And it’s more helpful if it’s a statement not questions – it’s hard to agree or disagree with a question.

And if you don’t want to speak, the trick is to stick with the crowd.

I’ll introduce the topic now:

Looking at the notes from the last session, we noticed an interesting idea that came up in the discussion and we are proposing it as a topic for conversation: *it was this suggestion that*
depending on who you are and especially your race, the topic/conversation of race may be easier or harder for various reasons. It seems like people of colour get more grace. That there’s more forgiveness if a POC says something and it’s not quite right. There isn’t the same pressure of knowing exactly what to say and for it to be right.

Is this true and what does it mean in terms of what roles we each play in this conversation?
Appendix J: Inquiry Team Member #1 Privacy Agreement

Dear <insert inquiry member name>,

You have been invited to participate as an inquiry team member on the research project *Engaging with Race, Power, Privilege and Prejudice in Student Residence* because of additional expertise you bring to the subject of inquiry and data collection method(s). The ethical guidelines of this study require that you read and sign this form, signifying that you are willing to enter into a privacy agreement with respect to the data collected in this study.

As an inquiry team member, you will assist with the following:
- Reviewing and piloting questions for data collection
- Co-facilitating a focus group
- Review data and assist with data analysis

As a co-facilitator, you will learn the identities of participants as well as names of third parties (for instance colleagues, family members, and/or acquaintances of participants). By signing below, you agree not to discuss anything regarding the participants’ or third party identities with anyone other than the primary researcher, Tiffany Mintah.

You will also have access to transcripts and other raw data files. You will ensure that all data records are kept confidential (i.e., materials are never left unattended and are secured when not being used).

By signing below you are indicating that you have read and understand the above agreement and that you are committed to all specified conditions.

Name: ________________________________________________

Contact Telephone: ________________________________

Contact E-mail: ________________________________

Signature: ________________________________________________

Date: ________________________________________________

Note: Privacy Agreement template from Memorial University. Retrieved from: [https://www.mun.ca/research/ethics/humans/icehr/confagree.php](https://www.mun.ca/research/ethics/humans/icehr/confagree.php)
Appendix K: Inquiry Team Member #2 Privacy Agreement

Dear <insert inquiry member name>,

You have been invited to participate as an inquiry team member on the research project Engaging with Race, Power, Privilege and Prejudice in Student Residence because of additional expertise you bring to the subject of inquiry. The ethical guidelines of this study require that you read and sign this form, signifying that you are willing to enter into a privacy agreement with respect to the data collected in this study.

As an inquiry team member, you will assist with the following:
- Reviewing and piloting questions for data collection
- Review data and assist with data analysis

As an inquiry team member, you will have access to transcripts and other raw data files. You will ensure that all data records are kept confidential (i.e., materials are never left unattended and are secured when not being used).

Further, you agree not to discuss anything regarding the raw data collected in this study with anyone other than the primary researcher, Tiffany Mintah and the second inquiry team member. By signing below you are indicating that you have read and understand the above agreement and that you are committed to all specified conditions.

Name: ________________________________

Contact Telephone: ____________________________

Contact E-mail: ______________________________

Signature: ________________________________

Date: ________________________________

Note: Privacy Agreement template from Memorial University. Retrieved from: https://www.mun.ca/research/ethics/humans/icehr/confagree.php