

DANCING ON LIVE EMBERS

Challenging Racism in Organizations

Tian Lopes & Barb Thomas

*Outstanding Book Award for Advancing Human Rights, Myers Centre, 2007
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“This hands-on book can help readers build fairness and equity into their workplaces. Ms. Lopes and Ms. Thomas bring us into various consulting situations (public agencies, unions, etc.) where we see concrete examples of problems as well as opportunities to move racial equity forward. With thoughtful finesse, they developed discussion materials grounded upon real-life contexts. The Canadian perspective on power imbalances and racial equity is particularly refreshing. The authors encourage us to act more intentionally in our ordinary moments. Read it and be jogged out of mental ruts!”

– Gustavus Myers Center
Award Committee

Chapters

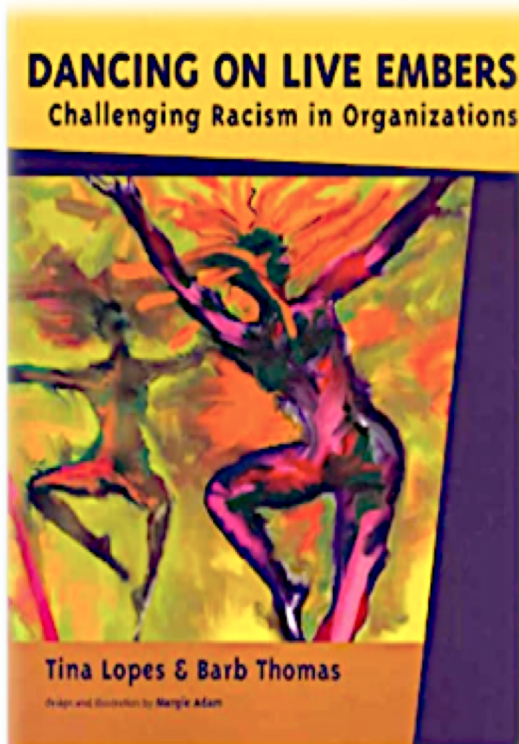
Section 1 What is racial equity work?

Section 2 Phases in organisational change

Section 3 Making the links

Section 4 Between us

Section 5 Tools and strategies



About the author

Tian Lopes is an independent organizational development consultant, facilitator and mediator, skilled in promoting organizational change processes. <https://tinalopes.com/>

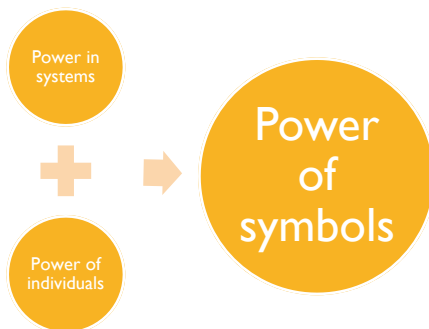
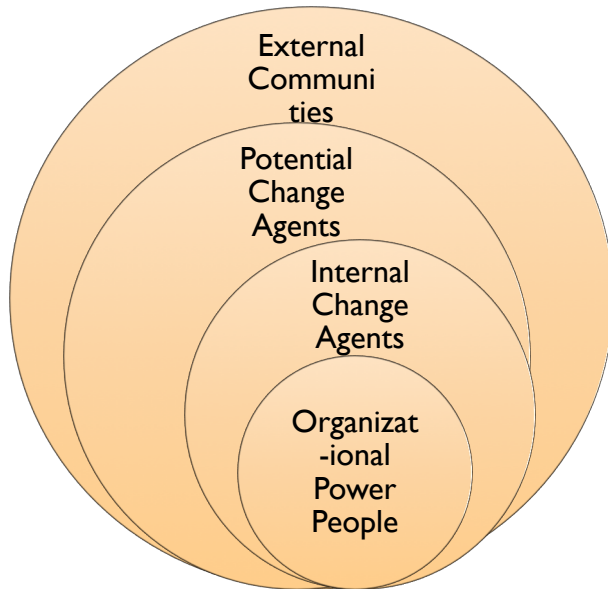
Barb Thomas integrates anti-racism and equity into program design, facilitator training, and organizational planning. She is the co-author of BTL and currently works with Ontario Public Service Employment Union.



Section I

What is Racial Equity Work?

- Outline the goals of the work and stakeholders
- Examined several organizations with political & economic pressure
- Reviewed the shifting frameworks through past 30 years
- Conclude an outline of key elements



Lopes and Thomas (2006) said that the leaders need to break the silence of disparities and make the right dictations to “evolved hand in hand in the originations” (p. 8). The methods of creating equitable in workplace those are shifting to multiculturalism by understating the racism in deep;

Brief overview

What is the book about?



White power and privilege are full of in the daily working in the organizational management. This book is to focus on internal work inside of the community and three main aspects of help. To establish originations as equal places, create chances and raise the awareness for anti-racism.

Who is the book for?

The people who want to **create equitable organizations**.

For white people, this book teaches ways for white people to question, challenge and grow from self-analysis of white privilege and ingrained racism while also teaching us how to question and challenge racist and unjust structures within organizations while supporting and giving space to BIPOCs within organizations. The book also includes some great guides to implement anti-racism efforts within organizations.



Section 2 Phrases in organizational change

- Phrase 1 Getting beyond training
- Phrase 2 Getting to how things work
- Phrase 3 Keeping racial equity on the agenda



Phrase 1 Summary

Decision-making	Communicating	Expertise	Network/Connections	Resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decion-makers should be more diverse • The leadership has hired a consultant • Equal budget • Be acknowledge • A belief 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement regarding respect and dignity • Use proper words, like "diversity" and "cross cultural" • Key documents related to multiple language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informal use of staff who speak other languages when clients need • Equity co-ordinator and contacts in funding and community supports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talking to sister organizations • Recuit election of racialized board members 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recive external money for staff training • Budget for consultants to deal with the situation in workplace

Examples from Phrase I: Getting Beyond Training

Story 1 Training will fix it

How power is working?

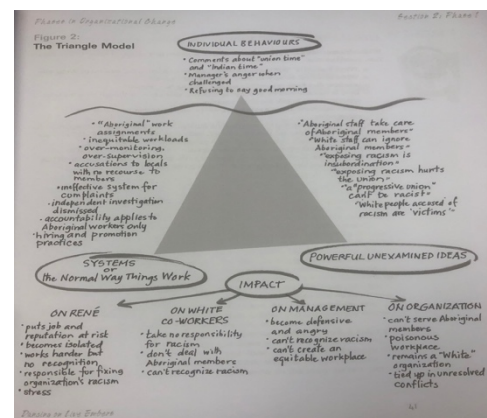
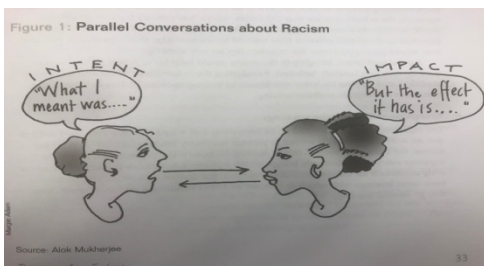
- White people see other white people as the "experts" on equity.
- White people control the language, "the story", and the action on equity.
- Equity is so marginal that training is seen as a fix.
- Racialized workers are present as proof of good faith, but are not active participants.
- The organization is silent about the impact on racialized workers.



Tools & Strategies:

1. Training sessions do not provide a quick fix
2. To challenge this assumption:
3. Interrupt the inequities in the meeting
4. Distinguish between somebody's intent, which one can never be sure of, and somebody's impact, which can be seen.
5. Shift the "gaze" and focus to the behaviours and actions of white people.
6. Broaden the number of players involved.
7. Recognize and widen the openings.

Figure 1 & 2



Story 2 “Proving” It’s racism

How power is working?

- Systemic forms of racism look “normal” to white decision-makers.
- The onus of “proving racism” is on the aboriginal person.
- Standards of “objectivity” don’t apply to white people.
- Decision-makers ignore their conflict of interest and protect themselves and other decision-makers.
- “progressive politics” and loyalty to the organization belong to the white managers only and not to the aboriginal staff.

- Managements tries to move the focus from the racism upheld in the report to Rene’s alleged performance problems.

Tools & strategies:

1. Ask questions that require decision-makers to account for their actions.
2. Wait through uncomfortable silences.
3. Focus on how the system works, not just on the behaviour of the regional manager.
4. Get support.



Story 3 Being the “diversity co-ordinator”

How power is working?

- Decision-makers do not take any responsibility for increasing equity.
- The comfort of white people determines the words and approaches racialized people must use to address racism.
- Potential white allies stay silent.
- Senior administrators make programming and staffing decisions with no attention to their impact on racialized staff, students, or parents.
- The administration pays lip service to the parents for equity coalition, while appearing to be influenced by term.
- Hiring policies have resulted in one aboriginal teacher and a few teachers of colour, mostly working on contract.
- School board staff are not bound by any racial equity policies or procedures.
- The diversity co-ordinate has large, vague responsibilities for “diversity” and little authority.
- “Diversity co-ordination” is not a line item in the budget.
- “Training” is still the main strategy for equity work.

Tools & strategies

1. Possible actions that could take place in this moment.
2. Structure the job so that it can make an impact.
3. Create policy that frames and supports the job.
4. Budget for real programming.
5. Make advancing equity an expectation in the jobs of senior people.
6. Strategic use of community pressure.



Phrase 2 Getting to how things work

Communicating

- Conversations acknowledge that inequities happen
- Equity initiatives to funders and the larger community
- Staff workshops
- Diversity celebrations

Networks/connections

- Job posting
- A contact list of community organizations
- "Outreach programs" are consulted to different issues

Expertise

- Informal use of staff who speak other languages when clients need
- Equity co-ordinator and contacts in funding and community supports

Resources

- Money spent on shifting dominant group to equity
- Managers trained on harassment procedures
- Consultants to consult communities of potential needs
- The board designed for equity positions

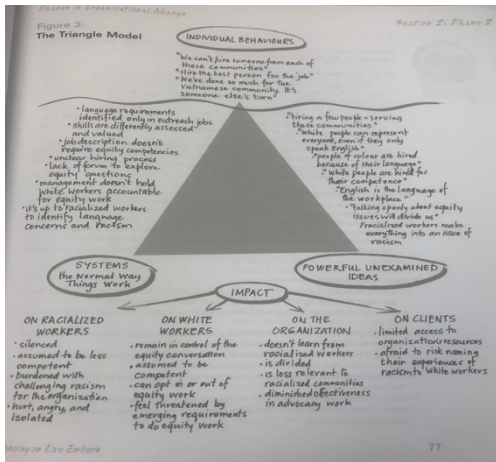
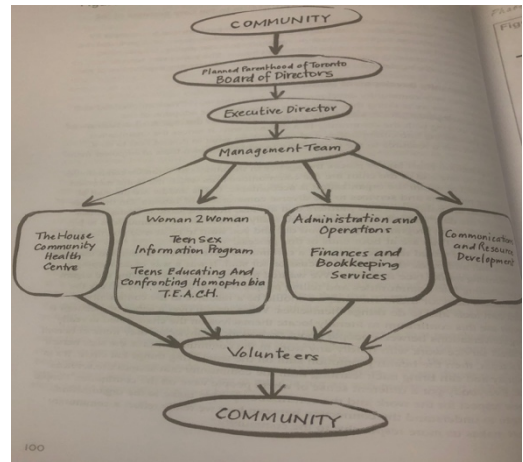


Figure 3 & 4



Phrase 3 Keeping racial equity on the agenda

Decision-making

- The organization has employment equity policies
- Middle management
- Equal strategic plan
- Clear accommodation policy outline
- Multiple makers
- More effort to settle flareups

Communicating

- A higher proportion of minor groups
- Talking about how inequity affects
- Less fear of reprisal for identifying discrimination in the organization,
- people speak their own language with colleagues.

Expertise

- Understanding equity on job posting
- Equity workplace is an expectation of managers
- Target group members are being consulted on a wider range of their expertise
- Staff involved in joint projects

Network/Connections

- Joint projects are operating with a wider range of other organizations
- Address lists in media
- Increase diverse staff
- Some staff who experience discrimination have started to bring situations to staff meeting for joint problem-solving

Resources

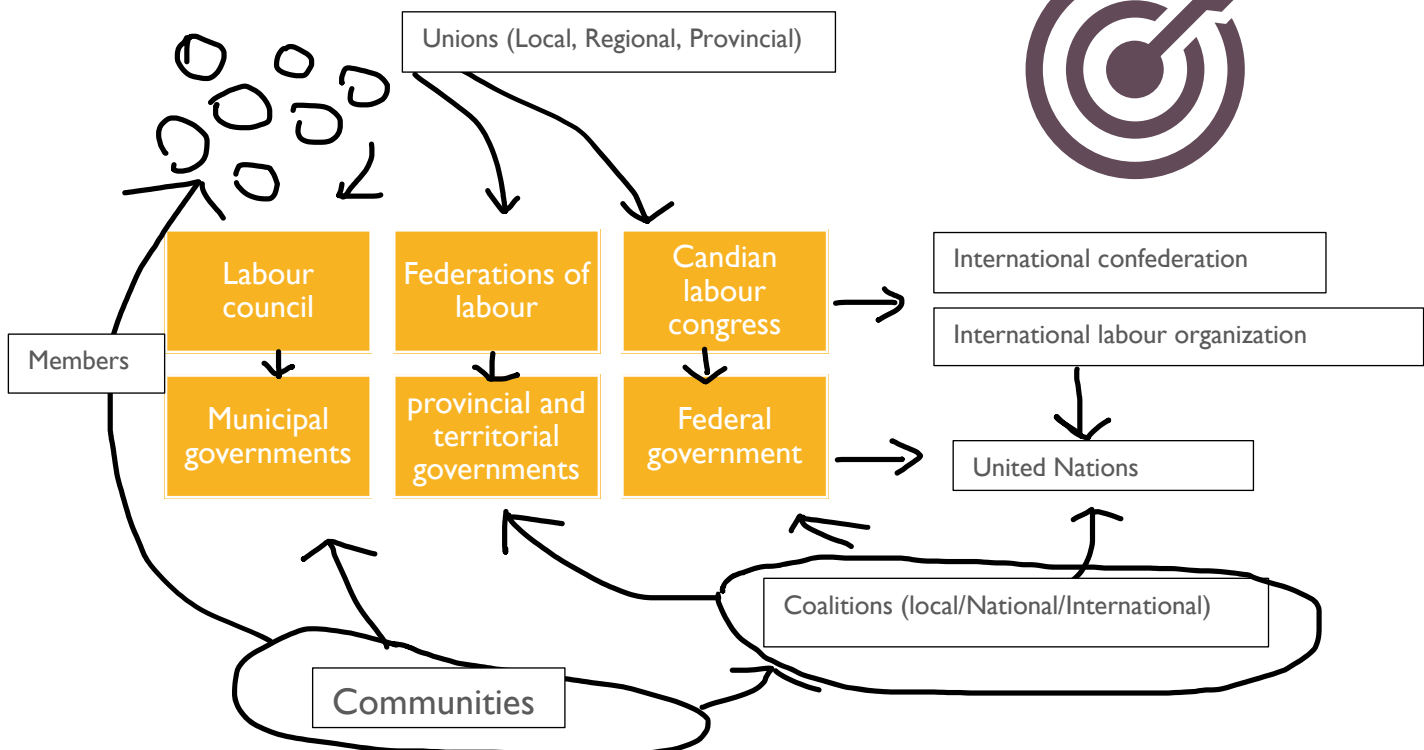
- Annual training on equity occurs for managers and union stewards
- Equity is appearing more routine item on meeting agendas
- Resources are found to update policies and procedures every few years
- Equity appears indirectly in line items in the organization's budget



“Evelyn’s tool for organizational change” (Lopes & Thomas, 2006, p. 173).

1. Organizational change acknowledges the complexity of the organization.
2. Organizational change requires a strategic power analysis in the organization as well as an evaluation of beliefs/value systems, communication systems, and networks.
3. Organizational change acknowledges that change is a matter of dollars and cents and not ideology.
4. Organizational change acknowledges that policies, procedures, and protocols are support instruments for change.
5. Organizational change recognizes and validates the difference between learning and training.
6. Organizational change acknowledges the impact of change.
7. Organizational change defines and structures change.
8. Organizational change involves everybody.
9. Organizational change encourages a lot of feedback, both negative and positive, because organizational stress is accepted as part of the change.
10. Organizational change legitimizes advocacy and the role of conflict in the organization.
11. Organizational change acknowledges the role of civil society, community scrutiny, and advocacy.
12. Organizational change acknowledges and defines the senior management commitment and leadership of the change agenda as critical and fundamental
13. Organizational change recognizes clearly its responsibilities and objectives.
14. Organizational change acknowledges, recognizes, and deals with resistance and opposition.
15. Organizational change needs clear communication.

Section 3 Canadian Unions and Social Movements



Section 4 Between us (Tina & Barb) Conversations between these two authors.



Section 5 More tools and strategies:

- An equity lens for reviewing policies, programs, and materials
- Group dynamics in racial equity work
- An organizational checklist for racial equity
- Sample supervision policy that integrates equity
- Sample human rights and equity policy

A questionnaire linked can be used as a tool to check your organizational quo of racism concluding 5 aspects in the book section 5.



Tool 1 An equity lens for reviewing policies, programs, and materials

Tool 2 Group Dynamics in racial equity work

Tool 3 An organizational checklist for racial equity

Tool 4 Sample supervision policy that integrates equity

Tool 5 Sample human rights and equity policy



Tool 1 An equity lens for reviewing policies, programs and materials in organizations



1. Does the document name and/or anticipate existing inequities?
2. What assumptions are being made about who and what matters?
3. Does the policy/document anticipate and address the differential impact of a practice on different groups of people?
4. Does the policy/document anticipate and address differential power/influence within the organization?
5. Does the policy or document aim explicitly to increase equity?
6. Does it acknowledge the benefits of equity to the organization?



Education and professional development	No	Working on it	Yes
Education for all staff is a component of the racial equity policy and implementation plan			
Education and training is seen as one among many strategies to achieve equity			
All education and professional development offered by the organization incorporates racial equity and other areas of equity work			
All educators and staff responsible for planning the professional development staff can integrate racial equity into their work			
Racial equity education is designed to assist people to practice anti-racism in their daily work			
Education utilize community expertise			
Racialized and aboriginal staff, volunteers, and service users have equitable access to education and professional development opportunities			
Racialized and aboriginal staff are equitably represented as educators and facilitators			

Tool 5 Sample human rights and equity policy

1. Policy
 - The policy ensures that increase diversity and create equitable employment s systems.
2. Purpose
3. Scope
4. Responsibility
5. Definitions
 - Discrimination
 - Equity
 - Prohibited grounds
6. Procedure



Lopes, T., & Thomas, B. (2006). *Dancing on live embers: Challenging racism in organizations. Between the Lines.*

