Racial Inequality and Injustice: How Critical Management Studies can Improve Traditional Approaches

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In this paper I will discuss how the current diversity training programs in American organizations are not working, some of the ways in which CMS could influence and improve this situation. Some of these may also apply to other countries, but for my current purposes I limit myself to the USA. There are four sections, beginning with a description of racial inequality in American society, and how it is manifested in American organizations. In the second section I outline the current state of diversity training and its apparent inability to impact persistent racial inequalities in career mobility, or the number of racial discrimination lawsuits. Following on this I consider the role that the diversity training industry has played in the maintenance of the status quo and the countenance of the white (male) backlash. The third section reviews the concepts and literature from CMS that I believe would be useful in analyzing how the current state of racial inequality has been created and is perpetuated, in spite of and perhaps because of the way diversity training is conceptualized and enacted. Finally, in the fourth section I draw on the CMS concepts to suggest some additions to diversity training for managers that would interrupt the reproduction of the status quo.

Racial Inequality in the USA

Race continues to be a factor in the allocation of power and resources in organizations and in American society at large with Whites controlling a disproportionate share (Lewis, 1995; Massey, 1990). Statistics collected in 2000 by the US Census Bureau (2002) report that non-Hispanic Whites have the lowest poverty rate of 8.1 % while 24.9% of Blacks live in poverty. Single non-Hispanic white men over 25 had an unemployment rate of 6.9 % while the rate for single black men over 25 was 11.7 % (US Dept of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2003). Initiatives such as affirmative action have attempted to address the issues of access to education and employment opportunities for White women and under represented racial minorities. In spite of these policies, disparities in employment across racial groups are significant, particularly between Blacks and Whites (Lewis, 1995; Jaynes & Williams, 1989; Massey, 1990; Roberson & Block, 2001).

These patterns are an artifact of the historical relationship between Blacks and Whites, which began in this country as an expropriative relationship when European colonists abducted African Blacks for the purpose of obtaining cheap labor (Fredrickson, 1981; Jackman, 1994). The relationship was codified by American state and federal laws denying human and civil rights to Blacks (Watts & Carter, 1991). The separate but equal laws have been struck down, beginning with the US Supreme Court decision in the case of Brown v. Board of Education but the urban residential segregation and the residual institutional policies continue to impact Blacks and Whites in significant ways (Massey, 1990; Frankenberg, Lee & Orfield, 2003; US Census Bureau, 2002).
Racial Segregation and Limitations on Career Mobility

These patterns of inequality persist in organizations. In spite of the civil rights legislation that created the Equal Opportunity Employment Commission, there is still significant segregation in the workplace (Grodsky & Pager, 2001; Huffman & Cohen, 2004). Whites are over-represented proportionally in professional and managerial occupations and under-represented in service jobs, and Blacks and Hispanics are under-represented in professional and managerial occupations and over-represented in service occupations (Lewis, 1995; Maume, 1999). White men make up forty-three percent of the workforce but they hold ninety-five percent of senior management positions (Federal Glass Ceiling Commission, 1995). The differences in occupation are subsequently reflected in the wages of racial groups, with Blacks and Whites disproportionately represented in the low and high ends respectively, of the income spectrum (Brief & Hayes, 1997; Grodsky & Pager, 2001; Huffman & Cohen, 2004). Changes in opportunity for racial minorities and White women improved substantially after the passage of the Civil Rights Act in 1964, but the rate of change then slowed and the general trend of fewer opportunities than Whites persists (Federal Glass Ceiling Commission, 1995; Pierre, 1998).

As minorities work to succeed in education and work settings, their efforts are not necessarily rewarded. The gap in earnings between Blacks and Whites increased substantially during the 1980's while differences in standardized test scores and educational achievements decreased (Grodsky & Pager, 2001). The myth of corporate mobility for Blacks, proffered by White managers, executives and researchers alike, is being challenged. One compelling study comparing equally qualified White and Black executives found that Whites advanced much more quickly and had higher earnings (Pierre, 1998).

The notion of the USA as a meritocracy is not born out by the experience of those who aspire to management positions, but are not White and male (Catalyst, 2004; Federal Glass Ceiling Commission, 1995; Pierre, 1998); they tend to hit the so-called glass ceiling, while their White male counterparts with no more experience or education are promoted on what one researcher dubbed the “glass escalator” (Maume, 1999). Asian Americans on the other hand are faring better in terms of wages but their movement into, and within, the managerial ranks is also limited; they tend to be funneled into professional roles rather than managerial roles (Federal Glass Ceiling Commission, 1995; Roberson & Block, 2001; Yanow, 2003). It is hard not to wonder whether these outcomes reflect less about preparation for management level positions and more about the white resistance to changes in the racial composition of management.

This brief description of the state of racial inequality in the USA and in American organizations depicts changes that have created both opportunity and frustration for White women and minorities. As the workforce composition and employment laws have changed, conflict and tension have also increased along racial lines, particularly as Whites resist affirmative action (Schuman, Steeh, Bobo, & Krysan, 1997). In the next section I describe the backlash against
affirmative action policies, and the rise of diversity training initiatives, which have become the standard policy response of American organizations.

What has been going on in the workplace?

BACKLASH

A backlash against the movement of racial minorities up the organizational hierarchies has been underway for some time (Thomas & Ely, 1996), and there are attempts throughout the USA to do away with affirmative action (Kellough, Selden and Legge, 1997). White men have resisted affirmative action by asserting that it is a form of discrimination, and blocks fair access for their advancement (Froomkin, 1998; Heilman, Block, & Stathatos, 1997). There is particular resistance to the mention of any kind of special opportunity for Blacks, reflecting the slow pace of change in White racial attitudes towards Blacks (James, Brief, Dietz, & Cohen, 2001; Murrell, Dietz-Uhler, Dovidio, Gaertner, & Drout, 1994). The research of Tsui, Egan and O’Reilly (1992) finds that it is men and Whites who have the greatest difficulty adapting to increased workplace diversity. Although White men still dominate all other groups in earnings and status, affirmative action has been attacked so severely that the perception of it as unfair to Whites now holds sway (Froomkin, 1998; Pincus, 2000; Schuman, Steeh, Bobo, & Krysan, 1997).

There is also the problem of how diversity is used in unintended ways. After the avoidance of lawsuits, the business case is the most common reason that managers give for hiring and retaining a diverse work force (Thomas & Ely, 1996), but it has become a double-edged sword. It is now also used to discriminate; studies have found that an alternative reason to discriminate, such as ‘the business case’ or ‘fairness’ often relieves the manager of the worry that they are racist when they choose to hire a White applicant over an equally qualified person of color (Brief, Dietz, Cohen, Pugh, & Vaslow, 2000; Federico & Sidanius, 2002; Sidanius, Pratto, & Bobo, 1996). This reflects the perception that Whites can only interact with other Whites in certain prominent business or professional roles, thus preventing other racial groups from access to all possible roles in the workplace (Pierre, 1998).

Preference for Diversity Training

At the same time as the backlash has taken root, the popularity of diversity management, in both the Federal government and American corporations, has increased and many organizations show a clear preference for such non-legislated policies over affirmative action (Gardenswartz & Rowe, 1998). According to the U.S. Department of Labor, seventy-five percent of Fortune 500 companies in the USA have diversity-training programs, and 36% of all American firms include diversity training for their employees. At the same time only twenty-two percent of the American workforce is employed by an organization that is required to comply with the federal laws pertaining to discrimination in the workplace (Department of Labor, 2003).

The diversity industry
In 1987 an important study was published that examined the changing demographics in the USA workforce. Johnston and Packer’s (1987) report for the Hudson Institute, Workforce 2000, predicted that White women and racial minorities would constitute 43% of the new workers entering the workforce by the year 2000. This spurred an interest in the issue of race in the workplace, but primarily among practitioners. The early 1990’s saw a huge increase in diversity consultants (Hayles & Russell, 1997), and were clearly a lucrative time for consultants to focus on an area of great interest to management as racial discrimination lawsuits were on the rise (EEOC web site). The diversity training industry has grown steadily since then and currently generates $ 10 billion US per year. In response to the White backlash many organizations now employ a broad definition of diversity that includes among others, marital status, health concerns, veteran status, and a host of “differences” that trivialize the issues of race and gender discrimination that first spawned the diversity training industry (Hansen, 2003). Most organizations prefer a broader definition in order to make it more appealing to employees and reduce backlash (Roberson, Kulik & Pepper, 2003).

The programs offered consist mainly of awareness training, though some provide skills training focusing on the interpersonal dynamics of misunderstanding and racism (Hernandez & Field, 2003). Organizations typically do not conduct a needs assessment to determine whether the target group might benefit from awareness training first, or skills training instead, or both (Roberson, Kulik & Pepper, 2003). Roberson and colleagues identified five current controversies including type of training (awareness or skills), using a broad or narrow definition of diversity, including confrontation as an element of training, trainee group composition, and trainer demographics (Roberson, Kulik & Pepper, 2003). They also point out that more empirical studies are needed to assess the effectiveness of the different types of diversity training. Some observers suggest that the diversity training industry is not going to undergo changes because of a lack of measurable outcomes (Hansen, 2003), while others suggest that these short training experiences usually fail but can create lasting benefits if linked to new and sustained management practices (Hayles & Russell, 1997). Because there is no accreditation process for diversity trainers, and no standards for what constitutes adequate diversity training, the controversies will no doubt continue.

The size of the diversity training industry and the amount of money spent creates the appearance that organizations are improving the work environment. However, there is one significant measure that indicates diversity training is not working; the number of racial discrimination suits has increased significantly during the 15 years that diversity training has been a common practice (EEOC Website). Because diversity programs are focused on interpersonal behaviors, they avoid the links to institutional policies and practices that have more far-reaching effects on diversity and equality in organizations (Hernandez & Field, 2003; Roberson, Kulik & Pepper, 2003). True change is also rarely discussed
because the trainers and consultants, typically educated in the field of industrial psychology or organizational behavior, are not really interested in social change (Hernandez & Field, 2003). Generally such consultants focus on helping organizations to avoid lawsuits and improve their competitive advantage (Thomas & Ely, 1996). Academics and practitioners alike report that diversity training has not significantly affected discriminatory attitudes and practices in the workplace, and many suggest that changes in institutional and management practices are required if lawsuits are ever to decrease (Hansen, 2003; Hernandez & Field, 2003; Huffman & Cohen, 2004; Roberson, Kulik & Pepper, 2003; Thomas & Ely, 1996).

Thus far we have discussed inequality of access to various racial groups in the American workplace, the changes catalyzed by affirmative action, the backlash against those policies, and the rising popularity of diversity training as an alternative. We have also considered some of the controversies in the field of diversity training, and the fact that racial discrimination lawsuits increase each year. Now we turn to consider how CMS might help understand this situation.

A Critical approach

One of the basic assumptions of critical theory is that problems in organizations are social constructions that reflect the agendas and interests of the prevailing interests of the most powerful constituents (Alvesson, 1984; Forester, 1992; Fournier & Grey, 2000; Reynolds, 1998). As it is currently framed, the so-called diverse employees brought in “problem” of diversity; affirmative action was created because Black Americans sued for their civil rights. The influx of workers of different races has been constructed as the problem to be addressed, not the resistance from Whites. When I read the diversity training literature, I see an unquestioned assumption that the problem is the “diversity” for which workers and managers need to be “trained”, not the resistance of the whites who do not want to work in racially integrated workplaces.

While it is tempting to suggest that there is money being wasted by organizations because diversity consultants have not done their jobs, a broader view of the situation suggests that all of us are constructing this reality together. Indeed, diversity training consultants are making a very good living by training individuals to become aware of and respect differences, but they appear to have been left to address an issue that remains substantially unaddressed in the nation at large, and may be forgiven for not single handedly decreasing the number of racial discrimination lawsuits. The methods they have employed simply reflect the ideology of the country at large; America is a meritocracy and those who do not succeed simply don’t deserve it because they did not work hard enough (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). The White men in the executive management ranks in American organizations have benefited from this ideology and for their purposes a diversity training that focuses on individual awareness of differences
has been more than sufficient. Many Fortune 500 corporations receive public acclaim and awards for their diversity programs while they are in court fighting, or settling, racial discrimination lawsuits (Hansen, 2003).

**Rethinking the Ahistorical Individual**

This individual focus is also reflected in the study of race in the USA; as Wetherell and Potter (1992) point out in their analysis of racism in New Zealand, the social psychological focus on the individual has dominated the study of racial attitudes, particularly in the USA. It follows naturally that this individual focus would also be the centerpiece of diversity initiatives. So how should changes in diversity training be addressed in organizations populated with people who believe that an individual, ahistorical focus is the appropriate one? Wetherell & Potter’s (1992) account brings our attention to broader ideological, political and economic patterns that are determinants of the individual racial attitudes. This is different than the focus of social psychological accounts that focus on how individuals develop stereotypes and misperceptions, and would be central to changing diversity training.

The broader patterns of history that precede an individual need to be specified and understood in order to clarify the ways in which racist practices develop (Wetherell & Potter, 1992, p. 41). This broader context is missing from the American ideology of the meritocracy, and needs to be woven into the diversity training discussion by both academics and practitioners. Managers need to be educated about these issues in a broader historical context as well. I will now take a brief look at the history of the issue of diversity and the rise of the diversity training industry through the lens of CMS, and suggest some of the elements that are missing and how they might be added and what these additions might accomplish.

The insights of CMS would be enormously useful in analyzing how the current racial demographics came about and might be addressed. There are layers of unspoken assumptions and biases that have been constructed over time and are reconstructed in current organization practice. If we work with the assertion that social arrangements are constructions that can be reconstructed (Alvesson, 1984; Fournier & Grey, 2000), the racial hierarchy in organizations becomes an object for examination rather than a natural outcome. This is a radical and important change in thinking about organizations, particularly as they become increasingly powerful in the construction of social arrangements. The emancipatory intent of CMS, the historical, sociological approach, the challenge to the myth of objectivity, and the assertion that managers are pursuing an agenda that can reinforce stereotypes and inequities are all elements that have been missing from the discourse of diversity in American organizations (Alvesson, 1984; Alvesson & Willmott, 1992; Deetz, 2003; Marsden & Townley, 1996; Nord & Jermier, 1992). CMS is a natural addition to the analysis of and response to the complex issue of racial inequality, and how diversity training might evolve.
Critical Reflection

One of the key elements of CMS offers is critical reflection. It is missing from the education of managers (Reynolds, 1998; Reynolds & Vince, 2004), and from the diversity training offered by human resource professionals and diversity consultants. Reynolds (1998) makes the case for critical reflection in management education, and his list points to many of the missing pieces in the treatment of race in American organizations: the questioning of assumptions; the social rather than the individual focus; the attention to power dynamics; and the concern with emancipation. Because management is “not a neutral or disinterested activity” (Reynolds, 1998, p. 190) this kind of interrogation is essential to locating and naming the interests, the power imbalances, and the manner in which they are reinforced and re-constructed in daily practice in organizations.

There is a need for critical reflection and questioning the taken for granted assumptions about what racial dynamics in organizations mean (Acosta, 2004). If management is not a neutral practice, and it reflects the political and economic interests of White male owners and managers (Alvesson, 1984; Reynolds, 1998), then racial dynamics and inequality can be examined in this light. This simple observation changes the focus of any question in an organization, moving our gaze from the individual to the social level and to the analysis of broader power relations. The issue of race in American organizations needs the kind of critical reflection that brings about change in thinking, in management education, and management practice. If managers learn how to critically reflect on how their racial attitudes, behaviors, and decisions pertaining to evaluation of those within their purview have been molded, they may be far less likely to be charged with allegations of racial discrimination.

Problem Definition—Who frames it and What is Not Included?

Steffy and Grimes (1992) offer an interesting critique of Personnel/Organizational Psychology that helps contextualize the use of diversity training. They contend that the function of Human Resource Management is to respond to organizational issues as they arise in such a way as to maximize productivity with the appropriate policies and procedures. When the issue of racial discrimination was brought to organizations through the civil rights laws, American HR managers appear to have simply created policies and procedures that reflected the biases of the White male managers, because the issue of “diversity” was framed as a problem brought in from the outside, and not about the resistance from within. And now that racial minorities have made some strides, and diversity training has been undertaken far and wide, many Whites Americans think that racism is no longer a problem. They just want to “get along”; hence the belief that diversity training is a better idea than affirmative action, which is unfair to Whites, who are now the underdog! (McKinney, in press)
While the focus in diversity training on interpersonal skills is valuable, it would be more useful if embedded in a broader historical and economic context that addresses how the current inequities came about. Most Whites are oblivious of how American history shaped current organizational demographics, and how that history affects them through their skin color; it affords them privilege, but when asked, most Whites deny any advantage (McKinney, in press; Sue, 2003). Many also believe firmly in their superiority, and the rightness of group-based dominance and social inequality (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). However, group based power differences are not currently an important element in diversity training, which essentially serves the status quo by avoiding the historical roots of workplace discrimination (Hernandez & Field, 2003). The critique offered by CMS could improve the analysis of the inequalities in organizations.

If managers are making policy as well as individual decisions about the movement of people and opportunities, they need to learn history, and understand how individual racial attitudes have been shaped by the economic, political, and ideological patterns (Wetherell & Potter, 1992). As mentioned earlier, White managers have different attitudes towards Blacks and Asians, who fare differently in organizational mobility (Glass Ceiling Commission, 1995), and this can be traced back to the history of intergroup contact, which evolved based on economics, political events, and ideological trends. If managers learned about the current and historical patterns of employment for demographic groups they would have an opportunity to see how their decisions can recreate or change the racial segregation that has existed in American organizations since the inception of this country. Managers are not aware of these patterns because it is not part of management education, which has divorced itself from a sociological approach (Reynolds, 1998).

**Ignoring History and Sociology**

The severing of the connection between behaviors within organizations and the social structuring of interactions in society (Marsden and Townley, 1996) has left the issue of race relation in organizations in somewhat of a vacuum. A historical framework for understanding the current demographic state of US organizations is needed to shed light on the way workplace differences are managed, particularly the painful legacy of race in organizations. The historical relationships of slavery, with the concomitant beliefs in White superiority, and legal discrimination against African Americans are not very far behind us; the law making racial discrimination in the workplace illegal, was signed a mere 41 years ago. In order to address what goes inside American organizations one needs to acknowledge the social relations of the society at large. This serves the purpose of the owners, reflecting the “boundary of private property” (Marsden & Townley, 1996, p. 663) rather than the interests of the workers who are part of that ‘property’. When we think of racial issues this also smacks of the historical development of American corporations, which is interwoven with the development of slavery (Cooke, 1999).
The postcolonial stream of CMS is particularly useful here, as it includes slavery in the history of the American corporations and the development of management theory (Cooke, 1999; Cooke, 2003; Mir, Mir, Upadhaya, 2003). This is omitted from the history we are taught as organizational psychologists, and although Loren Baritz’s (1960) history of Industrial Psychology is aptly named *Servants of Power*, he does not include the role of slavery. Whites want everyone to forget slavery, and the backlash against affirmative action policies may well be embedded in the wish to avoid having to discuss and make amends for the past. The theories of modern or aversive racism suggest that many Whites believe they are not racist, that they accept Blacks as equals; what the researchers find however, is that even those who want to believe they are not racist feel ambivalent about Blacks (Gaertner & Dovidio, 1986; McConahay, 1983).

The postcolonial theorists who look at the issue more broadly also suggest that this is the case. As Prasad (2003) describes in an overview of postcolonial theory, the colonial discourse contains ambivalent messages about the nature of Blacks. They are regarded simultaneously as animals and as obedient servants, etc. which creates instability in the colonial discourse. To shore up the superiority of Whites, the negative stereotypes and ‘old stories’ must be repeated. This brings to mind the kind of conversations among executives of Texaco that were caught on tape, and the pejorative terms used to describe the Black executives at Texaco. The white executives would commonly use terms “porch monkey” “orangutans”, and for that Texaco paid over $176 million in damages for racial discrimination. When one considers this kind of behavior, it is difficult to think of the problems associated with diversity are the “diverse” workers entering the workforce and not the racist, supremacist attitudes of the white managers who control who works where, how they are treated, and whether they are promoted into and upwards in the ranks of management. This issue would be better examined through a historical, political lens, one that takes down the metaphorical fence between organizations and the society that created them.

Neither management training nor management practices account for the historical and political context in which American organizational practices or organization theory have developed (Alvesson & Deetz, 2000; Nord & Jermier, 1992). Nord and Jermier suggest that Human Resource specialists may be particularly interested in the Critical approach because they are more interested in the people in organizations, and the emancipatory elements than some of their management peers who are focused on profits alone. The HR specialists who are interested in supporting and developing a truly diverse workforce would seem the most likely group to realize the value of CMS, with its historical and contextual approach to organizational analysis, and to see the link between the inequalities in organizations and those in society. The White women and racial minority managers that experience discrimination and limited mobility in organizations are another group who might be very interested in the perspective (Nord & Jermier, 1992). Nord and Jermier refer to them as “oppressed managers”, who are likely to support CMS inspired diversity research or initiatives.
I have reviewed some of the concepts and insights that have influenced my perspective on diversity training, and although this section is by no means a complete review of the pertinent CMS literature, it indicates the some of the breadth of insights that this literature contains for analyzing diversity training in American organizations. The importance of questioning the assumptions about management as a neutral and disinterested activity and the need for critical reflection on race is suggested (Alvesson, 1984; Reynolds, 1998). Diversity training in its current form reflects the belief that America is a meritocracy, that everyone can succeed if they work hard enough (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999), and this assumption needs closer examination. Since social arrangements are social constructs they can be re-constructed (Marsden and Townley, 1996), and this concept needs to become part of the diversity training rhetoric. The work of Wetherell and Potter (1992) provided an example of how race relations are constructed by examining the discourse of race and how it reflects the economic, political, and ideological patterns of a society. The lens of the postcolonial literature is brought in as an inducement to employing a historical approach, including the role of slavery in determining who works where in American organizations. These are some of CMS concepts that inform the suggestions I offer below in rethinking what diversity training teaches to managers. In the next and final section I am going to briefly describe some of the specific components that could be added to diversity training for managers.

Suggestions for management diversity training:

So what would a CMS inspired diversity training look like? The most common type of diversity training is awareness training, with skills training a less common component (Hayles & Russell, 1997). I suggest that the both components of current diversity training need to be taught to managers. Both aspects of the training must be augmented by placing the individual’s awareness and skills in a broader historical context. These suggestions are for diversity training for managers, though a similar set of changes would also be appropriate for workers who are not engaged in management. The focus on managers reflects the fact that they are given the authority to make decisions about the opportunities and outcomes of others, and the limitations of space.

There are some organizations that want to link manager’s performance evaluations with their ability to manage a diverse workforce (Roberson, Kulik & Pepper, 2003). It seems that an organization that want to minimize their exposure to the expense of racial discrimination lawsuits would be interested to know that their managers are educated in this area. Managers need a more thorough education and skills training in order to avoid problems in their workplace, beginning with the history of race relations in relation to the economic development of the USA and how this is linked to current organizational demographics. The historical context of racial issues is not the only element of history missing from management education; the history of management disciplines generally is less often a component of management curriculum than it
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once was (Van Fleet & Wren, 2005). Managers have the capacity to influence the climate in their department and would be a more reflective and hopefully, critically reflective manager, if they also understand how intergroup history affects current group dynamics and conflict. There is research suggesting that hiring a diverse workforce is only one step; many White women and racial minority managers find themselves on the periphery of the social and information networks, excluded from the opportunities and mentoring as well as from the rewards and accomplishments they feel they deserve (Acosta, 2004; Catalyst, 2004; Klein, Lim, Saltz, & Mayer, 2005).

Skills in action

In addition to knowing history and understanding how economic political and ideological patterns have influenced both the attitudes of the individual manager and the demographics of the organizations they work in, managers need to understand how these operate in daily practice. There are multiple skills that manager learns in their formal education and on the job, such as effective communication, problem solving, decision-making, conflict resolution, collaboration and so on. All of these must be critically examined in order not to reproduce racial inequality. Reynolds and Vince (2004) suggest that the most effective form of managers’ learning would be “as an integrated aspect of work-based action” (p. 443), and the issue of racial dynamics is a perfect example of something that needs to be learned in action as well as in theory. One of the problems in the workplace is that people perceive workplace conflicts differently. In some cases, members of different racial groups see a behavior or an incident as motivated by negative racial attitudes stereotypes. A manager needs to understand how these different perspectives developed historically and how Whites have dominated the discourse in order to see the intergroup as well as the interpersonal aspects of interactions.

I have considered a few of the ways in which CMS could provide an infusion of ideas to the field of diversity training and also suggested that managers need a particular kind of education in order not to continue reproducing the racial dynamics of the past. There is at least a small constituency who might be interested in the work of CMS scholars and in some of the suggestions made in this paper, and perhaps as managers look for new ways to avoid lawsuits they will consider some of the CMS scholarship as possible sources.

Who is Training the Trainers?

What all of this requires of course is that diversity trainers and consultants learn American and organizational history and gather the latest demographic data in the USA and in the organizations they are consulting with. In order to be effective trainers and consultants learn any number of new techniques or information and addition would make them more effective in educating managers about the context in which they are working. The fact that diversity training does
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not require a certificate or a degree indicates to me that their work is not taken that seriously, and this might be a useful topic to consider in itself. Space limitations prevent further discussion at this point, but it is notable that the issue of education managers about race in American organizations has been left to an unaccredited field.

Conclusion

In writing this paper and reading some of the CMS literature, it has become clear to me that influence of CMS would add valuable insights to the analysis of race relations in American organizations. I have outlined the problem of racial inequality in the USA and how it is manifested in American organizations, with its domination by White men, and limited freedom of choice and movement for White women and racial minorities. I have suggested a few of the insights of CMS scholars that appear immediately useful to this analysis, though by no means is this discussion complete. Finally I have briefly outlined how applying some of the principles of CMS could augment diversity training for managers. I hope that CMS scholars will realize the value of their continuing involvement in this important issue.

If the diversity practitioners have been left to work on the issues and problems associated with greater racial diversity in the American workplace and have created a niche for themselves but have not succeeded in changing many attitudes, what then is the role of the academic who wants to help practitioners address the problem more effectively? The question is similar to the question that others have asked regarding the role of CMS researchers in influencing management practices generally (Reynolds & Vince, 2004). My answer is somewhat similar to theirs; using the CMS literature as a guide, examine our own assumptions about race, and those that undergird the practice of diversity training. If we engage in a critically reflective dialogue with managers and diversity consultants we may unearth the historical, economic and ideological current assumptions that affect us all.
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