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Introduction to Part II of the Special Issue

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Author Biographies: *Geraldine (Geri) Palmer, Ph.D.* is a scholar-activist, practitioner, educator, and writer who uses an interdisciplinary approach of community psychology, social psychology and sociology to understand and work on issues of concern among Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) including racial justice and anti-blackness practices. She earned her Ph.D. from National Louis University, Chicago. In addition to her position as Assistant Professor at Adler University she is the Cofounder and Managing Director of Community Wellness Institute (CWI). Through CWI, Dr. Palmer and a team of consultants facilitate The F.A.C.E. of Justice workshops with topics on anti-racism and anti-blackness practices and social and racial justice, provide consultations with non-profits to help them strengthen their infrastructure, and conducts social research. Her teaching, research, and praxis has its foundation in her dissertation study which focused on homelessness particularly among Black/African Americans, and currently centers on language that often reproduces colonialism ideology, dismantling the code of silence, and historical trauma among Black/African Americans.

Jesica Siham Fernández, Ph.D. is an Assistant Professor in the Ethnic Studies Department at Santa Clara University. She received her PhD in Social Psychology and Latin American & Latinx Studies from the University of California, Santa Cruz. Grounded in a decolonial feminist praxis, she engages critical PAR paradigms and approaches to support BIPOC communities, especially Latinx immigrant families, youth, and student activists in mobilizing to actualize collective conditions of community thriving, sociopolitical wellbeing, and decolonial liberation toward transformative justice. As a teacher-scholar-activist, Jesica's praxis is rooted in a commitment to racial justice and anti-oppression toward decolonial liberation.

Dominique Thomas, Ph.D. is editor of *The Community Psychologist*. He attained his BA in psychology from Morehouse College and his MA and PhD in community psychology from Georgia State University. He was a Scholarship to Practice Fellow in the National Center for Institutional Diversity at the University of Michigan. Dr. Thomas is interested in the areas of Black identity, racial socialization, activism, Afrofuturism, and the Black Radical Tradition. He co-edited a special issue of *Community Psychology in Global Perspective, Black Lives Matter in Community Psychology* and is co-editing a forthcoming special issue in the *American Journal of Community Psychology, Imperial Algorithms: Contemporary Manifestations of Racism and Colonialism*.

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Abstract

We are appreciative of the voices that are constantly being raised around the world, and the public discourse centered on unsettling systemic racism, anti-Blackness practices, discrimination and other related prevailing social issues. We believe that these voices in conversation signal that the stronghold of silencing among activists, abolitionists, and all other allies and co-conspirators in this space is being dismantled as we speak and write. We are also aware that dialogues must move to actions and concrete strategies for justice.

We developed this two-part special issue around the themes of anti-racist and racial justice praxis to illuminate actions happening locally, nationally and globally, and how the work of anti-racism/racial justice might be adapted, integrated or used as guides for ongoing racial justice and social progress. These articles represent a call for a participatory, action oriented and decolonial liberatory standpoint rather than a bystander or deficit approach.

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We developed this two-part special issue around the themes of anti-racist and racial justice praxis to illuminate actions happening locally, nationally and globally, and how the work of anti-racism/racial justice might be adapted, integrated or used as guides for ongoing racial justice and social progress. How do we make progress when systemic racism that shows up in police brutality, mass incarceration, and structural violence in America's education system, as well as the labor market, and more, are deeply embedded in ideologies representative of decades, even centuries of colonialism and coloniality? How do we engage in actions that subvert whiteness in its facets while building anti-

racist cultures in the academy, practice, and praxis? How do we get descendants of the transatlantic African diaspora to document their lived experiences to engage in how colonization impacted Caribbean islands? How do we incite community psychologists in understanding the importance of incorporating an anti-racist and racial justice values into its framework for teaching and practice? These articles have been compiled to address these questions and a myriad of other questions as we continue to rediscover paths used before and at present, and as we seek to forge new ones in a moment in time when this is urgently necessary: our lives depend on it. Black Lives Matter and depend on our commitment to racial justice.

The content found here, which is Part II special issue, is an expansion of the work the Council on Culture, Ethic and Racial Affairs (CERA) began four-years ago, including raising our own voices to call attention to our lived experiences encountering racist logics, whiteness and hegemonic practices within the academe and community practice, including our very own disciplinary home. These articles represent a call for a participatory, action oriented and decolonial liberatory

standpoint rather than a bystander or deficit approach. The fifteen total articles in the series and the seven found in Part II reflect those manuscripts that underwent rigorous editorial and peer-review processes, and the multiple revisions by the authors who graciously accepted the feedback and comments. Thank you to the editorial team, anonymous peer-reviewers and authors. We readily acknowledge it is your work that makes this two-part special issue a dynamic space and worthy platform supporting our ongoing work in advancing anti-racism and racial justice praxis in community psychology.

Themes in Part II

Our lead editor, Jessica Siham Fernandez generously organized the collected articles into themes, which constitute the two-part special issue. In this series, Part II, we featuring seven articles focus on deconstructing and unsettling colonial power, racism, whiteness; reflexive dialogues to challenge oppression; auto-ethnographic methodologies of power and oppression; troubling whiteness/white supremacy and colorism; challenging white structures and systems; and anti-racism in practice. Part II of the special issue begins with Mingo, Balthazar, and Olson's work on deconstructing colonial authority in community psychology curricula and structures. The authors focus on "the premise of persistence," a concept described as maintaining White authority found in professional organizations, research, and practice. The key to addressing this is an intentional deconstruction of existing literature, prevalent ideology, and gatekeeping. Second, we feature the work of Ciann Wilson et al. whose collaborative work foregrounds the process of confronting oppression in the academy through archiving and documenting the testimonies and

experiences of students marginalized in a community psychology program in Canada.

Following Wilson et al., Moore et al., offer an empowering narrative on another region outside of the United States focused on concerns that can arise from multicultural identities, which can prohibit most discussions about racism. The article describes the processes involved in a qualitative study seeking to connect the experiences of the participants to bring forth their resilience as a viable method to addressing racism. After Moore et al., the issue brings back another discussion by single author Rauk, who through an autoethnographic process offers an ethically reflexive piece on the importance of community psychologists' development an anti-racist practice that interrogates whiteness and white privilege. This article is a response to a call for community psychologists to engage in more personal writings through reflexivity. The author uses their own experience with reflexivity, as a mode of engaging in heart-centered work.

Staying within the higher education space is the Ferreira van Leer et al. article focused on graduate students' resistance to institutional oppression. Using an autoethnographic approach, the students show how they addressed overarching themes of racism on campus to challenge higher education institutions in an effort to embrace graduate student activism. Collins complements the writings of Ferreira van Leer et al. and Rauk through the development of a theoretical framework that purports that White privilege and related concepts are social constructs that have failed to alter systemic conditions. Instead these concepts have perpetuated and reinforced White privilege and BIPOC oppression. Collins, therefore, offers a systems

theoretical approach that could address this concern. Following Collins, Dykstra and Storm end this second section of the special issue series with a discussion on their growing awareness of the need for critical-liberatory spaces where White anti-racist cultures can be cultivated. This awareness led seven White therapists and psychologists to strive to disrupt White body supremacy through a concept they refer to as “imaginings.”

Taken together, these articles illustrate the importance and urgency to make space for BIPOC centered scholars and scholarship, as well as white allies and accomplices who are unafraid to challenge Whiteness within structures, spaces and institutions, as well as within themselves. We are hopeful that the community psychology community, allies, and co-conspirators find this two-part special issue to be enlightening, prolific, and inspirational.