



# Racism in 21st Century America



## NETWORK's 40th Anniversary

Next year, on April 14, we will honor our founders' courage and vision during a 40th birthday celebration here in Washington. We will also explore what it means to be a faith-filled justice activist today. Please mark your calendars and plan to join us at Trinity University in Washington!

Watch our website for more information: [www.networklobby.org/about-us/history](http://www.networklobby.org/about-us/history)

### dear members

Here in DC we have lived through a summer of heat, hurricanes, earthquakes—and Congress! In some ways it is tempting to call them all “natural disasters.” But Congress is a wreck of its own making. It is difficult to articulate just how challenging it is to create effective strategies that can help improve the situation when many in the Tea Party just want to stop anything from happening in Congress.

This is where you come in. In these days of polarized government, being in contact with you, our members, keeps our hope up! We hear often that you, our members, appreciate our work in these challenging times. I want you to know that your words of support (and your sane perspectives) keep us going. Without you outside the “Beltway,” we could easily slip into the DC gloom and pessimism!

I guess this is what “NETWORK” is about: mutual support to make systemic change. You make it real for us and I hope we help to make it real for you! THANK YOU for keeping us going!

*Simone Campbell, SSS*

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JOHN VACHON/LIBRARY OF CONGRESS-FAIRFAX, NC, APRIL 1938. FOUNTAIN ON COUNTY COURTHOUSE LAWN.

# Legacies of Racial Classifications

By SIMONE CAMPBELL, SSS

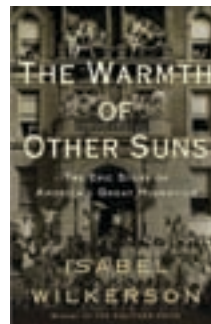
I have been overwhelmed by how artificial a construct “racial identity” is, even while it dramatically affects so many aspects of our nation.

Recently, at the Natural History Museum’s exhibit on race we discovered that racial categories developed in the 1500s when people started getting on ships and going long distances before seeing others. It is theorized that as long as people’s main form of long-distance travel was walking, the people they met changed gradually in their appearance. But after sailing six weeks or more, the voyagers met people who looked very different from themselves. In order to explain these differences, “science” developed different categories for Homo sapiens. We now know that all human beings have common roots in Africa, but we continue to live with the echoes of sixteenth century categories that label us as different.

Our *Mind the Gap!* campaign brought home to me the fact that the wealth gap is growing for all of us, and it is especially troubling because of its impact on communities of color. In 2009, the median wealth for a white household

was \$98,000 while the median for black households was \$2,000. New census data show that more Latino children live in poverty than any other ethnic group. The statistics go on and on. In a nation that has struggled since its creation about issues of race, why have we not made more progress?

I learned some important lessons in Isabel Wilkerson’s marvelous book *The Warmth of Other Suns*. It is the story of the “great migration” of blacks out of the south between 1920 and 1970. Her incisive history shows that when blacks left the south, they often had to do it secretly, bringing little with them. Many were sharecroppers and were held in servitude to the owners of the land. These farmers owned nothing of their own. The north was rumored to have available jobs, and while some were able to accumulate a little money to buy property, others were renters all of their lives. Blacks buying property in the north caused many whites to flee the neighborhood, which brought down



housing prices. This decreased the value of their homes.

As this migrant generation dies, they have little or nothing to pass on to their children. Without a small nest egg, it is virtually impossible for a family today to begin to save money and not be wiped out by one large emergency expenditure.

Additionally, schools are funded through property taxes, which are based on the value of homes and businesses in an area. People living in areas of low housing values are also living in lower-funded school districts. Despite federal government efforts and Supreme Court decisions to try to equalize school funding, there are still wide disparities among school districts and educational attainment, which adds to this vicious cycle.

On top of all of these factors, white privilege is ingrained in us. We expect white people to be better able to manage economic life in our society. Without doing anything, our society expects white people to be capable, articulate, hardworking and effective. It is this subconscious privilege that allows for the racial divides to continue despite a lot of evidence to the contrary. White privilege often leaves white people feeling isolated and people of color oppressed. It is usually a subtle preference that seeps into many aspects of our decision-making. I find it almost impossible to divest myself

of these very privileged assumptions that are made about me because of my skin color. We now know that race is an artificial construct with no scientific legitimacy. Science is telling us what we know in faith: We all are brothers and sisters sharing common ancestors. Science and faith both tell us that race is an artificial construct. We are all created with talents and limitations, but none of these are caused by the color of our skin. We must move beyond these sixteenth-century definitions and grapple with our historic privilege and prejudice so that we might indeed be a nation of “We, the People.”

Simone Campbell, SSS, is NETWORK’s Executive Director.



## The Challenge of Antiracism—An Internal Look

BY CATHLEEN CRAYTON

**F**ive years ago, I wrote an article in *Connection* describing “Brothers and Sisters All,” Pax Christi USA’s antiracism initiative. As I prepare to rotate off the NETWORK Board of Directors after serving for eight years, I am grateful for the opportunity to update and further explore antiracism in this issue of *Connection*.

### Antiracism and Pax Christi

Pax Christi USA has undergone major transformations in recent years. It changed Executive Directors and moved its headquarters from Erie, Pennsylvania to Washington, DC, where it is already an actor in local and international social activism and religious social justice work.

As a rank-and-file member who is no longer on the National Council I marvel at the changes that have occurred. The Bishop President is a Latino bishop, a black woman served as the Chair of the National Council for several years, and

the interim executive director is also a Latino who has roots deep both in the national Church and in the Hispanic community. The DC Deputy Director is a Latina and a faithful and prophetic leader-witness in Pax Christi USA and the U.S. Catholic Church.

PCART, the Pax Christi Antiracism Team, continues its work of leading the transformation of Pax Christi USA into a multicultural, antiracist organization. The team has stayed faithful to its original call, and has continued to implement the objectives and goals that were set years ago, even as it sets new ones to advance the organization’s transformation.

Another way of measuring Pax Christi’s antiracism work is its willingness to listen to the voices of those who are not heard. I have seen the lives of individuals transformed because this may be the first time their voices have truly been heard and their circumstances articulated in such a way that truly reflects reality as they experience it. This is true for many

of our white brothers and sisters in Pax Christi as well, but I have especially seen it in people of color, and experienced it myself — the power of having been acknowledged and believed.

### Pax Christi as Witness and Model

Pax Christi also has become a witness and model of antiracist transformation for many other social justice organizations, both non-Catholic and Catholic—including NETWORK. A couple of years ago, several NETWORK staff attended a weekend Pax Christi-sponsored antiracism training. Earlier this year, the NETWORK Board took a big step in antiracism formation when Crossroads Ministry (the same organization that trained the first Pax Christi antiracism team) spent a day with the Board in assessing where we are as a board/organization and where we want to go organizationally in instituting an antiracism identity and strategy. That said, we



acknowledged that the journey toward antiracism transformation is still before NETWORK, but we are all cheered that we have taken the initial steps.

### The Wider Context

We are especially encouraged because the political/economic/social climate of the nation and world is even more unstable and polarized. The U.S. elected the first African American President of the United States, but we still see unemployment at 9% (nearly 17% for African Americans), the economy as a whole continues its downward spiral, we are still at war, terrorism continues to be a threat (and our response to the threat continues to be reactionary), and we continue to be without comprehensive and compassionate immigration reform—among other issues.

We see in full color (pardon the pun) the retrenchment of racial and political progress that the election of Obama only masked temporarily. In fact, we are daily eyewitnesses to, if I may be direct, the attempted political castration of a duly elected president. (Gentle Reader: I have tried to come up with a more politic description than “castration,” but nothing really says it better or more accurately.)

From Day One, Obama’s detractors have made it clear that they will not work with this president on raising the debt ceiling, jobs creation, deficit reduction, healthcare, environmental protections and regulations, and on and on. And forget about comprehensive and compassionate immigration reform, the lack of which has resulted in what the Los Angeles Times recently described as “a national patchwork of [state] regulations” that have included draconian anti-immigrant legislation and proposed legislation throughout the country.

They have dishonored Obama and the presidency itself by slander and innuendo. The Obama administration opponents’ plan, it seems, has been to strip Obama of any presidential power and to nullify the 2008 election as, perhaps in their minds, an aberration.

And maybe Obama’s 2008 election win was an aberration. A few days ago it was reported that 55% of those polled believe that Obama will be a one-term president.

While there is plenty of room for disagreement and disappointment with the Obama Administration even among some of his supporters (regarding, for example, the backing away from a commitment to end the practice of forms of torture among suspected terrorists, the failure to shut down the Guantanamo Bay detention camp, his liberal prochoice position, to cite only a few examples), as an African American Democrat I am amazed that he has been able to effect any positive reforms at all.

To complicate matters more, and to provide I suppose what some people would call moral legitimacy to this

attempt at political castration, we also have faith leaders (ironically some in our Catholic Church) who have led the charge for Obama’s demonization. We have heard of prayer meetings led by prominent religious leaders praying for Obama to fail (and in at least one instance that I can recall, for his assassination) in the name of God. Within a week after his inauguration, we had Christian leaders describing Obama as the “most pro-abortion president” America has ever had. I remember a headline article in a diocesan newspaper in February 2009 that carried a photograph of several (white) women holding a banner that read “Mr. Obama, please stop killing our children.” We know about the controversy surrounding his honorary degree award at Notre Dame, and the insult he endured as commencement speaker at Arizona State University sans honorary doctorate because even as President of the United States he had not produced a “body of work.” We have all seen the caricatures of Obama as Hitler, as a monkey, as the Joker. And all of this before he barely moved into the White House!

While political figures are always subject to being made fun of and even demonization by their opponents, that this first black President of the United States has endured such relentless character assassination, and so early on, I think points to the reality that the economic, political and religious elite in this country (and those not-so-elites who for



DAVID BANKS



JOE RAEDLE

some reason identify with them) may not be ready to face the real challenges of our world.

When I was a teenager in the late 1960s and 1970s the term “white power structure” was held up as a way of explaining racist policies and structures. The white power structure was supported by the white “silent majority.” There was a majoritarian angle to explain how and why many [white] people naturally voted and acted in the best interest of their group—the white majority.

### Racial Identities

Today, we see many sections of our country becoming minority-majority regions for many reasons, but particularly because of the swelling of the Latino population. That is the way demographic changes are described today: minority-majority.

But a few years ago I once heard an analysis by a sociologist who theorized that the burgeoning Hispanic population will be subsumed as part of the white race (not just legally as it always has been considered in some places at different times, but socially and culturally). This thereby ensures there will always be a white majority. This also ensures that the basic racial paradigm in this country is understood as between those who are non-“black” and those who are “black.” When this racial paradigm is employed, the problem of racism remains the problem of those who are on the wrong side of the power divide—the “blacks.”

We know from our antiracism training

that this is not how racism ever worked its evil, and that this view is a kind of a red herring to cover up not only racial and social injustice endured by African Americans, but by everyone including white Americans. As our analysis articulates, [white] racism has the power to make victims of us all.

That racism is a problem primarily for blacks, and for now other disenfranchised people of color, is thinking that has also dominated our Christian culture. To be sure, there have been many great people in our Church who have seen racism as their problem as well. We know that, for example, the United States Bishops’ seminal 1979 letter on racism and several other writings by individual bishops face the issue of racism head-on, but the cultural rhetoric and ethic many times have ignored the complicity of the white privileged in promoting

and advancing white racism even within our Church. In fact, the Church in many cases has mirrored society at large in its practice of racism.

### So Where Do We Go From Here?

Where does this leave faith-based groups like Pax Christi USA, NETWORK, and other organizations (particularly Catholic organizations) undergoing or considering antiracism transformation?

Well, budget realities are daunting. I have a neighbor and friend—a well-educated, talented and beautiful woman—who was laid off from her middle-management position in the marketing department of a large utility company in Atlanta due to budget cuts. Patricia related to me that in the “blink of an eye” the four African American upper-management staff of this company were also laid off. These four positions and the people who filled them took decades of education, training and mentoring, and just like that, they were gone, as were most of their mentees like Patricia. What is disheartening, she predicts, is that it will take decades to regain those precious four positions and the people to fill them. There are only a limited number of people who have the right mix of opportunity, education and mentoring skills, but what may be even more discouraging is that it will take many more years to restore the company’s commitment to a diverse upper-management team and workforce.

In NETWORK, we face the same budget challenges that all organizations are facing today. And we are only in the initial stages of formal organizational



GISELE



JAY LAZARIN



antiracism assessment. NETWORK has experienced resistance, too, however understandable, to the movement to look deeply within our organization, critically regarding race.

I remember Joe Barndt, the founder of Crossroads Ministry saying time and again that often people most resistant to antiracism transformation are those who are already doing the good work on behalf of the disenfranchised. But we are reminded, as Tom Cordaro pointed out in his contribution in the antiracism issue in *Connection* in 2006, that organizations like Pax Christi USA and NETWORK, who are already accountable for the dispossessed, must learn to become accountable to them, as well.

That means, in part, that we must be in authentic relationship to those on the margins (economically, racially and/or politically and otherwise) as well as those at the center of society. We must allow those who have been disenfranchised from the economic and political life of this nation to speak for themselves (much like I am speaking via this article) rather than being satisfied that their voice is being heard only through the work of others in the organization.

It also means being willing to risk altering our own self-images, reputations and fortunes to bring about the transformation for which we are advocates.

To Pax Christi's credit, the economic downturn has not, it seems, turned back the tide of antiracism progress. Even as

it struggles with its own legacy of unintended racism it has not turned away from this challenge—at least not on its face, and not yet. That may be simply due, in part, to the fact that in the beginning PCART examined the founding documents of our organization and revised the vision contained in them. It



DOUG BERRY

sought and won inclusion in the vision and language and, most important, in a commitment to become an antiracist, multicultural organization for peace and reconciliation.

But the issue remains an open question for Pax Christi USA and NETWORK and all faith-based social justice organizations: When the rubber meets the road will antiracism implementation be viewed as a requisite for justice and peace not only for this time of transition and changing demographics, but for all times—yesterday, today and tomorrow? Or will antiracism transformation be viewed as a luxury, a vision that can wait, and be cast aside for years before the organization decides to recommit itself to transformation?

As I wind up my tenure on the NETWORK Board—a wonderful and challenging time—my hope and prayer for NETWORK is that it stays close to the vision statement articulated in the 2006 strategic plan, which read, in part: *We are anti-racist and inclusive in our actions; we collaborate, partner and engage differences in service of our mission.*

We do commit to diversity on the Board. We have a built-in mechanism that almost ensures the Board will be diverse in every way. During my tenure, my colleagues on the Board have been supportive of the vision—some in very tangible ways. During our assessment of where we stand as an organization vis-a-vis becoming an antiracist organization, it was graphically revealed to us that we are only beginning what can be an exciting journey.

One area we can improve on is a more diversified staff. We need the power machine on the Hill to identify NETWORK with the antiracist vision and people of color in the same way that the power machine in DC identifies NETWORK as the “nun’s lobby.” As we noted earlier, it is very difficult to change an already positive identity such as the nun’s lobby to an even better and more inclusive one as a multiracial and antiracist lobby.

But change we must. Or we risk becoming not only irrelevant but obsolete. And that is even more daunting than those budget realities.

*Cathleen Crayton is a Project Administrator at the Brain Architecture Center, University of Southern California.*



LARRY W. SWANSON

### Crossroads Antiracism Organizing & Training

NETWORK and Pax Christi USA have worked with Crossroads (<http://crossroadsantiracism.org/>), which provides antiracism organizing, training and consultation services to institutions desiring to dismantle systemic racism.

### Crossroads Mission Statement

The Mission of Crossroads Antiracism Organizing & Training is to dismantle systemic racism and build antiracist multicultural diversity within institutions and communities, implemented primarily by training institutional transformation teams; and guided by the following principles:

- The work of Crossroads is based upon a systemic analysis of racism and its individual, institutional and cultural manifestations;
- Crossroads seeks to be accountable in its work to those who share a common analysis of racism, and especially to communities of color;
- Crossroads understands its antiracism work to be part of a national and global movement for racial justice and social equality;
- Crossroads recognizes that resistance to racism also requires resistance to all other forms of social inequality and oppression.

# Waiting for Fairness

BY THE NETWORK ISSUE STAFF

We face daily reminders of our needs and those of our fellow Americans, exacerbated by the current state of our economy. It is frustrating to observe politicians bickering over policies that could help meet these needs. We have to continually remind ourselves that if we keep chipping away, we shall eventually break through. The best way to fight our frustrations is to actively engage with our representatives, holding them accountable for addressing our nation's problems.

## Immigration

President Obama supports prosecutorial discretion for deportation of detainees who do not pose a safety threat. Low risk individuals could be released and awarded employment authorizations. The directive is not an amnesty as it does not provide a path to citizenship.

The House Judiciary Committee approved the Legal Workforce Act, a controversial labor proposal that requires all U.S. businesses to confirm the legal status of new hires via "e-verify." The approval instigated numerous objections on both

sides of the aisle making it unlikely that the Act will pass in the foreseeable future. E-verify is the online verification system that matches job applicants' data with Social Security Administration and Department of Homeland Security records. There is a known 2-3 % inaccuracy rate of the online system, which would result in hundreds of thousands of authorized workers and/or citizens suffering from denied or delayed work opportunities.

A federal district court judge in Alabama recently upheld the most discriminatory, anti-immigrant legislation to date. Now, under Alabama law, local police are required to demand proof of legal status from anyone who "appears to be foreign." Public school administrators must check the legal status of students and their parents. Contracts entered into with undocumented immigrants were declared null and void, thereby diminishing housing and utility rights. Civil rights groups and the Department of Justice requested an emergency injunction of the offensive provisions in their appeal to the U.S. Court of Appeals.

NETWORK continues to object to the passage of e-verify or any state legislation that calls for racial profiling and/or arresting "foreign" looking persons.

## Healthcare

Eighteen months after the Affordable Healthcare Act (ACA) was signed into law, states have raised over twenty legal challenges to its constitutionality. In September, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 11th Circuit struck down the mandate requiring all individuals to obtain medical insurance. With haste, the Justice Department requested that the Supreme Court hear its appeal on the decision. It is widely believed this will happen.

Other threats to the ACA include the denial of federal funding in appropriations and a GOP bill that neutralizes its efficacy and would suspend implementation of the Act until 90 days after the last legal challenge.

NETWORK promotes the implementation of the ACA. We encourage members to call their legislators and voice objection to the backdoor antics of the GOP. The Super Committee must work to increase revenue and refrain from making cuts to Medicaid.

## Trade

The Obama administration and House Republicans have forged a compromise related to the Trade Adjustment Assistance Act and the trade agreements with South Korea, Colombia and Panama. Despite opposition to the Colombian deal from most of organized labor as well as NETWORK due to the country's long record of violence against union activists, all bills passed in early October.

## Budget Control Act

Last *Connection*, the nation was experiencing anxiety over a potential default on payment of our debts, unless Congress raised the debt limit. Default was averted at the last instant, and the Budget Control Act (BCA) was established to reduce the deficit over ten years. Key elements of the deal include:



RYAN RODRICK BELLER

Need up-to-date information about legislation in Congress? Check out NETWORK's Legislative Action Center at <http://capwiz.com/networklobby/issues/bills/>. ★ To learn what happened to legislation you followed in the past, go to <http://capwiz.com/networklobby/issues/votes/> and enter your zip code in the "Key Votes" field.





HILLARY FOX

A Detroit resident looks on in a dilapidated neighborhood. Detroit has more than 10,000 vacant properties, stretching city services and infrastructure.

- **Debt Limit Increase.** The BCA allows the president to increase the limit up to \$2.4 trillion over ten years, in two steps, if needed. \$400 billion became available immediately and must be matched by discretionary spending cuts.
- **Discretionary Spending.** FY 2012 began on October 1. The BCA set a limit on appropriations of \$1.043 trillion for 2012, a 0.7% decrease from FY 2011, which had significant spending cuts from the previous year. Over ten years, the caps are expected to cut \$917 billion, some of which will come from mandated programs such as Medicaid.
- **Joint Select Committee for Deficit Reduction.** The BCA also created a 12-member committee charged with reducing the deficit by \$1.5 trillion over 10 years. The House and Senate each have 6 members, evenly divided between Republicans and Democrats. ([www.networklobby.org/legislation/super-committee](http://www.networklobby.org/legislation/super-committee)). The committee is to propose a plan to Congress by November 23 for an “up-or-down” vote, with release of a public report by December 2. Savings may come from any combination of increased revenue and spending reductions. The House and the Senate must vote by December 23. The Super Committee began meeting early in September with both open and closed meetings. House and Senate Committees have until October 14 to submit their requests for protections and/or cuts to the Super Committee.
- **Sequester Trigger.** If the Super Com-

mittee is unable to agree on a plan to reduce the deficit by at least \$1.2 trillion, a trigger for across-the-board cuts (sequester) is in place. Sequester reductions would be equal across nine fiscal years, beginning in January 2013. Defense and non-defense spending would each produce \$54.7 billion in ten years. However, some programs are protected in the sequester: Medicaid, Social Security, CHIP, SNAP, child nutrition, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), refundable tax credits such as EITC, veterans’ benefits and federal retirement. There would be cuts to Medicare providers and insurance plans (limited to 2% in any year). Some organizations argue that sequestration would be a better option, as they expect cuts from the Super Committee to be even deeper for their favorite programs. It is critical that the Super Committee hear from constituents that significant revenue increases are urgent—there is no way to reduce the deficit without additional revenue.

### Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) replaced “Aid to Families with Dependent Children” in 1996, and was extended rather than reauthorized in 2005. TANF has recently been extended again, until December 31, 2011, to allow Congress more time to make comprehensive changes.

Insufficient funding has prohibited

TANF from effectively responding to impoverished families, especially during the recession. Continuing to extend the current flawed version of TANF would be disadvantageous. However, if reauthorized with improvements, TANF has the potential to significantly help move families out of poverty.

### American Jobs Act

On October 11, President Obama’s American Jobs Act stalled in the Senate. This is extremely disappointing given our 9.1% unemployment rate that only includes those who are eligible for and receiving unemployment benefits. The Republicans’ firm stance on job creation is that tax cuts create jobs. However, since the passage of the Bush tax cuts, unemployment has only risen. Blocking this bill comes at the expense of the American people. Congress must participate in job creation through public jobs programs and bolstered supports to the unemployed.

### Peace Building in Iraq

The Defense Department is gradually removing all of the military troops from Iraq. While some speculation exists that the Iraqi government will ask for a small residual force to stay (3,000 soldiers), it is certain that the majority of the military will be out by the end of the year. The State Department and US AID will pick up primary responsibility for police training and development. The State Department will be managing the biggest project since the Marshall Plan after World War II. It is estimated that the State Department will have 2,000 civilian employees and an additional 14,000 contractors, many of whom will be security personnel. There is some question regarding the capacity to manage such a big project, but an even bigger question is this: Will Congress continue to fund these vital programs once the troops have withdrawn? NETWORK believes that the transition to diplomacy and development is essential for a peaceful Iraq and it must be funded if we are to keep faith with the Iraqi people.

Want timely information about key issues in Congress? NETWORK members can sign up for our weekly email legislative hotline. Send your name, zip code and email address to [jsammon@networklobby.org](mailto:jsammon@networklobby.org).

# Racialized\* Workers in Canada

BY SHEILA BLOCK AND GRACE-EDWARD GALABUZI

In recent decades, the profile of the Canadian population has changed dramatically. It has become one of the more racially diverse nations on the planet. Census data shows that between 2001 and 2006, over three quarters of immigrants to Canada came from the global South or countries with racialized majority populations. By 2006, the long form Census enumerated 5,068,100 individuals who belonged to the racialized population—16.2% of the total population—in Canada. Between 2001 and 2006, the racialized population increased at a much faster pace than the total population. The rate of growth was 27.2%, five times faster than the 5.4% increase for the Canadian population as a whole. (Statistics Canada. *The Daily* April 2, 2008)

By 2006, the six largest racialized groups in Canada were, in order of size:

1. South Asian (1,262,900 or 25% of racialized groups)

2. Chinese (1,216,600; 24%)
3. Black or African Canadian (783,800; 15.5%)
4. Arab & West Asian (422,200; 8.3%)
5. Filipino (410,700; 8.1%)
6. Latin American (304,200; 6%)

Statistics Canada estimates racialized groups will make up a third of Canada's population—one in three Canadians—by 2031. (Statistics Canada. *The Daily* March 9, 2010)

This transformation has been rapid, from less than 5% of Canada's population in the 1980s to a projected 32% 20 years from now. It results from both changes in immigration patterns and higher birth rates among racialized Canadians. The racialized population will continue to be younger than the rest of the population, with 36% under age 15 in 2031 and only 18% predicted to be over 65.

## Inequalities in Employment Income

Racialized Canadians face barriers to jobs compared to non-racialized Canadians, but they also experience a significant gap in pay. As the table shows,



## Average Employment Income Canada, 2005

	Racialized	Non-racialized
Men	35,329	45,327
Women	25,204	28,584
<b>Total</b>	<b>30,385</b>	<b>37,332</b>

SOURCE: Statistics Canada—2006 Census. Catalogue Number 97-563-XCB2006060.

racialized Canadians earn 81.4 cents for every dollar paid to non-racialized Canadians.

Looking at employment earnings by gender, we see a pronounced gendered dimension to Canada's racialized income gap. The gap is at its worst when comparing the earnings of racialized women to non-racialized men.

Racialized women earned 55.6 cents for every dollar non-racialized men earned in 2005. The gap narrows a bit when comparing the earnings of racialized and non-racialized men. Racialized men made 77.9 cents for every dollar that non-racialized men earned. The gap narrows even further when comparing racialized and non-racialized women. Racialized women earned 88.2 cents for every dollar that non-racialized women earned.

The impact of sexism on both racialized and non-racialized women may partly explain this smaller gap, as all Canadian women's earnings are depressed compared to men's earnings.

The overarching result along the dimensions of race and gender: the earnings of the three groups—racialized men, women and non-racialized women all trailed those of non-racialized men.

## Income Gap Variation Among Racialized Groups

Employment earnings for racialized workers are lower than non-racialized workers across all racialized groups—except for the small number of Canadians who identify as Japanese. A number of groups fare particularly poorly, including:

- Those who identify as Korean: They earn 69.5 cents for every dollar a non-

\* The term *racialized* is used to acknowledge “race” as a social construct and a way of describing a group of people. Racialization is the process through which groups come to be designated as different and on that basis subjected to differential and unequal treatment. In the present context, racialized groups include those who may experience differential treatment on the basis of race, ethnicity, language, economics, religion (Canadian Race Relations Foundation, 2008). This paper uses data from the 2006 Census on visible minority status. Visible Minority status is self-reported and refers to the visible minority group to which the respondent belongs. The Employment Equity Act defines visible minorities as “persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour.” Census respondents were asked “Is this person...white, Chinese, South Asian, Black, Filipino, Latin American, Southeast Asian, Arab, West Asian, Japanese, Korean, Other (specify).”





CHRISTOPHER BERNARD

work as a major feature of Canadian labour markets is an important explanation for the racialization of poverty.

The impact of these forces accentuates historical forms of racial discrimination in the Canadian labour market and creates a process of social and economic marginalization. The

proportionately represented in sectors of the economy where these forms of work are a major feature. This may be because of their vulnerability to employment discrimination and the barriers to access to professions and trades, particularly for those who are immigrants. The material implications are that racialized groups experience different socio-economic status, which has an impact on their well-being. These experiences are increasingly crystallized in the vulnerability to low income and what we have come to know as the racialization of poverty.

The unequal patterns of labour market outcomes and the vulnerabilities to racial discrimination that racialized group members and recent immigrants suffer do not only lead to disproportionately higher levels of low income. They structure a racialized experience of poverty that creates social alienation, powerlessness, marginalization, voicelessness, vulnerability, and insecurity both in the workplace and in the community. This combination of factors results in higher health risks for the racialized population.

These material conditions have the

effect of both disadvantaging the racialized population but also undermining the legitimacy of the promise of multiculturalism as a regime of diversity management that can ensure equal access to opportunities for all Canadians.

*Sheila Block is Director—Economic Analysis at the Wellesley Institute and a CCPA Research Associate. Grace-Edward Galabuzi is an Associate Professor in the Politics and Public Administration Department, Ryerson University, Toronto and a Research Associate at the Centre for Social Justice in Toronto. He is a board member of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives.*

racialized worker earns, with an annual earnings gap of \$11,403

- Those who identify as Latin Americans: They earn 70.3 cents for every dollar a non-racialized worker earns, with an annual earnings gap of \$11,091
- Those who identify as West Asian: They earn 70.4 cents for every dollar a non-racialized worker earns, with an annual earnings gap of \$11,053
- Those who identify as Black: They earn 75.6 cents for every dollar a non-racialized worker earns, with an annual earnings gap of \$9,101
- Those who identify as South East Asians: They earn 77.5 cents for every dollar a non-racialized worker earns, with an annual earnings gap of \$8,395
- Those who identify as Chinese do better: they earn 88.6 cents for every dollar a non-racialized worker earns, for an annual gap of \$4,251.

### Racialization of Poverty

The racial barriers to Canadian jobs and the resulting racialized income gap have a deep impact on the health and well-being of racialized Canadians. It influences the nature of poverty in Canada and the experience of health and well-being among its citizens.

The data emerging from the last long form Census survey point to an entrenchment of the racialization of poverty. The racialization of poverty refers to a phenomenon where poverty becomes disproportionately concentrated and reproduced among racialized group members, in some cases inter-generationally. The emergence of precarious

result of this marginalization is a disproportionate vulnerability to poverty among racialized communities. The racialization of poverty is also linked to the entrenchment of privileged access to the economic resources in Canadian society by a powerful minority. This access explains the polarizations in income and wealth in Canada as a whole.

The 2006 Census data bolsters previous evidence that racialized Canadians are disproportionately among Canada's poorest, particularly in the urban centers.

### Conclusion

As this study shows, racialized Canadians continue to face differential labour market experiences, which include higher levels of unemployment and lower employment earnings. The report suggests that racialized groups face a labour market in which racially defined outcomes persist and considers discrimination in employment as a contributing factor to these racial disparities in labour market outcomes.

The changing nature of the labour market is another factor responsible for the unequal outcomes. Precarious employment is on the rise — contract, temporary work arrangements with low wages, limited job security, and no benefits. Racialized groups are dis-



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This article is excerpted with permission from "CANADA'S COLOUR CODED LABOUR MARKET: The gap for racialized workers" (Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, March 2011). [www.policyalternatives.ca/publications/reports/canadas-colour-coded-labour-market](http://www.policyalternatives.ca/publications/reports/canadas-colour-coded-labour-market)

# Harvard Law School Prison Legal Assistance Project

BY JACQUELINE ALEMANY, LINDSAY LOUIE, CHRISTINE MATERA, JULIA VAN DER VINK AND CLAIRE WHEELER



DAN BANNISTER

The Prison Legal Assistance Program (PLAP) is a student organization composed of first-year to third-year Harvard University law students who represent inmates in Massachusetts prisons in official disciplinary hearings where they may be charged with anything from disorderly conduct to possession of contraband. Inmates typically call PLAP because they do not know how to effectively defend themselves on their own and would otherwise run the risk of being reclassified and damaging their chances for parole. While inequalities within the prison system are rampant, and PLAP's range of influence is limited, their goal is to provide representation for people who would otherwise be unrepresented.

By giving inmates fair trials, restoring their faith in the legitimacy of the State, and making sure they have equal access to representation, PLAP has the opportunity to ameliorate some of the effects of racial inequality and community trauma that affect many of the victims of America's legal system.

PLAP representatives are not hesitant to speak of racial disparities that play into prison politics, especially when referencing the subjectivity of correctional officers. In one case, a correctional officer was repeatedly getting into physical altercations where the prisoner suffered terrible injuries and the officer emerged with only a few scratches and slight

bruising. The officer was consistently reporting these prisoners for harassment and other behavioral infractions. The PLAP volunteer representing one of the beaten prisoners soon discovered that the officer had filed a suspiciously high number of reports against African American prisoners and had sent most of them to the hospital. While the officer was not punished for what he had done, despite his obvious racial motivations, the PLAP volunteer successfully represented the inmate and the disciplinary charges were dismissed.

The ways in which immigrants are further marginalized by the criminal justice system are detrimental to assimilation. Sometimes, adult immigrants do not fully comprehend the criminal justice system. Although PLAP representatives cannot offer legal advice, they have a firm grasp of the law and are able to explain due process protections in simpler terms. PLAP volunteers frequently find themselves helping those who suffer from language barriers navigate the system.

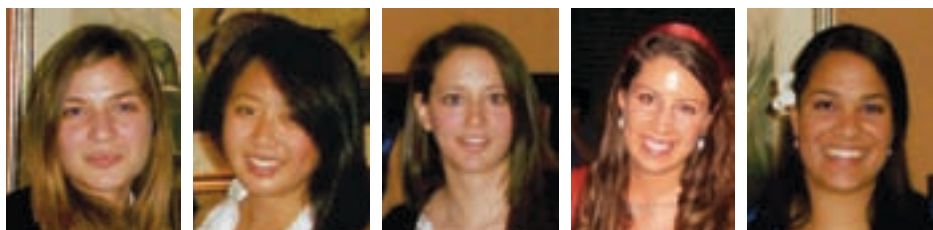
PLAP representative Sarah Morton described a case involving three PLAP members, in which an Arab client was deeply grateful and surprised that he was receiving any help during his disciplinary hearing. He was not aware that he had an option besides representing him-

self, and instead believed he was granted a favor rather than an entitlement. PLAP not only helped challenge and defeat the erroneous charges, they also explained the idea of representation to a man who did not know such institutions existed.

According to Kyle Virgien, it is not rare for PLAP to represent ESL (English as a Second Language) clients and non-English speakers. However, PLAP's linguistic resources are limited. If a Spanish-speaking inmate calls PLAP on a day when a Spanish-speaking PLAP representative is not available, that inmate suffers unfairly due to an arbitrary factor—language.

In the case of the Arab prisoner, PLAP ultimately won the case, but Morton emphasized that due to the language barrier difficulty, it took a more intense amount of work and a relatively large team of people working on the case. PLAP volunteers understand the importance of equal representation, but their scope of representation can only reach so many inmates.

PLAP's effort to better the Massachusetts prison system is a model that should be followed. Simply put, giving prisoners this small opportunity to be fairly represented will ultimately have a positive ripple effect among prisoners' communities, eventually helping to support immigrants, decrease recidivism, and increase faith and trust in the justice system.



Authors L-R: Jacqueline Alemany, Lindsay Louie, Christine Matera, Julia Van der Vink, Claire Wheeler.

*This article is taken from a student research paper completed in December 2010 as a final project for a class at Harvard University. Claire Wheeler, one of the authors, is currently a NETWORK Lobby Associate.*



# The Racial Wealth Gap and Where We Live

**The median African American household has less than ten cents of wealth for every dollar of wealth owned by the median white family. The U.S. has a history of unjust housing policies that contribute to the racial wealth gap in the United States:**

- ★ Following World War II, suburban communities specifically designated for whites—some called “Levittowns”—were built, excluding people of color.
- ★ These segregated communities spread like a disease across the country and helped foster patterns of racial discrimination in housing that still exists today.
- ★ Federal policies contributed to housing discrimination. The Federal Housing Administration instituted policies that routinely denied low-interest loans to non-whites returning from World War II.
- ★ Zoning practices also contributed as streets and communities could be divided by race.
- ★ On an individual level, homeowners would routinely avoid selling to people of color, and bankers would not approve inexpensive mortgages for them.
- ★ Housing discrimination has affected families in many ways. For example, it prevented people from acquiring wealth through rising home values and kept children in poorly financed schools where their education could suffer.
- ★ The effects of these practices exacerbated the tragic legacy of racism throughout our nation.

**Bottom Line: We must recognize the devastating impact racism has had on our nation.**



RICARDO INFANTE ALVAREZ

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RICARDO INFANTE ALVAREZ

# Racial disparity isn't becoming a thing of the past—it's growing.

**White households on average now earn 20 times more than the typical black family and 18 times more than the average Hispanic family. This is three times more than in 2008.**

- ✦ The typical black household had \$5,677 in wealth—defined as assets minus debts—in 2009. The typical Hispanic household had \$6,325 in wealth, and the typical white household had \$113,149.
- ✦ The housing collapse, which began in 2006, had a devastating impact on a high number of minority families because of historical factors.
- ✦ From 2005 to 2009, inflation-adjusted median wealth fell by 66% among Hispanic households and 53% among black households, compared with just 16% among white households.

## What can you do?

- ✦ Encourage Congress to increase the funding and staffing levels for HUD's Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity.
- ✦ Promote anti-predatory lending legislation, which is designed to eliminate unfair and deceptive practices of lending money with excessive fees or insurance costs that target the elderly, low-income and communities of color.
- ✦ Visit [www.networklobby.org](http://www.networklobby.org) to find out more and to contact your Members of Congress.

Written by Eric Gibble and Matthew Shuster

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# Dismantling Racism with Faith

By JEAN SAMMON

I asked some of our NETWORK members about overcoming racism. Their responses tell me that a good place to start is in a faith community.

**John Meehan and Jane Sweeney** told me about ongoing group meetings in **Birmingham, Alabama**, with members of St. Mary's, a historically black parish, and St. Peter's, a white suburban parish. The monthly meetings started 12 years ago as part of a diocesan program to connect parishes across racial lines. John, a parishioner at St. Mary's, said they continue because of the commitment of leaders at both parishes, and because the participants enjoy each other and their discussions. Topics range from race to current events, and in 2008, the group helped develop the Platform for the Common Good! (see the news coverage of this event at [www.networklobby.org/blog/Alabama](http://www.networklobby.org/blog/Alabama)).

Jane says she and the others from St. Peter's learn a lot by listening to the stories of the people from St. Mary's. The monthly meetings involve about eight to 12 people from each parish, and the parish partnership extends to joint events at both parishes.

John and Jane also talked about Alabama's new anti-immigrant law. They both have hopes that people of faith can make a difference in opposing it.

**Charlie and Marge Sears** have been members of the anti-racism team at **Detroit's** Gesu parish for seven years. Gesu is about 60% African American, 35% Caucasian, and the remainder Hispanic and Asian. The team has



CHRISTOPHER FUTCHER

addressed racism through a variety of programs including the film series, *Race: The Power of An Illusion*, Bishop Dale Melcek's pastoral, *Created in God's Image*, Tim Wise's work on white privilege, and Fr. Clarence Williams's presentation on *Racial Sobriety*.

Charlie says, "Despite our efforts, we recognize that we still have a long way to go toward being the Beloved Community (described by Martin Luther King, Jr.)." The anti-racism team is now known as "Building the Beloved Community" in order to direct attention to the ultimate goal. This year they plan to share stories during parish events, and open more minds and hearts to the message that we are *Brothers and Sisters All*.

**Steve Herro** recently moved from St. Norbert Abbey in Wisconsin to **Washington, DC** to begin a new ministry with Catholic Charities USA. He chose to join the faith community at St. Anthony de Padua, where black Catholics are the majority. He says St. Anthony's has an active social ministry and "promises to expose me to a culture very different than my own, and I want to be stretched from my white, middle class, professionally educated background." Steve believes that "active participation in racially diverse congregations provides a great opportunity for people to build inter-racial communities if we are up to the challenge."

Finally, **Nick Mele** of **Bellevue, Washington** gives us this hopeful observation: "One thing I have noted in our current parish and in my occasional travels around the country is the increase in bi-racial and multi-racial marriages. The younger generations seem much less interested in the color of a person's skin than in the person inside that skin."

Thanks to all of you who sent in comments. I regret that space restrictions did not allow me to use all of them, but I do appreciate knowing what our members are doing.

*Jean Sammon is NETWORK's Field Coordinator.*

## More Ways to Make a Difference

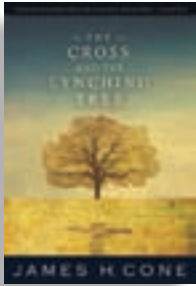
**Bea Leising's** Franciscan sisters in **Western New York** serve immigrants from places all over the world where conflict and torture create refugee flows. Their biggest effort has been in education—trying to help others understand why refugees are in our country needing help.

**Sr. Carla Mae Streeter's** new Pax Christi group in **St. Louis** wisely noted that they needed to be more intentional about inviting people who are not white.

**Florence Mittino** tries to be "as polite, pleasant and helpful as I possibly can to the people in the ICU waiting room" at the hospital in **Virginia** where she volunteers.

**E. Michael McCann** wrote from **Milwaukee, Wisconsin**: "With serious prayer earnestly requesting God's aid, these [subliminal racist] attitudes can be surfaced within us and by God's grace radically extirpated."

NETWORK recommends



**The Cross and the Lynching Tree** by James H. Cone, "A powerful and painful song of hope in our dance with mortality." —Cornel West. Orbis, www.

maryknollsocietymall.org/description.cfm?ISBN=978-1-57075-937-6

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**MARK YOUR CALENDAR!**

Make plans now to join us at Trinity University in Washington, DC, to celebrate the 40th birthday of NETWORK. The celebration will take place on April 14, 21 | 12, and will include speakers, awards

and food. To make sure you receive a personal invitation, email [sniedringhaus@networklobby.org](mailto:sniedringhaus@networklobby.org). And watch for more 40th anniversary news at [www.networklobby.org/about-us/history](http://www.networklobby.org/about-us/history)

*As we enter this time of hope and anticipation, NETWORK joyfully invites you to join us in celebrating our 40th Anniversary.*

On December 17, 1971, 47 Catholic Sisters gathered in Washington, DC to form a "network" of Sisters to lobby for federal policies and legislation that promote economic and social justice. To get their organization off the ground, they passed a bag around and collected \$187. In April 1972, they opened a small office in Washington with a staff of two.



Forty years later, NETWORK continues to answer the Gospel call to act for justice, building on the resources and relationships we have maintained over the years. We are so grateful that you have shared in our success and hope you'll join us as we kick off a year of celebrating our accomplishments and looking forward to the future.

Help us to make it another 40 years by giving a special 40th Anniversary gift—or honor the season by introducing another to our work for justice with a gift membership. You can do this online at [www.networklobby.org/](http://www.networklobby.org/) donate or by using the envelope inside this issue.