

**25 to 1: People of Color Experiences in Unitarian Universalism 1980-2005**

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1980-2005**

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### Dedication

*To my wonderful family who sustain and remind me of heaven and earth. For our newest life Miyka'ela Luwalhati, her mother Maria Aimee, her Kuya Gabriel Hiraya. Also to Bernadette Santos, my mother-in-law who helps us out in so many ways. And finally, for the generations of People of Color, within Unitarian Universalism, who have shared the free faith, and for me, those outside yet sympathetic to my work, growth and ministry.*

*To friends, authors and mentors who shaped my heart and soul in this life – Isabel Allende, Rigoberta Menchu, Dolores Huerta, Angela Davis, Quintard Taylor, Edwina Welch, Daniela Diaz, Mustafa Kasubhai, Javier Cervantes, Robin Morris Collin, Alexandra Caballero, Consuela Zumwalt, Andrea Adams, Trevor Montieth, Carmen Rubio, Brandon Sugiyama, Daniel Garcia, Cindy Nguyen, Kim Nguyen, Glen Banfield, Maleah Ermac, Nathan Thuan Nguyen, Leslie Lum, Jae-sik Kaufman, Eun-yung Paik, Alyce Gowdy-Wright, Kristen Harper, Danielle Gladd, Melvin Hoover, Leon Spencer, James Brown, William Jones, Robette Dias, Manish Mishra, Marisa Gutierrez, William Sinkford, Joo Young Choi, Diane Arakawa, Cheng-Imm Tan, Jose Ballester, James Coomes, Mark Morrison-Reed, Michelle Bentley, Tony Brumfield, Janice Marie Johnson, Hope Johnson, Gordon Bailey, Natalie Nguyen, Chester McCall, Mitra Rahnema, Dzu Do, Belva Brown Jordan, Cheryl Giles, and Wallace Best.*

### Personal Note:

In September 2006 I will be beginning a Ministerial Internship with the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Philippines based in Dumaguette and Manila. I am raising funds for my internship expenses, given the limited resources of the UU Church of the Philippines to pay for my basic living costs and ministerial development. Funds have been received from the Fund for International Unitarian Universalism, covering roughly 50% of the costs anticipated. I am seeking to raise an additional \$3000 for the internship. **I am asking those who receive this thesis to consider donating \$20 or more.** If you are willing, please send to PO Box 3011, Portland, OR 97208 or paypal to [joey\\_lyons@yahoo.com](mailto:joey_lyons@yahoo.com). Tax-deduction is a possibility, but please contact me first. Thank you for your consideration.

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### Definitions:

*GA* – General Assembly, the annual meeting of delegates from Unitarian Universalist congregations in North America.

*UU* – short for Unitarian Universalist. Generally used to describe individuals or specific organizations aside from the central administration of the association of congregations.

*UUA* – short for the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations, founded in 1961. It is utilized to symbolize both the association of congregations and the central administration of the association.

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### 25 to 1

*The odds of meeting a Person of Color in a Unitarian Universalist congregation are 25 to 1. There are no congregations with a majority of People of Color. In a liberal religious faith with long standing commitments to racial justice, a community of People of Color has never materialized. People of Color are present, however, and increasingly active in the lifeblood of the Association. We struggle within a White institution for respect, dignity and the right to sacred space. What are our experiences? Who has come before us? What have we experienced? What have we learned? May this history help each of us better understand the wholeness of our religious home. Joseph Santos-Lyons, May 2006*



**Danielle DiBona and Vivian Hao (credit: Santos-Lyons)**



**Kendall Renae and Paula Cole Jones (credit: Santos-Lyons)**

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### Chapter I: Introduction

*We have an American culture  
in which European culture is the norm and standard,  
and from which anything else is perceived as deviant, or not "right."  
It was within this context that Unitarian Universalism  
was created and flourished.  
Therefore, it is reasonable to turn a sharp and critical lens  
on our history and practice and pre-suppositions,  
to reveal in what ways Unitarian Universalism,  
as a creation of the white European culture,  
was designed to perpetuate white power and privilege.*

*What becomes obvious is the way in which our expression of our faith,  
European religious language, music, form, color, texture, and story  
have been the culture, normative, definitive.  
By focusing on removing the understanding of  
European culture as "right" and normal for our faith,  
we create the context in which people of color can shape  
a Unitarian Universalist faith which is compelling for them,  
and in so doing, create a Unitarian Universalism which  
more authentically and congruently lives its principles.*

*Similarly, we need to study our history with new questions  
and heightened awareness,  
so that we might better tell an authentic story of who we have been.  
That must include the ways in which Unitarian Universalism  
supported the oppressive structures,  
behaved in ways which were oppressive ourselves,  
protected white interests, and resisted change.*

*- Rev. Dr. Anita Farber Robertson  
"Toward a Theology of Anti-Racism"<sup>1</sup>*

Meeting another Person of Color in Unitarian Universalism for the first time was a spiritual experience for me. I knew they existed; they had to exist, as we are identified as a liberal and inclusive faith. As a child and youth growing up at the West Hills Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in Portland, Oregon, my understanding of the world as it relates to racial/ethnic cultures was stunted. The identities we claim, the names we call ourselves, in racial, cultural or ethnic terms, were not easy to discuss at our fellowship or in my youth group experiences. I developed a mask about myself, one that hid a part of who I was and segregated me from the wisdom of the cultural communities I came from. This mask put me at risk of losing a part of me, lying about or omitting a part of my historical personhood. Wholeness, unity, oneness of the universe are theological and political beliefs I had learned in Sunday Worship and Religious Education. There was a contradiction that rubbed inside me creating friction, frustration and leading me to seek resolution in college.

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A year after high school I found grounding as a spiritual person on this earth, receiving education and mentorship that helped me understand my sense of place racially and culturally. Before the advent of the internet, I used Dewey Decimal, upper classmen, and professors to help introduce and guide me to materials about Chinese, Asian-American, Multiracial, Biracial, Transracial Adoptees and People of Color communities and experiences. Chicano and Native friends welcomed me in their struggle for justice as colonized people; Black friends wrote papers with me about the historical institutional racism that has shaped life in their community; Asian friends challenged me to know myself and know the history of the people who lived so that I may live, Multiracial and Biracial friends and I started a support group, and together, with White friends who sought racial justice, we worked hard to be accountable and in solidarity with one another. This growth however was in the absence of my own intentional spiritual development, and as I found myself acting in ways I had learned in Unitarian Universalism, I remained curious and open to returning to liberal religion.

At the General Assembly (GA)<sup>2</sup> of Unitarian Universalist congregations held in 1995 in Spokane, Washington, I was approached by a stranger, someone who had obviously done a quick visual imaging scan before introducing themselves to me. I was asked, after a brief introduction of names, if I would be interested in attending a meeting of Young Adults of Color sponsored by the UUA (Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations) Office of Young Adult Ministry. My reaction was one of euphoria, in part because I had not anticipated any opportunity to meet in religious community with other Unitarian Universalist People of Color, and in part because this belief had been gnawing at my soul as I debated my future in the church. I had loved my Unitarian Universalist experience as a child and youth, and I had embraced my experience of understanding my identity and responsibility as a Person of Color. The spiritual experience was in the miraculous nature of these two loves, that I had once thought paradoxical, meeting together with harmony. The sense of connection was overwhelming with the dozen or so young adults who gathered, and the simple process of checking in provided a satisfying spiritual strength that has become a wellspring for my continued activism around People of Color ministry in Unitarian Universalism today.

Mark Morrison-Reed, one of the most recognizable African-American Unitarian Universalists in the last 25 years, due in large part to his critical research of African-American Ministers in our faith published in the book *Black Pioneers in a White Denomination*<sup>3</sup>, spoke of

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his deep personal need to be connected to African-American Unitarian Universalist history. He wrote about this history in 1979 when he was preparing to enter the Unitarian Universalist Parish Ministry, a time when there were only a handful of African-American ministers ever in the history of Unitarian Universalism. He writes:

In the beginning my quest to learn about African-American Unitarian Universalist ministers had been strictly personal – a pilgrimage driven by deep curiosity, a yearning for wise counsel, a sense of self-preservation, and a need to pay my respects to those who had preceded me. But my quest was propelled further by the need to write a thesis.<sup>4</sup>

My own thesis is inspired by Morrison-Reed's book, in truth the only widely available published work that describes in detail the experience of a People of Color in Unitarian Universalism, specifically the Black or African-American experience. It resonates with me at a soul level, where the stories of our ancestors, their accomplishments and challenges serve to guide and mentor our attitudes and behaviors in this life. Morrison-Reed's effort to reclaim a history nearly lost is profound. His book, sermons and writings, have been a powerful grounding for the generation of People of Color who have come into the ministry since 1979 when it was published. It is the only book mandated by the UUA Ministerial Fellowship Committee that delves deep into the difficult history of a People of Color community within Unitarian Universalism.

This thesis looks at the last 25 years of Unitarian Universalist history and asks "What has been the experience of People of Color?" This question can be investigated from a number of positions. I've chosen to focus on providing a narrative about the culture of Unitarian Universalism and locating the social positions that People of Color occupy in the church. I have also developed several historical timelines that examine the experience of People of Color within various contexts. These points are intended to show the development of (1) racial ideas in the predominately White UUA; (2) the fellowshipping of Ministers of Color; and (3) significant events and people that are a large part of the cultural fabric of the People of Color community today in Unitarian Universalism. Finally I offer research and an analysis that identifies some of the key communities and projects that have sought to minister to Unitarian Universalist People of Color over the last 25 years.

Presenting these experiences has not been an easy task, in part due to my desire to place the experiences within their sociological context. This thesis contains an abundant reporting of



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events, names, dates, and acronyms that are brought together from the perspective of an insider to Unitarian Universalism. While this is being written primarily for the benefit of other Unitarian Universalists, later editions will seek to place this history in a broader societal and cultural context. In order to help the reader along, consider the research and writing with the following evolutionary description:

- 1) Personal hermeneutical introduction, methodology, terminology. (Chapters I, II, III)
- 2) Sociological contextualization. (Chapters IV, V, VI)
- 3) Historical narratives. (Chapters VII, VIII, IX)
- 4) Conclusion and Recommendations. (Chapter X)

We live in an era where increasingly, everything is documented. Yet there is very little that tells the story of People of Color in Unitarian Universalism. This places us in an Orwellian situation: “He who controls the past, controls the future; and he who controls the present, controls the past.” Presently the record of our existence does not extend far beyond our mere presence. The accomplishments, achievements, hopes and visions as Unitarian Universalists within the faith are barely known and many are in jeopardy of being lost. My hope is that this work will encourage others to investigate and collect the experiences and history of People of Color within our liberal religious faith. May it also help all Unitarian Universalists be more aware of the histories of People of Color in the church and may a stronger collective knowledge, particularly among People of Color through organizations such as DRUUMM<sup>5</sup> foster clarity in vision, solidarity and action.

I encourage all people to take time to know their own histories starting with themselves and their families of origin. We have excellent models of empowerment and ethical action as Unitarian Universalists around gender, sexual orientation, accessibility and class consciousness. Let us strengthen these justice efforts with the consistent work of studying race and racism in our congregations and communities and build a model of linked oppressions and linked identities. We need to remember our history as part of respecting our inherent worth and dignity. We need to understand the experiences of People of Color within Unitarian Universalism if we are to build religious covenants that honor the interdependent web of existence. May this work be but a brush stroke of our collective painting of history, healing through education and consciousness, and scaffolding for future historians.

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In order to ground my own perspective for the reader, I offer two short stories. The first is my personal story of reawakening to the gifts and spiritual home of the faith after growing up Unitarian Universalist in Oregon. The second is a story of an interaction with Rev. Dr. William Jones, one of the few African-American ministers and long-time advocate for racial justice within the UUA. My hope is that these stories will help articulate the confluence of the personal and political that serves as a foundation for this thesis.

### **Personal Story**

By the summer of 1997, I had found a backdoor into Unitarian Universalism after taking leave of active involvement after high school. Throughout college I maintained a connection, to my home congregation in Portland, Oregon, with friends I had made from my youth ministry leadership, and with the congregation in Eugene, Oregon where I was going to college. Yet there was a growing gap in my relationship with Unitarian Universalism. At the University of Oregon I became deeply involved in the social, cultural, and political issues of Students of Color, and by direct extension the larger surrounding Communities of Color. It was a period of intense revelation in my life, culminating in some significant transformative events in my last years of undergraduate study.

I had become very committed to the idea of building a multiracial community, and was slowly learning the theories of racial justice, anti-racism, the linkage of oppressions, confronting racism, institutional, cultural and systemic racism. When I was invited in 1996 to take on the responsibility of moderator for the Continental Youth organization (Young Religious Unitarian Universalists, or YRUU,) for their annual business meeting, I was honored but skeptical of feeling at home in the community that had once been so meaningful for me. With my worldview newly informed by my college education and experiences, I had already begun a careful and detailed interrogation of my birth-faith of Unitarian Universalism. I had become wary of the extreme Whiteness within the church, and the institutional and cultural racism therein. My experience at the University of Oregon introduced my maturing self to racism of the White liberal through my activism with Students of Color. Reflecting on my childhood in the church, I concluded that I had gained little knowledge or insight about race relations. Given where I was personally, Unitarian Universalism's White guilt, tokenizing, and color-blind behaviors fueled my growing disenchantment towards the church. Even so, attending the 1996 Continental Youth

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Council at Reed College was an honor and gave me a long moment to reflect on my own religious and spiritual identity. At the conclusion of this I felt a renewed interest in our liberal religious faith. I experienced serious questioning about racism within Unitarian Universalism that inspired me, paralleling the questions I was asking as a Person of Color within the church. At Youth Council I learned much about myself and came to look upon the virtue of Unitarian Universalism with fresh eyes in part through the mandatory and daily Anti-Racism workshops.<sup>6</sup> I was one of two or three People of Color at the event, and I was learning from a pair of co-trainers, a White seminarian and a Black minister from Boston.

In 1997, I agreed to attend the GA of UU Congregations in Phoenix, AZ. Attending primarily as a representative of the UUA's Young Adult Ministry Office, I had become an engaged critic who was then asked to take on official responsibilities, (not necessarily in a co-opted sense,) and I spent a good deal of time connecting with other People of Color. The Young Adults had organized a Young Adults of Color Network in 1995 that I had been loosely aware of, led by Kristen Harper (formerly Jewett), Danielle Gladd and Alyce Gowdy-Wright. All three Black Women were amazing leaders, calling together people with vision and direction. I lent my skills, primarily group organizing, and we organized several meetings during the GA.

On the last night, we organized an intergenerational People of Color gathering, and held it in the large banquet hallway leading into the main hall where a dance was being held. This was a popular time to be out and to be seen at GA. We used this location and time period to identify and reach out to as many People of Color as we could. We made announcements, handed out flyers, reminders on the bulletin board, and then staffed tables as the flow of several thousand UUs passed us by. We gathered nearly four dozen folks together. Many lifelong connections were made that evening, particularly between the younger and older generations of People of Color.

For this paper, these experiences inform my perspective of the writer. I write as a lifelong Unitarian Universalist committed to becoming a religious professional in the Association, as a Person of Color of mixed Chinese and White descent, and as an engaged anti-racism/anti-oppression activist. I pursue this thesis as an act against racism, by providing documentation of the labors and accomplishments of People of Color within the UUA, and surfacing the ways People of Color see themselves within the UUA and their aspirations for their faith. I understand racism as racial prejudice and the misuse of power by systems and

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institutions<sup>7</sup>. I believe that all people are affected by racism, and that people have different but interconnected powers to create a culture of liberty with anti-racist strategies.

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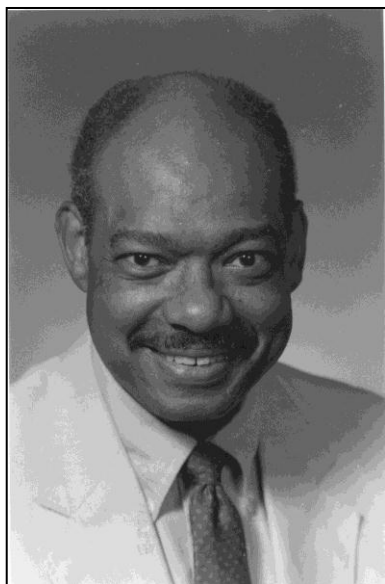
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### Story of Rev. Jones

One of the first elders I had the privilege of meeting was Rev. William Jones, a Unitarian Universalist minister who served as the 10<sup>th</sup> African-American minister in our denomination. As the music was starting up and folks were milling around amidst the sea of White UUs waiting for an official start to our People of Color gathering, I offered Bill a seat and we introduced ourselves. We got to talking about why we are UU, and my response started as it still does today: I was born and raised UU. Bill, however, shared a difficult story, one which was personal and political for him.

I was honestly a little confused as to why someone of his stature, a college professor, renowned in Black Studies, who started the first Black Studies Department in Florida, had chosen to become a UU minister and serve our congregations at this point in his life. I felt that if I could understand this better I might be able to have a clearer vision for the possibility of a multiracial Unitarian Universalist faith.

Bill recounted how while in college and soon thereafter, he began seeking a religious home. He experienced discomfort with his spiritual practice and was open to a new religious



**Rev. Dr. William Jones** (credit: Florida State University)

tradition. He recalled doing research, as he was prone to do, examining the demographics of liberal faiths he was interested in. Bill turned to Unitarian Universalism because of the disproportionate power and privilege the faith had in the world. Despite meager numbers in comparison to mainstream Protestant choices, UUs were economically, politically and socially better off. He wanted to make a change in the world and felt that religiously he could be comfortable as a Unitarian Universalist. Strategically—and it was a strategic decision by his own words—being UU would give him incredible access to gatekeepers in key private and public institutions across the world.

This story grounded me as I was transitioning back into Unitarian Universalism. Emerging from four years of heavy involvement with Communities of Color, however, I yearned for more. I had been disappointed at how little Community of Color there is within Unitarian Universalism, and have intentionally sought out stories like that of Rev. Jones and others in order to opportunities to learn pieces of

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this history. For many of the youth and young adults of Color that I've worked with as staff member for the Unitarian Universalist Association, I sense a similar desire. On many levels it is more profound as the younger People of Color lack a consistent connection to a larger Community of Color. This thesis is in part, an effort to address the paucity of such stories and connections. By standing witness to our living history, we call forth from the margins those unmoored and silenced by this absence.

### Chapter II: Methodology and Frameworks

The research and writing in this thesis were guided by three methodologies. At the center is a historical effort, attempting to record the history of People of Color through narratives and public documentation. Personal interviews, reviews of original source documents, articles in the *UU World* (formerly *The World*, the name changed to *UU World* in 2001) magazine, multiple reports and letters collected from obvious and obscure locations, and a 2005 survey were utilized. In establishing a context for this history, I employ a sociological method, studying the origins, organization, and development of the community of Unitarian Universalists. This exploration is notably limited, although there are several good, and recent, publications available that discuss the denominational history since the merger of Unitarians and Universalists in 1961 with respect to racial concerns. I draw upon the work of Mark Morrison-Reed, who tells the story of two Black Unitarian ministers pre-merger: Victor Carpenter, who in 2004 published *Long Challenge* exploring in more depth the Empowerment Controversy that has since dominated the psyche of the UUA with respect to race, and the detailed and comprehensive 1983 UUA Commission on Appraisal report probing the 1960s and 1970s racial justice endeavors of the Association. Finally, in developing this history and sociological context, I utilize an anti-racist analysis rooted in an understanding of power. This helps to reveal the dynamics of racism that revolve around mattering and marginality, understanding the power of racism to shape our personal, social and spiritual identities, and recognizing the need for accountability to autonomous and empowered communities of People of Color.

Every work of history, according to Howard Zinn, is a political document.<sup>8</sup> This paper will undoubtedly be interpreted by many in a similar fashion. Within Unitarian Universalist circles I want to acknowledge that I have begun to receive a reputation for my anti-racism work. From growing up with a background of mixed races in an American society where White supremacy dominates, to maturing as a racial justice activist through experiential and analysis development with Crossroads Ministry and the People's Institute, I clearly write with attention to social and cultural change. For those readers who may be skeptical about People of Color ministry in all its diversity, and of anti-racist/anti-oppressive multicultural identity and cultural change as mandated by the 1997 Journey Towards Wholeness Resolution, I hope that this thesis serves as a resource for you to better understand the experiences of Persons of Color in Unitarian

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Universalism. Through hearing and listening authentically to these experiences, perhaps we can make more meaning in our common commitment to racial and cultural diversity, and to nurturing welcoming congregations for all the people of the world. Ultimately anti-racism is about accountability to the experiences of People of Color. This experience is dynamic, it is not dogmatic or static, and we have to continually adapt and reinterpret our condition, analysis, and strategy.

### **Framework 1: Jones's Diagnosis Determines Therapy**

Professor William Jones offers the following construct to remind us to pay attention to the vibrant nature of race relations: Diagnosis Determines Therapy or DDT for short. This maxim has been integrated into the anti-racism work of the UUA, and is important for us to consider it with respect to the history of People of Color. Our history and the way it is both reconstructed and understood are subject to the common analysis, or diagnosis, of the condition. For this history to be of best use to Unitarian Universalism, I encourage us to deliberate on developing clarity with respect to the circumstances of People of Color within Unitarian Universalism. In later chapters, I will seek to discuss the culture, particularly Whiteness and Racial Ideas, in order to explain this sufficiently.

Professor Jones, who served as minister in Providence, Rhode Island, before teaching at Yale Divinity School and finally settling at Florida State University to found the Black Studies Department, calls us to remain steady in our thinking and rethinking of the situation of People of Color within Unitarian Universalism. We cannot ignore the changing forces of racism that have allowed racism to persist and become so deeply embedded in our cultural way of life. Thus, it behooves us not to imagine a single universal solution to the difficulties of race relations in our church or in the world. Our reality, as it relates to race, culture and ethnicity, is affected by virtually every event. For example, the way race was understood before September 11, 2001 and how it was understood afterwards after cannot be considered fixed and invariable. Robette Dias, a former Director of Religious Education in Santa Rosa, California, and the first UUA staff to hold the portfolio of ministry to People of Color in the Faith in Action Department, provides an excellent model for probing the complexity of race, particularly within the context of the United States (but also potentially applicable to Canada).



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### **Framework 2: Dias' Historical Development of Institutional Racism**

Dias, who now works as Co-Executive Director of Crossroads Ministry, sees history through the metaphor of the basket, with the diverse and seemingly disconnected actually being strands that can be woven together to create a picture that provides us with clarity with respect to our state of affairs. Combined with Jones's "DDT," we have an excellent strategy for ongoing investigation of these issues, and further expansion of the history of People of Color in Unitarian Universalism. It is a challenging task, however, piecing together the distinct histories in a way that offers us a glimpse at a common diagnosis. Dias writes,

I was looking for the patterns, looking at events as circumstances, dissecting the words and deeds of historic figures in an attempt to discern more broadly the social dynamics of the time. You have to do this if the people you care most about are written out. But even in the writing out or distortion of the stories, there is evidence of the truth. It wasn't until I learned to make baskets that the pattern I describe here became clear to me. Perhaps the ordering of my mind as I thought about the basket I was working on, and dreamed about the baskets I wanted to make, cleared the way for these thoughts to suddenly come together in a whole new way for me to weave divergent strands together to form the basket of history.

I gathered the frame for the basket while trying to make sense of why Blacks and Indians are treated so differently in the United States. One drop for one group, blood quantum for the other. While both dynamics are clearly motivated by racism it didn't make sense the different ways racism manifested in relationship to these groups. That's when I understood the power of colonialism and why colonialism has to be part of any discourse on racism. It wasn't until I really understood the US as an apartheid nation in the 1960s that I could gather the divergent strands together that would eventually create the bottom and sides of the basket. I had to hear the stories of each racial group and both hear and experience the current realities for people in each racialized POC group before I could complete the basket. September 11 and the aftermath helped a lot. The crisis removed the veils of political correctness and allowed hateful racist rhetoric (especially toward Arabs and people of the "Middle East") to resurface in the mainstream discourse.

Then I realized how very deeply the pattern was engraved in our society and how it had operated throughout the history of the US and continued to this day. This emphasized for me the importance of looking at history through the lenses of colonialism and apartheid as keys to understand both history and current world events. This article is intended to reveal some of the patterns I have witnessed and to identify the legacy they bring to our lives today.<sup>9</sup>

Dias, who is a lead trainer around institutional anti-racism/multicultural transformation work, shares this framework for discerning the progress within institutions that have perpetuated racism in our society. The examples she provides and the connecting ideas are useful as we next

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discuss the term People of Color. Keep in mind that while the examples detailed below pertain to historical affairs outside Unitarian Universalism, we need to remember the powerful position individual Unitarian Universalists have had in the creation of the United States, as well as the real presence Unitarian and Universalist churches have had on the proverbial “public square” traditionally.

The table below, developed by Dias, is provided without alteration. It provides an accounting of the major racial groups present within the United States, along with Dias’s own analysis and language describing their condition as created and enforced by White institutions. In addition to describing the fundamental strategies for the dehumanization, or objectifying, of People of Color, Dias provides evidence showing the interconnection of diverse racial minorities through unique, yet similar experiences of racial oppression, within the American system of institutions. We Unitarian Universalists cannot ignore the social realities around us as well as our active and/or passive complicity in the exploitation of People of Color. Dias’ analysis demonstrates the power of institutions to shape identity, perpetuate stereotypes, and categorically maintain a system of privilege and marginalization which impacts our daily lives within congregations and beyond. Based upon Dias’s framework and Jones’s theory of the dynamic nature of oppression, this paper seeks to document and evaluate the need to perpetually review and amend our analysis to address the conditions and facts of reality.

Unitarian Universalism is interconnected to social and cultural realities of the world. In fact we have a unique bond, given our theology and practice, calling us to live out our values in creating the world we pray for here and now. Without a creedal belief in heaven or hell, we focus our attention on *this* world, and salvation in this life. We have a powerful history of social engagement on behalf of social justice, and we have much experience to build upon. We also have a responsibility to learn from these experiences, particularly in areas where we have struggled so substantially. With respect to race and racism, Dias helps remind the UUA that these issues cannot be only addressed through the lens of individualism. To do so ignores the obvious truths of institutional and systemic missions, purposes, functions and responsibilities in creating and maintaining White power and privilege culturally in our world. Concentrating on institutional anti-racism transformation is not as simple as educating an individual; it necessitates more acutely addressing authority and control, which are hallmarks of preserving the status quo of supremacy. When we touch the issue of institutions, we touch the layers of organizations that

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respond most slowly, and most sensitively to change, and thus we need patience. Jones's theory is the gentle reminder that our long commitments and glimpses of astonishing anti-racist institutional transformation will not be static nor satisfactory for lasting racial and social justice. Indeed, we need to prepare ourselves for great success, to honor and remember success, but to never forget the adapting nature and conditions that support racism in Unitarian Universalism, White racism. To disregard Jones's thinking is to struggle unsustainably towards justice. The experiences, histories, and stories shared here are part of the continually assembling building blocks towards racial justice in Unitarian Universalism.

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### Historical Development of Institutional Racism Chart (R. Dias)

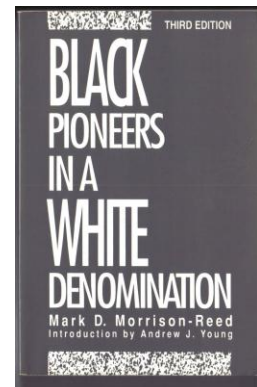
Racial Group & Ideology	Racial-Economic Strategy	Examples of Legally Mandated Racism and Apartheid	Examples of Changing Laws	Examples of Self-Perpetuating Racism
<b>African Americans</b>  <i>Social and intellectual inferiors</i>	Dehumanize the people to create a large pool of free and cheap labor that can also be used to manipulate and control poor white workers as well	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Naturalization Act of 1790</li> <li>• One Drop Rule</li> <li>• 3/5 Doctrine</li> <li>• Dred Scott Decision</li> <li>• Slave Codes esp. punishment</li> <li>• Plessy v Ferguson</li> <li>• Jim Crow Laws</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Civil Rights Act of 1866</li> <li>• 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Amendments</li> <li>• Naturalization Act of 1870</li> <li>• Brown v Board of Education</li> <li>• Civil Rights Act of 1964</li> <li>• Affirmative Action</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• De facto housing segregation</li> <li>• Unequal school funding</li> <li>• Urban renewal</li> <li>• Lack of employment opportunities</li> <li>• Unequal sentencing laws</li> </ul>
<b>Arab Americans</b>  <i>Marauding invaders</i>	Dehumanize the people to acquire and control their natural resources in order to prevent those resources from being used to invade and conquer free, democratic, Christian society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reconquista and Crusades</li> <li>• Naturalization Act of 1790</li> <li>• Immigration Act of 1924</li> <li>• Ex parte Shalid,, also Dow</li> <li>• In re Feroz Din</li> <li>• In re Ahmed Hassan</li> <li>• Covert CIA operations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952</li> <li>• Immigration and Nationality Act Amendments of 1965</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Registration, detainment, deportation and expatriation</li> <li>• Guantanamo Bay detentions</li> <li>• Post Sept 11 rhetoric</li> <li>• War on Terror</li> <li>• War on Iraq</li> <li>• US war economy</li> </ul>
<b>Asian Americans</b>  <i>Perpetual foreigners</i>	Dehumanize the people to keep them outside the protection of the Constitution in order to exploit their labor and prevent them from acquiring property and resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Naturalization Act of 1790</li> <li>• Naturalization Act of 1870</li> <li>• Chinese Exclusion Act 1882</li> <li>• Immigration Act of 1917</li> <li>• Immigration Act of 1924</li> <li>• Takao Ozawa v US</li> <li>• US v Bhagat Singh Thind</li> <li>• Tydings-McDuffie Act 1934</li> <li>• Executive Order 9066</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952</li> <li>• Immigration and Nationality Act Amendments of 1965</li> <li>• Reparations for internment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952</li> <li>• Vietnam War</li> <li>• Hate Crimes</li> <li>• Vincent Chin</li> <li>• Wen Ho Lee</li> <li>• Students excluded from affirmative action</li> <li>• Model minority myth</li> </ul>
<b>Latina/os</b>  <i>Mestizos tainted by African and Indian inferiority</i>	Dehumanize the people to maintain the Spanish colonial model in which social, political and economic elites are co-opted to participate in the exploitation of the masses and particularly the most vulnerable of their own racial/ethnic group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Naturalization Act of 1790</li> <li>• Spanish American War</li> <li>• Braceros program</li> <li>• Repatriation campaigns like Operation Wetback</li> <li>• Downes v Bidwell</li> <li>• Literacy Laws</li> <li>• Covert CIA operations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nationality Act of 1940</li> <li>• Mexican Worker Amnesty</li> <li>• Farm labor reform</li> <li>• Bilingual education</li> <li>• Navy leaving Vieques</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952</li> <li>• Puerto Rican Diaspora and “brain drain”</li> <li>• Proposition 187 in California</li> <li>• English only</li> <li>• NAFTA</li> </ul>
<b>Native Americans</b>  <i>Vanishing savages</i>	Dehumanize the people in order to commit genocide and take possession of the land and exploit the resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Naturalization Act of 1790</li> <li>• Naturalization Act of 1870</li> <li>• Indian Wars</li> <li>• Treaty breaking</li> <li>• Removal and reservations</li> <li>• Allotment Act of 1887</li> <li>• Termination</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nationality Act of 1940</li> <li>• Indian Reorganization Act</li> <li>• American Indian Religious Freedom Act</li> <li>• American Indian Child Welfare Act</li> <li>• Repatriation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blood Quantum &amp; invisibility</li> <li>• IRA and Claims Commission</li> <li>• American Indian Civil Rights Act of 1968</li> <li>• Lyng v NW Cemetery Protection Association</li> <li>• BIA “trust” case</li> </ul>

### Chapter III: Terms and Scope

This chapter seeks to define in more detail the historical scope of this study, and discuss and determine as best as possible the meaning of the term “People of Color.” In establishing the scope of this paper, some informed, yet ultimately arbitrary, decisions had to be made in setting the historical boundaries. In my attempt at explaining why 1980-2005 as a period is important to explore, it is my hope that others will take up the call of searching for truth and meaning in other periods, both brief and long in annals of Unitarianism, Universalism and Unitarian Universalism. The discussion of the development and usage of the term “People of Color” is an uneasy one at best. While there are some sectors of our society, both Western and internationally, that universally employ the term with a common understanding, there is clearly an unfinished debate within the UUA. Questions about the descriptive and political nature of the term persist, with the only consensus being its conditional nature. Understanding the conditions of how the term has developed, is utilized, and lives in various contexts helps us recognize the complexity of the term while at the same time not abandoning its use out of simple frustration at the lack of absolute definition.

#### 1980-2005

The era of 1980 to 2005 was chosen primarily thanks to the work of the only Person of Color who has been identified as a historian of a People of Color experience within Unitarian Universalism.<sup>10</sup> Rev. Dr. Mark Morrison-Reed, recently retired co-minister of the First Unitarian Church of Toronto, published his Meadville-Lombard doctoral thesis entitled *Black Pioneers in a White Denomination*<sup>11</sup>, in 1979, revealing for the first time in comprehensive form stories of persons of African descent/African-Americans/Black Americans in Unitarian Universalism.



The book focused on the experience of two ministers, Rev. Egbert Ethelred Brown (1875-1956) and Rev. Lewis McGee (1893-1979), and their struggle with racial discrimination in the American Unitarian Association. Egbert Ethelred Brown, founder of the first Unitarian Church in Harlem, and Lewis A. McGee, who started the Interracial Free Religious Fellowship in Chicago's black ghetto, struggled to shape their liberal religious faith in a racist, White denomination. Morrison-Reed's book is a bright benchmark in the scholarship widely available to Unitarian Universalists and the world. As essentially the only existing published work that

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provides a window into the experience of “Persons of Color” in Unitarian Universalism, it is a beginning, an example and a calling to those seeking knowledge in this area. It is the only book written by a Unitarian Universalist “Person of Color” about “Persons of Color,” making it a unique, primary resource.

Morrison-Reed provides us with a glimpse of the struggles of Black clergy within Unitarian Universalism in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. His work is influential, as it is the only book required of seminarians that relates critically to the lives of People of Color in Unitarian Universalism.<sup>12</sup> Interestingly, he is perhaps the only Unitarian Universalist who identifies as a historian of the experience of People of Color in Unitarian Universalism, predominantly the African-American or Black experience. His voice has been undoubtedly lonely since *Black Pioneers* was first published in 1980. Since then, Morrison-Reed remains a consistent reporter for Unitarian Universalists of Color, but as a single voice, there is only so much he can reasonably accomplish while also serving one of our largest congregations in Canada. Morrison-Reed as a historian has given us a beginning, has opened doors through which I pray many more will enter. It is important to note that in interviews with Morrison-Reed, I have learned that he is continuing his research and is contributing to the new Unitarian Universalist People of Color Archive at Meadville-Lombard established by Rev. Dr. Michelle Bentley.

I selected 1980 as a beginning point to not only draw attention to Morrison-Reed’s work twenty-five years later, but because I wanted to begin to outline, with complexity, the history that has proceeded since *Black Pioneers* sought to call Unitarian Universalists again to more authentic racial and cultural diversity. Neither Morrison-Reed nor my work here should be considered universal however. Furthermore my work, although seeking to be inclusive, is more plainly likened to an effort to paint the edges of an iceberg. Twenty-five years is a generation of time that overlaps roughly with other significant eras in the UUA. Personally it is the generation I grew up in, as I was age 7 in 1980 and a child in the West Hills Unitarian Fellowship religious education program. Institutionally, 1980 was nearly 20 years after the merger of the Universalist Church of America and the American Unitarian Association.<sup>13</sup> In 1980 Liberal Religious Youth was becoming Young Religious Unitarian Universalists, and the Women in Religion and Gay-Lesbian efforts were gaining traction and strength influencing the culture of our community and theology to the congregational core. The UUA Principles and Purposes had yet to be

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established, and there were less than a dozen ordained People of Color active in Unitarian Universalist ministry.

The last 25 years have also seen several broader cultural transformations, rapid technological advancements, declining economic security, mass media and communications, and the world geopolitical changes of the 1990s. Information is becoming a commodity and multiracial relations continue to grow and change the dominant White/European culture we live in. Communities of Color in North American are contributing heavily to popular culture, even though segregation has been sustained and some would argue is even increasing beyond the levels of 1958, when *Brown vs. Board of Education* criminalized intentional institutional segregationist policies<sup>14</sup>. The emergence of the internet has improved access to information, creating a virtual world forum of topics previously unexplored. The generation born today (in 2005) will have a significantly different childhood than my generation (born in 1973). Gross and growing economic disparities are profound, oppressing the many for the pleasure of the uppermost classes, while at the same time adapting Borg<sup>15</sup> style in resisting calls for racial justice and equality. The idea alone of what race and racism mean in our society has revolutionized new progressive and reactionary conservative thought yet the mainstream fail to be inspired, motivated or committed to engage in the exercise of tackling race prejudice and White supremacist power. Daily we are reminded of this in the use of language and imagery in mass media, the economic disparities among People of Color, and continued violence, particularly racially motivated hate crimes,<sup>16</sup> against People of Color.

We are a culture that understands ourselves in terms of generations, and within the UUA there are several important generational distinctions to recognize that are useful here. First is that it has been almost 50 years since the merger of the Unitarians and Universalists, with the generation of laity and religious professionals that were active pre-merger are entering the ranks of elders and are entering their last stages of life. The generation of laity and religious professionals who came of age immediately post-merger, many of whom were significantly touched by the civil rights era and work of the UUA in this regard, are mostly retired today. Finally, the post-merger generation is coming of age having been raised more intentionally as Unitarian Universalists, a faith identity still relatively new in form and function, without the same historical and theological grounding of their more religious, Christian, forbearers.

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### **People of Color Terminology**

“People of Color” is a term that has come into widespread use over the last decade. With no apparent roots with respect to the common parlance of today, it has been used historically to identify multiracial persons, particularly of African descent. In French New Orleans as early as the 18<sup>th</sup> century there were groups, including a battalion in the War of 1812, which organized as “Free People of Color.”<sup>17</sup> The idea of identity based on color can be directly connected to the racism and identity of European-Whites, predominately in North America, who have a long record of passionate fixation over color and people. Over time the meaning of the term has changed significantly, and nowadays the term is generally used to identify those persons who have been racially, culturally, ethnically, and economically oppressed. For all intents and purposes, this has meant broadly persons of Latino/a, Native American/Indigenous, African, Asian/Pacific Islander, and Arab/Middle Eastern descent, in part or wholly.

The Western States Center, a progressive training and organizing institute based in Portland, Oregon, offers this description of the term People of Color:

People of Color is not a term that refers to a real biological or scientific distinction between people. People of Color in the United States share the common experience of being targeted and oppressed by racism. Unfortunately, one of the ways racism operates is to keep People of Color divided. Many people only think about their specific ethnic or racial group when discussing oppression or the need to build political power. By using the term People of Color, we begin to push people to think more broadly. We need to build relationships with other groups of color. The term People of Color has movement building potential.<sup>18</sup>

For the purposes of this paper, and being careful not to inflate the definition to claim those who would not identify as People of Color, I ground my meaning in the political solidarity analysis of Western States Center and the following principle established by DRUUMM when it was solely a group for religious professionals of Color in 1998-2000:

The United States is a race-based society made up of a dominant White group and several other racially defined groups which have been and continue to be oppressed in specific ways. While race is a social construct created by the dominant White group to oppress and exclude the other groups from the power and resources of the society, race has also been used by oppressed peoples to build group solidarity and a culture of survival and resistance.

Racism has also created barriers which separate oppressed groups from one another. While each oppressed group is affected by racism differently and each group maintains its own unique identity and culture, there is also the recognition that racism has the

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potential to unite oppressed people in a collective of resistance. For this reason, many individuals who identify as members of racially oppressed groups also claim the political identity of being People of Color. This in no way diminishes their specific cultural or racial identity; rather it is an affirmation of the multiple layers of identity of every individual.<sup>19</sup>

Crossroads Ministry, an interfaith antiracism ministry in the USA which has worked extensively with the UUA to address institutional and cultural racism, offers this perspective on racial identity in America:

Racial identity in the United States is not shaped in a neutral environment. The identities of People of Color form in response to racial oppression, and the identities of Whites form in response to racial superiority. These two identity dynamics manifest in a complex range of attitudes and behaviors that support and perpetuate the racist paradigm in this country. In order to work together to dismantle individual, institutional, and cultural racism, People of Color and Whites must understand how these identity dynamics operate in specific institutional settings, and devise strategies to overcome the barriers and oppression created by them<sup>20</sup>.

The complexities and multiplicities of experience with respect to race, ethnicity and the cultures we claim make any effort to establish a consensus language around racial/cultural/ethnic identity problematic. Building on Jones's analysis discussed earlier, and Dias's framework of institutional racism, both see People of Color becoming a natural movement building term. Unitarian Universalists of African, Asian/Pacific Islander, Arab/Middle Eastern, Latino/a, and Middle Eastern/Arab descent over the last 25 years have been at the forefront of Association efforts to study and act for social, political, and economic justice. While not all have agreed on the terminology of People of Color, this term is commonly used within the public witness of the UUA, and it has seen an increasing usage institutionally in response to advocacy by racial minorities. In this context, it is reasonable and accountable to utilize the term, while recognizing the inevitable limitations that come with any attempt to identify universally any group subject to oppression.

In the UUA, People of Color have endured in essentially liminal space that is situated at the sensory threshold and barely perceptible historically by White Unitarian Universalists. We People of Color, are wise to explore our diverse experiences in shared space. We have been patient in learning to relate authentically with one another, and generous in our willingness to forgive mistakes and affirm the efforts of ministering and organizing for a faith community that

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welcomes all people. It is also important to appreciate the enormous potential of White Unitarian Universalists with respect to nurturing and sharing space for People of Color ministry. In truth, we need each other as we tell these histories and collectively act upon the stories we share.

The UUA continues to struggle however with People of Color and has made a significant modification internally by adding “Latino/a”. People of Color/Latino/a has now become the standard phrase articulated by the UUA administration and programs, coming initially from the newly formed Identity Based Ministries (IdBM) Staff Group in 2002 the year the Faith in Action Department was dismantled. IdBM, led by Taquiena Boston, a former Faith in Action staff member, launched a Latino/a Concerns portfolio (initially led by Marta Valentin), which was conceived of separately from the broader People of Color community. Both the change in language and the establishment of new staff services took many People of Color by surprise.<sup>21</sup> This surprise was also mixed with frustration given the vacancy of the People of Color ministry portfolio that had been carefully and sensitively developed just a few years earlier.

A small group of Latino/a ministers, Rev. Patricia Jimenez, Rev. Lilia Cuervo, Rev. Jose Ballester and Rev. Peter Morales advocated for the change in language to the UUA administration after the election of Rev. William Sinkford, an African-American and one of the founding members of DRUUMM. The attention to inclusiveness with language is important to celebrate, although the failure to engage the larger People of Color community needs to be taken as a lesson in accountability. Misunderstanding and confusion as to the purpose of these changes, coupled with the continued presence of Latino/as within DRUUMM who identify as People of Color, continues to be a source of tension in the UUA.

Latino/as within DRUUMM have acknowledged the intense racism within the Latino/a community and the unique combination of Spanish colonialism and White supremacy that has shaped Latino/a identity. It has been said to foster a profound internalization of racial inferiority/superiority that separates Latino/as from one another<sup>22</sup>. The need for collective discussion and defining of language would be helpful here, which has happened occasionally and with great passion at DRUUMM, the Latino/a UU Networking Association (LUUNA) and the DRUUMM Asian/Pacific Islander Caucus, yet still remains tender and uncomfortable within the

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UUA. Some of these discussions, specifically among religious professionals, have produced potential language that would begin a reconciliation and clearer common analysis. There has not however been satisfactory follow through and presently disharmony remains.<sup>23</sup>

The rejection of the term People of Color by some Latino/as also reminds us of the fallacy of biology of race, and how it was perpetuated scientifically, politically, economically, socially and culturally disproportionately by White-European Americans for hundreds of years. We ignore the impact of race, interconnected with ethnicity and culture, at our own peril; history and experience clearly tell us that they are linked. To operate out of this paradigm not only provides ammunition to Whites who have no stake or empathy for the racial justice sought by People of Color in the UUA, but has the real potential of confusing and poorly educating the next generation of children who are increasingly multiracial and multicultural. These children, especially children of color, have a right to be educated about the realities of race and racism within their communities.

I have come to understand the identity of a "Person of Color" through the following construction:

- (1) *Self-identify as*, in part or whole, with one or more racial/ethnic groups that are not of European/White descent. Persons may well identify strongly with their European/White descent heritage, but must also identify with a non-European/White minority. (I personally don't like the term "minority" or being non-anything.)
- (2) *Seen as*, in part or whole, a Person of Color by society. This extends beyond the shallowness of skin color, to being connected to cultural practices, language, shared resistance against oppression, active solidarity with other Persons of Color, and consciousness in our vocabulary about the effect of White Privilege and White Supremacy on Communities of Color.
- (3) *Live as*, in part or whole, a Person of Color in the larger world. This also extends beyond skin tones to our own choices related to strengthening ourselves against White Supremacy, supporting other Persons of Color in need, and being in relationships of accountability with Communities of Color, both specific to our racial/cultural heritage and wider efforts to unite disparate Peoples of Color.

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Finally, People of Color identity within Unitarian Universalism is closely tied to an analysis of anti-racism, in which a part of the strategy includes accountability to a larger community of Unitarian Universalist People of Color. The experiences of racism in our world have shaped the resistance and powerful cultures of survival in the face of violent and coercive assimilation and wholesale genocide. This history, understood with a vision for racial justice and equality for all, is a part of all of us as individuals. For those of us who feel detached or free from such history, we may be reminded daily of the racial disparity and divide through the social indicators of class, education, health care, hate crimes, employment and representation in government.

This chapter sought to problematize both the chronological scope and the terminology of People of Color to give the reader a more in-depth perspective of the considerations of the author, and to provide a glimpse of the complexities of the use of “People of Color” within Unitarian Universalism. There is no absolutism here with respect to terminology, only an intentional, positive, and movement building purpose that is the heritage of the use of People of Color. In the next chapter, we will explore more about the meaning and usage of People of Color language in our modern era, drawing upon the voices from the 2005 Survey of Unitarian Universalist People of Color, and we will continue to examine the history and experience of People of Color with the methodologies and frameworks discussed thus far. .

**Chapter IV: Survey of Unitarian Universalist People of Color**

In the fall of 2005 a short survey was developed and distributed to 300 Unitarian Universalist People of Color, exclusively through email list-serves and an internet website. In addition, the announcement of the survey was carried to many White UUs, who were asked to communicate the existence to any People of Color in their congregations. The survey received 91 responses in the 3 month timeframe provided. There were 16 questions, including several identifying characteristics. The survey was approved by Harvard Committee on Human Subject Research, and the questions were developed by me with support from my thesis advisor, Professor Wallace Best. People of Color was used in the title, but not defined in anyway. There were no instructions, only this brief statement of purpose: *The main goal of this survey is to understand the attitudes, hopes and concerns of Unitarian Universalist Persons of Color. The responses will be used for a Senior Thesis on “A 25 Year History of People of Color in Unitarian Universalism 1980-2005.”* The survey is in the appendix in full form.

The racial/cultural diversity reporting allowed respondents to name their own identities without categories. In order to gain insight into the diversity within Unitarian Universalism, the responses were grouped according to the traditional communities that have organized in the faith. Thus, the following table represents the percentage of respondents who identified their ‘racial/cultural identity and heritage as \_\_\_\_’, including multiracial persons.

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### Racial/Cultural Identity

African descent	52.75%
Asian/Pacific Islander	32.97%
Latino/a/Hispanic of Color	9.89%
Native/Indigenous descent	5.49%
Iranian/Middle Eastern	1.10%

Several things to take into consideration when trying to interpret these numbers. First is the longer term presence of persons of African descent in the UUA, in part documented by *Black Pioneers*, who were a part of our religious professionals and laity even before the American Civil Rights era. This community of color has achieved prominence at the denominational and congregational level thanks to their collective advocacy, organizing, and UUA financial support. Of particular significance were local congregational efforts at establishing Black Unitarian Universalist Caucuses in the 1960s and 1970s, and the 1985 GA Resolution calling on congregations to establish local “Black Concerns” groups<sup>24</sup>. These efforts coupled with the steady, although slight presence of African descent Ministers, Religious Educators and UUA denominational staff may help us understand the majority presence of African descent responses to the survey. Compared to the U.S. Census of 2000 however, this number is disproportionate where Latino/as and African-American/Blacks constitute roughly equal numbers.

The second historical detail to consider is the recent history, (since 1995,) when Latino/as organized into LUUNA (Latino/a UU Networking Association), and 1998 when Asian/Pacific Islanders began to network and ultimately founded the Asian/Pacific Islander Caucus of DRUUMM in 2002 (A/PIC). The small Latino/a identification may relate to the relatively dormant status of LUUNA over the last three years outside of an annual meeting at GA, and the lack of any known website, email list-serve or organizational leadership publicly listed. The Asian/Pacific Islander presence, on the other hand, needs to be understood in the context of a fast growing and highly organized DRUUMM A/PIC that maintains an active internet presence and reaches out through newsletters and an annual conference for members of local congregations.

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The results of this question also provide us with an understanding of those who claimed to be mixed race, i.e. claiming more than one racial/cultural identity, and those who chose not to identify in any way racially/culturally.

Mixed Race	23.08%
Unreported	2.20%

The growing recognition of mixed race/multiracial identity has been lifted up historically by LUUNA and the African-American Unitarian Universalist Ministry (AAUUM). At GA in 2005, People of Color who identified as multiracial organized a new DRUUMM Caucus, “MultiRac.”<sup>25</sup> The small fraction of survey respondents who did not report any racial/cultural identity may be viewed with some skepticism as the number is likely higher in congregations due to the dominating presence of Whites and the subsequent pressure of non-Whites to assimilate or ignore racial/cultural heritage in order to sustain membership. Furthermore, the survey clearly stated People of Color, with an explicit racial/cultural connotation, and thus persons who may identify as having a heritage other than White-European—i.e. other racial and cultural minorities traditionally underrepresented and/or historically marginalized in North America—may have chosen to remain silent. Lastly, there is a feeling among some of the older generation of People of Color who were present during the UUA efforts around antiracism in the 1960s and 1970s that the UUA never fulfilled racial justice commitments promised public, and while remaining in our congregations, some of these people have since become silent on issues of race and racism.<sup>26</sup>

Other demographic data of the survey showed good representation beyond the denominationally active persons. Surprisingly welcome was the overwhelming majority who reported being a member of a UU congregation. The gender breakdown may be further considered by the generally higher involvement rates of women in lay leadership and as religious professionals (both ministers and religious educators for example). Overall, this survey exceeded expectations in eliciting a balanced response and is thus potentially quite useful in valuing the interpretation of response.

### Member of a UU Congregation

Yes	87.91%
No	12.09%



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### Geographic Origin

North	20.88%
South	18.68%
Southwest	16.48%
Northeast	12.09%
Midwest	9.89%
Northwest	7.69%
International	7.69%
None of the Above	6.59%

### Gender

Women	62.64%
Men	36.26%
Transgender	1.10%

### UUA Denominational Involvement

Not Involved At All	29.67%
Very Involved	26.37%
Somewhat Involved	24.18%
Limited Involvement	19.78%

### Attended a People of Color Event

Yes	63.74%
No	34.07%
Not Sure	2.20%

### Age

Over 50	38.46%
36 to 50	30.77%
26-35	20.88%
Under 25	9.89%

Returning to the discourse on the term People of Color, those surveyed overwhelmingly saw the term as a neutral expression descriptive of their racial/cultural identity. Of the 90% who raised no objection to the term, or associated it with persons of African descent, 2/3 described “People of Color” with apolitical language, i.e. having no socio-political relevance or

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importance, that often manifested as “Non-White”. Unfortunately the survey did not ask if respondents would themselves identify with the term People of Color. Given that the question was designed to elicit an impartial response without any prompting, the survey results may be considered less biased than if the question was asked with a definition of the term provided.

With this in mind, the responses that defined People of Color in more comprehensive and complicated ways, such as directly linking People of Color to a power and political analysis, or seeing it as derogatory, potentially are a greater reflection of an individual’s actual belief. A useful consideration for follow-up would be to ask what ideas people would associate with the term and provide a list of contemporary meanings in order to reveal a more nuanced view and practice.

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### Meaning of “People of Color”

Non-White and/or Apolitical Neutral	58.24%
Political/Empowering/Anti- Oppressive	31.87%
Oppositional/Derogatory/Meaningless	6.59%
Being of African descent	3.30%

### **Selected Responses – *Racial/Cultural self-identity in brackets afterward***

#### Non-White and/or Apolitical Neutral (58.24%):

A majority of respondents provided short answers that made no overt political, movement building associations. In the context of the earlier discussion of the term “People of Color,” this data shows that most Unitarian Universalists, at least when questioned simply about the meaning of the term to them, do not demonstrate a sense of political significance to their own circumstance. In contrast to other answers, which provided responses that showed both political consciousness as well as an understanding of the interconnection of “People of Color,” these answers present themselves in more bare conceptual terms. Examples include:

“A person of non-European descent, including persons of African, Asian, Latino, or Indigenous descent.” [multiple responses]

“Any non-white person.” [multiple responses]

“It refers to an individual residing within the US who is regarded as being racially/ethnically/culturally different. I am not sure the extent to which other countries use this term. There is a growing respect in several other first world countries for First Nations people—sadly not in the US. I do not think these individuals are referred to as persons of color.” [Asian/Pacific Islander descent]

#### Political/Empowering/Anti-Oppressive (31.87%):

These answers match most closely with the development of the term “People of Color” discussed earlier in Chapter III. The understandings articulated here show a definite political consciousness involving an analysis of racism, power, and oppression in general. Language around dominance, colonialism, and superiority, historical and contemporary elements of racism, as well as resistance and solidarity and elements of anti-racism theory and theology are present. These responses are in harmony with the mission and purpose of DRUUMM, although an

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analysis of how many of these respondents are DRUUMM members is not available. Sample responses:

“People of Color is a political term to me, used to identify many different racial and ethnic groups bound by similar political circumstances.” [Asian/Pacific Islander descent]

“People of Color is a term of racialized resistance. It’s a term adopted by racially oppressed peoples to bind us together in order to resist the divide and conquer the paradigm that characterizes our lives and our collective relationship to White people, as the dominant racial group in the US.” [Native descent]

“It is an umbrella term intended to both identify the common experiences of brown-skinned people in a white world and, also, it is a way to build a sense of solidarity around those experiences across ethnic lines.” [African descent]

“When I speak of “People of Color” in the anti-racism community, I mean people who are descended from any of the indigenous people of Asia, America, Africa, Australia, Pacific Islands, and people from the Middle East. I include people who are multiracial as “People of Color”. I understand, however, that most of these people have never heard of the designation.” [Latino/a descent]

“It is both a personal and political identity. It brings a name to my personal experience, without having to walk around ‘bleeding’ for folks, and it is a comment on my political analysis of the system of oppression. It also implies personal and political commitment to an engaged resistance around issues of oppression rooted in my experience of racism.” [Arab/Middle Eastern descent]

### Oppositional/Derogatory/Meaningless (6.59%):

These responses, coming from only a few respondents, showed a personal disapproval of the term. Responses did not make claims as to the use of the term more broadly in community as those who identified it in a political or movement-building sense sought to convey. Instead, these respondents commented that they personally would not employ the term to describe themselves because it had a neutral to negative meaning. Examples include:

“Honestly I would have to say ‘Person of Color’ is extremely rude when referring to anyone. Yes there may be differences in the way different cultures raise their families, but to make a statement regarding People of Color just sounds politically incorrect. I would be offended if say a Teenager on up to an adult would say this, but maybe a smaller child would probably not upset me as much.” [Latino/a descent]

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“I don’t find the term meaningful. It lumps together groups of people who don’t necessarily relate to one another or have the same interests. In addition, some use the term when they really mean ‘African-American.’ [African descent]

“It’s a label of self-identification; it talks about skin colour and/or race and includes elements of culture. It carries connotations of minority, of political correctness, and sometimes of self-righteousness...and it’s difficult to use in conversation.” [Asian/Pacific Islander descent]

### Being of African Descent (3.30%):

These three respondents believed the term to mean of African descent. As discussed in Chapter III, this has been a point of contention for several Latinos in the UUA, although this data demonstrates the nominal extent to which this impression is held. Furthermore, it is not a trend building with the younger generation, as all who responded this way were over the age of 35.

Example statements:

“Person(s) of African descent.” [Asian/Pacific Islander descent]

“Personally, that I’m black. It identifies who I am.” [African descent]

	<b>Under 35</b>	<b>Over 35</b>
Non-White and/or Apolitical	46.43%	65.08%
Political/Empowering/Anti-Oppressive	46.43%	25.40%
Oppositional/Derogatory/Meaningless	7.14%	4.76%
Being of African descent	0.00%	4.76%

There was a clear generational gap among these results, with an equal numbers of under 35 year olds (46.43% each) understanding People of Color in political or apolitical/neutral terms whereas in the older generation by nearly two to one, the term was described as apolitical/neutral. This difference is less significant with the other data, although it is worth noting that only the older generation considered being of African descent as critical to People of Color. As discussed earlier, Latino/as in their discomfort with the usage of “People of Color” may be challenging the idea of the African descent experience as normative to the construct of People of Color. The objections have come exclusively from the older generation of Latino/as who naturally may be reacting to the generational understanding of their peers of other

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racial/cultural identities. Rev. Jose Ballester of the UU Ministers Association Hispanic Ministry Caucus, a founder of LUUNA, and a current member of the UUA Board of Trustees, has raised this concern. He points out the recurring conflation, and the difficulty this poses for Latino/a inclusion when African descent issues are considered paramount in real or imaginary ways. It is important to note however that DRUUMM, and the People of Color mission, were developed intentionally with Latino/a leadership, including a group of Latino/a ministers who have now separated from DRUUMM. Lastly, one Latino remaining or former DRUUMM member has suggested another component of the confrontation around “People of Color” in the older generation is linked to the complexities of color and racism within specifically Latino heritages. White privilege developed in Latino/a communities through a different type of colonialism that sought to intermix yet maintain strict racial hierarchies based on White supremacist ideology.<sup>27</sup>

The data has affected my opinion of the general usage and intention of the phrase, moving me to believe that despite the age gap and political consciousness of the younger generations around the term “People of Color,” the term needs further education and discussion within the UUA if it is to be employed appropriately. While there appears to be little active resistance to the term institutionally and personally, continuing to understand “People of Color” in an anti-racism context will be important for the UUA. “People of Color” is now utilized not only by the UUA but across the spectrum of society, in government, business, education, non-profit and media/entertainment sectors. The term is used to describe, set policy, and communicate intentionally. For example, it is utilized in job announcements, in census data, referred to in the media, organized around in academia, and is regularly a concern of social justice and non-profit organizations. In the health sector, an understanding of race and ethnicity has important medical and well-being implications. Research continues to demonstrate that a strict colorblind application in medical treatment has the real potential of promoting incorrect diagnosis and treatment, and preventative and lifestyle measures inappropriately prescribed may also be flawed and even dangerous. For example, persons of Asian descent have lactose intolerance rates approaching 100% and persons of African descent at rates of nearly 90%, whereas persons of European descent (White), have relatively low rates at 20-25%.<sup>28</sup>

This data provides a useful look at the diversity and representation of the People of Color surveyed, as well as some specific information with respect to the term “People of Color” discussed in Chapter III. The good demographic diversity, in terms of geography, age,

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denominational involvement, and racial identity increases the relevance and accuracy of the overall assessments endeavored here. The results also provide us with an awareness of some of the gaps present, such as the disproportionately smaller participation of men and youth.

### Chapter V: Whiteness of Unitarian Universalism

UUs are white and dominated by white styles of life. People of color, in leadership positions, would not understand the majority of UUs. Whites are intellectual and educated; [People of Color] are emotive and affective. People of color would not be comfortable in the UUA.” Obviously this generalization is operative for those who state that UUA ought to remain as it is in regard to racial composition. But the same results may occur from the dynamic which originates in the stereotype even when it is held by people who wish the organization were more inclusive of racial groups.<sup>29</sup>

There are no congregations in North American Unitarian Universalism that currently have or have had a majority membership of People of Color. An examination of the few congregations that have been attempted as intentionally multiracial/multicultural, grounded as liberal religious communities that are by and for People of Color, have failed to realize a sustainable membership of People of Color or have closed down. Historically, as *Black Pioneers* documented, Black ministers interested in serving or bringing their congregation of Blacks into the UUA were unsuccessful in breaking the social segregation, predominant in America, even in a liberal religious system with natural tendencies towards integration<sup>30</sup>. Organizations for People of Color have had an equal fate, suffering from institutional resistance, lacking a critical mass, and falling short of establishing the financial stability and long-term staffing necessary for success<sup>31</sup>.

The racial and cultural roots of Unitarianism and Universalism in North America are classically White. Both churches that joined together in 1961 to create the UUA have a history of nativism, racial superiority and segregation among the congregations, ministers and individual lay membership.<sup>32</sup> A surge of membership from People of Color, particularly African-Americans, happened in the 1960s in direct response to the racial justice-oriented political action of White Unitarian Universalists. This increase in racial diversity was a one-time event and was undermined by the intense and painful Empowerment Controversy that began in the mid-1960s and lasted until the late 1970s.<sup>33</sup> This period in Unitarian Universalism saw an exodus of African-American and other People of Color and White Allies who experienced a betrayal of principles and purposes with respect to racial justice.

Rev. Victor Carpenter is widely considered to possess the largest body of knowledge, from personal experience to active research, on the topic of the Empowerment Controversy. He has had the most substantial material published on the subject, including the 2003 book, *Long*



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*Challenge: The Empowerment Controversy 1967-1977.*<sup>34</sup> The era, often titled the “Black” Empowerment Controversy, is more accurately a White controversy with the idea and action of Black empowerment. Carpenter, who served as parish minister of congregations in Philadelphia and Boston during this time, highlights the failure of White Unitarian Universalists to be aware of the shifting of the traditional ordering of authority. The UUA was one, if not the first, White religious community to respond en masse to the calls of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference for civil rights, beginning most prominently in 1965 in Selma, Alabama. From this point forward however, the UUA struggled to understand and act in right relationship with African-Americans while society’s cultural grounding of racial relations shifted so significantly underneath.<sup>35</sup>

The Empowerment Controversy involved the UUA institution as a whole, in tension with Black Unitarian Universalists who had been inspired and welcomed by White Unitarian Universalist racial justice efforts as well as the racial identity and justice consciousness raised by civil rights, Black power, desegregation, and anti-racism activities in communities across America. At the heart of the tension, the UUA, through a special resolution presented and voted upon at GA in, committed \$1,000,000 to Black Empowerment after heated debate. After further debate, at times harsh and bitter, this commitment was never fulfilled. Additional conflict arose between the original Black Caucus and their partner White Ally organization and a counter-organizing effort entitled Black and White Alternative which disagreed with the notion of Black-centered decision-making authority and caucusing and instead offered up the mission of working together as equals on issues of equality in Unitarian Universalism.<sup>36</sup> Today this period of history continues to trouble efforts at racial justice, with many complex questions. Carpenter writes,

Such telling as has occurred has only succeeded in raising more questions than have been set to rest. For most people in the denomination, many questions remain unclear: Who were the contesting bodies? What separated them from each other? What was the role played by the UUA in the conflict? And why is the controversy labeled ‘black’ when the overwhelming majority of the participants (for we must count all Unitarian Universalists at that time as participants) were ‘white’?<sup>37</sup>

Unitarian Universalism today is virtually an all-White faith. While there is no regular census that can provide comprehensive and comparative data, the occasional surveys conducted by the UUA, specifically the Commission on Appraisal, all provide estimates that more than 95% of the membership identify as European-American or White. The faith is not just majority

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White, it is dominantly White. The most recent data published in 1998, in part to assist Dr. Robert Bellah in his presentation to the GA on “Unitarian Universalism in Societal Perspective”, revealed the following<sup>38</sup>:

### UUA Racial/Cultural Demographics 1998

European-American or White	97.6%
Native American/Indigenous	2.5%
African-American (or of African descent)	1.3%
Latina/o/Hispanic	1.1%
Asian American	.8%
<i>No Answer</i>	226 of 8118 or 2.8% of respondents

How does the Whiteness of Unitarian Universalism manifest in our congregations and institutions? One central dynamic is the unfettered and accumulated entitlements of privilege and power within the institution. This is documented throughout Unitarian and Universalist history, with the first systemic challenge in the 1960s during the Empowerment Controversy. With People of Color originally, traditionally and systematically absent from our religious communities, the conversation and direction of the institution continued on a path that ignored and/or marginalized the hopes and aspirations of People of Color within the faith.

“Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack”, is an essay written by Peggy McIntosh in 1988. In this essay she ponders whether and how racism is purely an individual act of meanness or a system conferring dominance to White people and she provides a simple litany of the personal aspects of Whiteness. Her piece has been widely utilized within UUA racial justice efforts, and has been regularly quoted and referred to as descriptive of the culture of privilege which White people enjoy in the UUA. Her list, which she refers to as an invisible backpack that all White people carry around whether they know it or not, assists us in describing the nature of the community and the intellectual, spiritual and political challenge faced by People of Color seeking respect, dignity and equality within the church. Here are several examples:

#### McIntosh’s Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack (selected)

1. I can if I wish arrange to be in the company of people of my race most of the time.
2. When I am told about our national heritage or about “civilization,” I am shown that people of my color made it what it is.
3. I can be sure that my children will be given curricular materials that testify to the existence of their race.

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4. I can be casual about whether or not to listen to another person's voice in a group in which s/he is the only member of her/his race.
5. I do not have to educate my children to be aware of systemic racism for their own daily physical protection.
6. I can do well in a challenging situation without being called a credit to my race.
7. I am never asked to speak for all the people of my racial group.
8. I can remain oblivious of the language and customs of persons of color who constitute the world's majority without feeling in my culture any penalty for such oblivion.
9. I can be pretty sure that if I ask to talk to the "person in charge", I will be facing a person of my race.
10. I can go home from most meetings of organizations I belong to feeling somewhat tied in, rather than isolated, out-of-place, unheard, held at a distance or feared.<sup>39</sup>

What is striking about this list of privileges I have selected above is that by adding "in Unitarian Universalism" one would still find truth to the statements. My experience and the experiences of People of Color I have met and worked with confirm this. The effort at overcoming a White culture of privilege that is fueled by a culture of marginalization and domination for People of Color is troubled by the complex nature and history of race and racism and the difficulty in asking and acting upon what is right and true instead of with self-interest and a lack of knowledge about the experience of People of Color. The disconnect between White people and People of Color is illustrated well by White UU Minister Rev. Dr. Marilyn Sewell who writes,

...seeking what is true is dangerous. When we are informed, we must act. Truth means responsibility. So there are things we prefer to be misinformed about, or hazy about. Whites don't really want to know how People of Color experience their lives, for if we did, we would have to change.<sup>40</sup>

In an *Open Letter to White Unitarian Universalists*, published in the 1988 World Magazine of the UUA, President William Schultz makes a direct appeal to the call for racial and cultural diversity in Unitarian Universalism, seeking to assuage us away from wallowing in guilt while making clear that Whites within the church will need to be partners in this goal.

This letter is not about guilt. It is about possibility. I have addressed this letter to white Unitarian Universalists both because I speak out of the experience of a white person and because I believe that whether or not Unitarian Universalism ever becomes a truly multi-racial faith will depend in large measure upon the reactions and attitudes of whites. ...we have far too few black, yellow, brown, or red Unitarian Universalists – our surveys suggest no more than three percent – and that this dearth deprives every one of us, no matter our color, of the richness of a racially diverse religious community.<sup>41</sup>

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Dr. Rebecca Parker, President of Starr King School for the Ministry, met recently with the DRUUMM Seminarians Caucus<sup>42</sup> to discuss several points of analysis she has developed with respect to the attitudes and behavior of Whites within the UUA. While she is still developing a comprehensive examination of White privilege, she offers these two habits of White privilege within the Unitarian Universalist context which help us understand better the religious environment in which People of Color are raised or welcomed into.

### Parker's Two Habits of White Privilege in Unitarian Universalism:

1. Benevolent Paternalism – This habit makes the assumption that the privilege and resources enjoyed by White people needs to be extended to People of Color. The habit is based on viewing People of Color as less than White people. White people are helpers, People of Color are the helpee. Whites see themselves as resourceful and the habit reinforces White identity as benevolent and good. Roots of this habit can be seen in our tradition's historical leaders. William Ellery Channing, for example, wanted to raise People of Color to the standards and norms set by White people. The unequal relationships are required for the generosity to continue. This habit limits people, especially People of Color who are viewed as not whole, not fully developed.

An example from the 1981 UUA Institutional Racism Audit provides us with more perspective from the Black experience. It emphasizes Parker's concern of White people clinging to the role of benevolent helper and the intrinsic unequal relationship People of Color in our congregations can be subject to.

During a break in a UUA meeting, two black persons were talking over coffee. A white person, also a member of the same committee which was meeting, came over to the two blacks and said, "I'm so glad you're with us." At least one of those black persons wondered about the incident: Is there some kind of paternalism – a benefactor relationship here? Is she glad that I'm here today? How welcome will I be tomorrow? Was I a "stray" or an "outsider" – invited in and officially welcomed to be "with them" on the inside?<sup>43</sup>

2. Romantic Dependence – This habit involved White people projecting their un-integrated "dark" side or prophetic voice onto People of Color. White people need People of Color to mature, express emotions, or get in touch with their passions.<sup>44</sup>

In this dominant all-White cultural environment, what is the identity, spirit and way of life for People of Color? The experience within the church is inherently rife with incidents of racism, both personal and institutional. The presence of racist attitudes and behaviors, many of

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which are unexamined within our congregations, takes a toll on People of Color in obvious and obscure ways. The ability for People of Color to gather a critical mass is difficult due to the small numbers, and restricted by the conduct of White privilege that fails to recognize the importance of nurturing and sponsoring community and leadership development for People of Color. In unhealthy ways, White Unitarian Universalism expresses anxiety over power and place about People of Color interested in life beyond a minimalist congregation. Leon Spencer, a long-time UU leader, former member of the UUA Board of Trustees and District President, comments that “what makes racism so intractable (in the UUA) is white middle-class people’s fear that by coming to grips with it they might lose their identity and the privileges the culture has granted them...The fear is that we might have to give something up.”<sup>45</sup>

In the Survey of Unitarian Universalist People of Color I conducted, the following are the results of the stated racial/cultural diversity of their Unitarian Universalist congregation:

### **Racial/Cultural Makeup of UU Congregations Attended by People of Color**

Mostly All White	64.84%
More than average UU church	12.09%
Diverse, not majority, but significant	15.38%
No Answer/No Place of Worship/Unknown	8.79%

It is important to note that of the 15% who reported the most racial/cultural diversity, nearly one-third were members of the same congregation – All Souls Washington DC. For those 9% who had no answer, were not sure or not in a congregation, several were members of the Church of the Larger Fellowship or Church of the Younger Fellowship, virtual congregations connected by mail, phone and internet and people were unaware of any statistics or presence of other People of Color. Looking at these numbers, reported by self-identified People of Color, we can make the assertion that while all People of Color worship in congregations where they are a considerable numerical minority, the 27% who stated a higher than average racial/cultural diversity (more than 5%) is most likely higher than the percentage of White Unitarian Universalists who worship in such congregational settings.

These selected comments from respondents help to convey both their awareness and their frustrations.

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### Virtually All-White Congregations (64.84%)

These responses, by far a majority of the respondents, showed a sentiment of frustration at the token presence of People of Color that appeared to manifest with either matter-of-fact resignation or a sense of sharp frustration. Sample responses:

“I am the only People of Color church member in a congregation of 150 membership.”

“It falls within the UUA norm, i.e., over 90% White.”

“It is very white. You can count with your fingers the People of Color in a congregation of over 800 pledgers. About 65% within five mile radius of the neighborhood are People of Color and about 85% are children of color.”

“Only a handful of the 250 congregation members are “People of Color.”

“Out of congregation of 400, only 6 persons are African-American and 4 East Indian.”

### Predominately White Congregations (12.09%)

These responses, while attempting to describe what is clearly more racial diversity than the average congregation, still notes the isolated nature of People of Color in congregational life. Several noted how the few People of Color are rapidly dispersed among multiple committees in the congregation, an admission that provides evidence of potential burnout, and others commented on the importance of anti-racism and diversity work in bringing together People of Color in the first place, including spouses and children of color who may not normally attend the predominately White congregation. Sample responses:

“Out of about 750 members and 250 friends at First UU church of San Diego, we have about 40 People of Color most of whom are actually multiracial: Latino/Latina, African Diaspora, Indian, Native American, Filipino/Filipina, Japanese, Chinese, Korean, and Middle Eastern. About 7 of these People of Color are active in the church including three who are currently serving on the Board of Trustees. Our active People of Color meet once per month by themselves and once with our white allies. We have a person of color on the nominating committee, one person chairing the associate minister search committee, two on the JTW committee, and one on the worship resource team. People of color also serve as RE leaders and OWL trainers.”

“My congregation of about 140 has about 10%, i.e. about 14. How do you count a Hispanic male who is married to a white woman with three kids? Is this 1, 4 or 5. Likewise we have a white man married to an Argentinean with two kids. Have a white couple who adopted a South American girl, how is she counted?”

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“There is a small group of People of Color that have begun to organize in my home church. We have started with a potluck for about 50 people with the full support and participation of the church leadership, and are planning activities and events to try and institutionalize the importance of both diversity work and the value of caucusing.”

### Majority White Congregations, Significant Minority of People of Color (15.38%)

As discussed earlier, nearly half of these responses visibly identified All Souls DC as their congregation (the survey did not ask for congregational name). Most voiced a sense of pride and enthusiasm for the presence of People of Color, noting their involvement in leadership, impact on the culture, and the importance to their spiritual growth. Sample comments:

“VERY DIVERSE. I attend All Souls Unitarian in Washington, DC. The racial/cultural diversity is why I am willing to attend church again.”

“My church has several African-American lay leaders including me, the treasurer. However the congregation is probably only about 20% People of Color -- inclusive of all non-whites.”

“The only UU community or worship I participate in is DRUUMM, so it is very racially diverse. And diverse with People of Color, not so much with White folks, though there is the occasional worship with White Allies and family members.”

### No Answer/Not Sure/No Congregation (8.79%)

These responses come from persons who live and work as or within Unitarian Universalism, but do not attend a congregation, or have not recently, or belong to the distance-based Church of the Larger fellowship, a congregation without a brick-and-mortar home.

Sample responses:

“I am a member of the Church of the Larger Fellowship. I don’t know the racial/ethnic/cultural diversity of this congregation. I don’t believe CLF has surveyed its membership to find out our racial/cultural diversity.”

“I don’t attend worship on a consistent basis anymore. When I was Catholic, I was immersed in a People of Color community. Some of the most meaningful worships for me have been in People of Color communities.”

“I generally do not worship, I am far more introspective on my spirituality than a lot of people, I feel. When I do worship, I like it to be in communities of Color, or mostly of Color.”

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The Whiteness of the faith should be no surprise to Unitarian Universalists, and those informed about the UUA. While little has been written about *why* this is the case, it is the widely perceived and accepted reality of the over 150,000 adult members of North American congregations. Much more needs to be written about the White identity of Unitarian Universalism, for as we come to understand this part of our heritage and our present, we can more authentically foster relationships and we can make better this liberal religious faith welcoming for People of Color.

Understanding the intensity of being an overwhelmingly White faith is important as we begin exploring the experiences and history of People of Color. People of Color in this position are essentially operating in the margins, and this changes both the experience and the interpretation of the experience. Almost entirely, People of Color are acutely isolated, and thus labors and accomplishments may regularly feel, and be recognized for their pioneering nature. This has the potential to mislead through superfluous praise or relative silence stifled by a White community that lets guilt and shame dictate their ability to authentically relate and minister to People of Color. In the next chapter, concluding attention to the sociological context will be addressed in considering what is at stake, both from the voices of White Unitarian Universalists and People of Color Unitarian Universalists seeking racial justice and equality.



### Chapter VI: What Is At Stake

“It has long been an ideal for white people who have regarded themselves as supportive of better relations between races to try to think of ourselves as indifferent to the color of a person’s skin. “I treat everyone the same, regardless of color,” we have said. And this is a noble sentiment. But, given the realities of race in North America today, it is also, I suspect, not an entirely helpful one. To be “color blind” in a predominately white culture such as ours is in fact to see the world through an ivory prism. It is to fail to understand deep in our hearts that the experience of being black, brown, yellow or red is truly different from being white. To be “color blind” is to try to minimize those differences and bleach them over.”

– William Schultz “An Open Letter to White Unitarian Universalists” (1998)<sup>46</sup>

“Our unique identity within Unitarian Universalism as a diverse, anti-racist People of Color community, carries with it both responsibilities and opportunities. Therefore, we covenant with one another to:

- Change the racial status quo in the Unitarian Universalist Association;
- Develop tools and strategies to work together;
- Remain together and present with one another through disagreement and conflict;
- Connect to this organization and one another throughout our professional and personal affiliations with the UUA;
- Provide vision and leadership for the Journey Towards Wholeness;
- Hold one another accountable in our efforts to become an anti-oppressive faith community.”

– DRUUMM Racial Justice Covenant: Resistance and Harmony (2000)<sup>47</sup>

Telling the history of People of Color in Unitarian Universalism, as addressed earlier, is in part a political act. The fact that there is insufficient history written in the first place is significant to the culture of Unitarian Universalism, as it both signifies the general absence of People of Color and the marginal place for those who are present. Paula Cole Jones, a former President of DRUUMM and a second generation member of All Souls Washington DC, noted at the 2003 GA that “being present is no longer enough.” This is in response to the continual suffering of People of Color, and in addition to the repeated need for People of Color to be the ones to speak out and educate White Unitarian Universalists<sup>48</sup>. People of Color and White people, who seek to manifest the racial justice commitments, imperatives and promises of our Unitarian Universalist past, need to have a stronger sense of that past in order to make rewarding and meaningful plans for the future. For some People of Color, the question about remaining Unitarian Universalist, particularly in the religious professional field, lingers. For all, our future

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as an authentic, compassionate multiracial community is of vital concern. Today, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, People of Color are emerging in larger numbers, more organized and interconnected with each other and our congregations.

In our congregations the racial and cultural diversity is already rapidly changing, and more and more of it is being brought to the attention of religious professionals. The last twenty-five years have seen more sophisticated, grassroots, comprehensive and adaptable efforts at both building People of Color ministry and community, as well as witnessing White UUs working towards understanding their own individual responsibility in fostering a multiracial faith. We are at a point when the Empowerment Controversy of the 1960s is nearly 50 years old, and many of the controversy's central figures aging and passing on. UUA President William Sinkford writes of these in the introduction to *Long Challenge: The Empowerment Controversy 1967-1977*, published by Meadville-Lombard Press in 2003:

Perhaps enough time has passed for those in my generation to forgive [the pain of the Empowerment Controversy]. Perhaps we are ready: Twenty years of growth in numbers, and years of associational commitment to anti-racism. But most important, perhaps: the complexion of our congregations is changing. The change is not most evident in our pews, though I see some change there as well. The change is in our RE classrooms and youth groups. Transracial adoption, blended families, mixed marriages of many kinds are beginning to make our church schools and youth programs look more like the world. Perhaps we are ready to ask ourselves what kind of a church we will bequeath to our children – all of our children. We must learn to help our children, all of them, be proud to say, “I am a Unitarian Universalist. This is my church.”<sup>49</sup>

Sinkford draws our attention to the changes in our racial and cultural diversity, particularly in our children and youth community. By all accounts, despite inconsistent and limited efforts at conducting a racial/cultural census in the UUA, percentages of People of Color are higher among the younger age groupings.<sup>50</sup> Reflecting on what is at stake for this next generation is an enduring activity, and our ability to understand the church environment, the presence and the vision of People of Color will greatly improve the relevance, quality and authenticity of our Unitarian Universalist ministries and its community. The growing presence of children of color, many of whom are growing up and becoming active in DRUUMM's youth and young adult programs, is a challenging development given the limited resources available, and the lack of clarity with respect to how we imagine the multiracial/multicultural change. We need to nurture this change intentionally, systemically and with a long-term vision. To do this

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effectively, we need to be aware of the history and experience of People of Color thus far, for this will teach us many important lessons as well as honor the endeavors and accomplishments of those before us.

There is anxiety around the growth of children of color in a White church without a vision or understanding of People of Color history and experience. The default behavior of many UU congregations has been reported regularly as non-action around race relations, racial and cultural identity development, and activism for racial justice. The Unity Church-Unitarian of St Paul, Minnesota Church conducted an important and transformative historical accounting of congregational activities from the 1800's to the present as part of their involvement with the Minnesota Collaborative Anti-Racism Initiative, a partner with Crossroads Ministry. This accounting, entitled an Institutional Racism Audit, underlines this historic behavior in their large church setting. This understanding of past behavior and attitudes is important in shifting the culture and practice of our congregations in positive ways. The challenge for Unity-Unitarian was:

Unity Church did not change in its willingness or ability to engage in the challenging work of developing authentic interracial relationships. As in the early years of Unity, we do not think the racial exclusion that existed here during this time period was intentionally racist in its origins. It was more a result of being oblivious to its existence and its impact. It was a result of feeling that we are fine as we were and not wanting to change.<sup>51</sup>

Perpetuating a blind policy of non-engagement only reinforces the concern about institutional amnesia which Morrison-Reed raises, and will forever be a sign to People of Color in a predominately White church that they matter less. Minimizing or ignoring the experiences of People of Color will be a constant dissonance for the younger generation as they grow up, and we do a terrible disservice to impart the gift of tone-deafness to the voices of People of Color within the UUA. At stake in telling the history of People of Color is both improving our present condition as well as seeding a better future.

*Through this thesis I am advocating for a UUA, from the association to the congregational level, that remembers, endorses and funds community building and spiritual development for People of Color in congregations and in the world at large as an affirmation and actualization of the Journey Towards Wholeness Resolution of 1997 and as an issue of universal justice and equity. It calms the soul and helps give us meaning to know our personal*

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and community roots, and to do so as Unitarian Universalists will help bring about the truth that Sinkford hopes for, that all the children, newcomers and lifelong will say, “I am a Unitarian Universalist. This is my church.”

### Visions of UU People of Color

Turning to the survey again, let us listen to some of the responses to the question of “Why are you a Unitarian Universalist?”. In general, these replies point to the free, liberal religious theology and spiritual practice of Unitarian Universalism. A few note the importance of racial diversity in their particular house of worship. Most commonly, the responses demonstrate multiple credo, or belief statements, that center on commonly held Unitarian Universalist principles, purposes, and sources of faith. Selected responses, with some parts emphasized:

“I became a UU through architectural curiosity. I was always fascinated by the Arlington Street structure and stained glass, so one day I went in and was shocked to see a black minister, Dr. Renford Gaines (Malimu Imara), the first black minister since reconstruction. *His progressive message and uncongenial programs impressed me and I became a member.* In my recollection I think that I was made to feel welcome by mostly white members in a genuine way. I enjoyed social parity among the socially well-established with a spiritual outlook. I was exposed to an atmosphere of spiritual and intellectual enlightenment which promoted self growth and self discovery. In actuality I felt I was among ordinary people with extraordinary means and sincere social outreach. I chose to remain in spite of a few disconcerting racial experiences. My reasons being due to genuine social connections, and UU Societies racial, feminist and social legacies which influenced radical changes in American society from the Ante-bellum period to the 1970s. Presently, I am not sure that the current state of social and spiritual effectiveness is leaving an impact on its members. Having a black CEO who projects a liberal image, does not guarantee any effective leadership in the areas where we have lost our social, racial and spiritual effectiveness.” [African descent]

“I am a Unitarian Universalist because of theological and philosophical reasons. I remain a Unitarian Universalist because of these theological and philosophical reasons. *Race, ethnicity, and social egalitarianism are very important aspects* of this foundational theology and philosophy, but there is more to it as well. I do believe the UUA has a lot of work to do as far as minority leadership and representation is concerned. The UUA does well, and it could do better.” [Latino/a, Native and White descent]

“Theologically, I am an atheist agnostic who acknowledges the need for faith. I see the evidence for God as sketchy at best, so I do not think belief in God is warranted, hence my atheism. I question our ability to make a final conclusive decision either way, hence my agnosticism. I also recognize that the purpose of religion is really to *discover those things that make life worth living*, and that faith is an important component in that quest,

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hence my personal articles of faith: that life is worth living, that relationships are worth having, and that the ethical path is worth pursuing. I hold on to these beliefs even though I concede that they cannot be logically proven or empirically demonstrated. In the part of the country where I live (North Central Texas), the only place where I can live out my religious quest while remaining true to my personal integrity, is in the Unitarian Universalist Church.” [Latino/a descent]

“My grandparents were Buddhists and Confucianists, and though I was raised within the Methodist faith, as a young adult, I found it difficult to accept that they were considered “sinners” and would not be “saved” because they didn’t accept Jesus as their Lord and Savior. Unitarian principles and acceptance and *valuing of people of many different backgrounds* and beliefs fit into my personal framework better than any Christian faith. I also found About Your Sexuality, now Our Whole Lives, curriculum more helpful in talking with my son about sexuality and relationships than other religious perspectives.” [Asian/Pacific Islander descent]

“I have chosen to remain a UU because I believe that it is vitally important *to rebuild the moral left*. UUism is descended from Christianity, and thereby is able to engage in dialogue with the conservative religious right, and present a different, but also spiritually grounded perspective on political issues of the day. I have also chosen to remain a UU because it speaks to my faith beliefs, and my spiritual practice. Religion and faith are very important parts of my life.” [Asian/Pacific Islander descent]

“I did not choose to become Unitarian Universalist. My mother chose this faith community for her family when I was very young. My first church was a Unitarian church with significant “People of Color” membership. This has been my only church. I have chosen to remain a Unitarian Universalist because theologically and philosophically this is my identity. As an adult, there have been several times when I have had to be intentional in recommitting myself and remaining a Unitarian Universalist. Today I am a UU because I do believe that this Association *is a place where there is a commitment to self-examination, especially regarding racism and other forms of oppression*. There are no other predominantly white institutions, of which I have been involved that articulate this commitment so clearly and act accordingly. We are by no means where many of us hope the Association will be, but I know other people who believe that it is possible for us to live up to our ideals. My personal, professional, and spiritual values are all fully integrated here. What is lacking is the cultural context that makes this a place where more people from my “Community of Color” would feel welcome and at home.” [African descent]

Selected responses to the survey question: “Statistically, congregations in Unitarian Universalism are over 90% White racially, culturally and ethnically. What is your opinion of this state of affairs?” These responses provide People of Color opinions as to the state of affairs with respect to racial and cultural diversity in congregations. A real sense of frustration emerges

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in these answers, one in which some express acceptance of the situation, but most identify the situation as a paradox given the theology and ethos of Unitarian Universalism.

“That’s a complex question. At first glance, what can one say? I’m mad, sad, confused, feel left hopeless, worried.....all of them at once. I don’t know what to say. As a staff member, I worry about saying these things because they might offend others who have been struggling in this battle for far longer than I have. So, I don’t know how to feel. It’s difficult when this situation comes up in a community that you once loved. With an “outside” perspective, I found it hard to explain to others how and why this statistic continues to exist.” [Latino/a descent]

“I don’t think Unitarian Universalism can be true to its stated principles, values and identity if we continue to be over 90% white. I also think that if this “state of affairs” is to change, there must be intentional efforts to do so, and a willingness to take risks and try diverse ways of building congregations, including those that are culturally-based as well as intentionally multiracial and multicultural.” [African descent]

“The Unitarian Universalist Association is resistant to changing its methods except on a very superficial level because many of the people who fund them are resistant to Anti-Racism (not necessarily Anti-Racism programming, but the infusion of Anti-Racism into UUism). Challenging its own institutional racism plunges the UUA into unfamiliar territory and could vastly change our financial outlook forever.” [African and White descent]

“Sad. Even in Southern California communities where POC are indeed the majority, I see white UU churches unwilling to acknowledge their implicit role in maintaining the status quo. A big problem is white-controlled UU churches are unwilling to risk alienating “their own”—particularly the more conservative older and higher-pledging white UUs who ‘like church just the way it is.’” [Asian/Pacific Islander descent]

“We could do better to make our congregations more racially diverse, but I’m at a loss when it comes to how! I myself have continued to invite POCs to our worship services, and they don’t stay around. They find it very hard to fit in. It’s almost like breaking into a clique. I’m not exaggerating that when I look at our membership book and picked out the POCs in my congregation, all of them have, are, or were in inter-racial marriages with the other half being white! It’s a fact that I can’t ignore. We must change this. In one of my sermons from the pulpit, I asked, “Do we have to marry one of you to get a foot in the door?” and I do mean that very seriously.” [Asian/Pacific Islander descent]

“The UUA always states that they want to have Diversity in their congregations, yet if you take a poll over 95% of the Caucasians are pretty well off with a Income of \$75K on up, and then about 4% are various other cultures that are also well off and can afford large fancy materialistic items. Then lastly there is that 1% who are working class people struggling to make ends meet, yet they support the UUA values and give a lot of their selves in many other ways, yet a lot of times people just get walked over when it comes down to it. I’ve also read this on many Websites talking about issues with UUA Congregations.” [Latino/a descent]

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“I work as a volunteer facilitator for Beyond Categorical Thinking Workshops. Getting beyond this statistic is easier to talk about than actually change. The benefits of inclusion is acknowledged, however, there is a disease with high numbers of non Caucasian members. Greater numbers would be perceived as being discomforting. They fear the moniker then of being a People of Color church.” [African descent]

### **Historical Literature**

There are only a handful of books published that document the history of Unitarian Universalism over the last 25 years. None of them bear witness to the experience of People of Color within Unitarian Universalism. The textbooks examining our faith post-1961 merger make no remark outside of the 1968-1979 Black Empowerment Controversy of a Unitarian Universalist ministry to and with People of Color. The Empowerment Controversy is by all accounts the most documented period of time in our denomination when persons of Color were involved and organized. This period was painful and continues to hurt today among many of our elder generation. The fallout of the conflict, around the development of Black Power organizing and a White institutions attempt at accountability and a justice-centered response to persons of African descent during the 1960s, is still a wedge issue preventing reconciliation and progress towards racial justice in the UUA. Nearly all of the writings about this era are by White men, specifically Victor Carpenter, Jack Mendelsohn and Warren Ross. Mark Morrison-Reed writes of the time saying:

"The black empowerment controversy was a denominational tragedy. Social and institutional realities beyond anyone's control placed tremendous pressures on the UUA. The different choices made by many good people set them ideologically and then emotionally in opposition to one another. The legacy of that time and those events is with us today."<sup>52</sup>

Any evidence of accomplishments by People of Color, of efforts at ministering to People of Color, the life and times of People of Color, and particularly the experiences of religious professionals, is noticeably absent in the UUA. Any reference that is made usually is a footnote, or quote, referring to the legacy of the Empowerment Controversy which continues to be the “Big Unresolved Elephant In The Room.” The history of People of Color over the last 25 years is there, but you have to be more than a casual explorer. Is the lack of any publicly accessible history for People of Color affecting our expressed commitments to racial and cultural diversity?

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Is the lack of a history of People of Color reinforcing the “extreme Whiteness” as reported by the seminal 1983 Commission on Appraisal Report?

There needs to be more history written by People of Color in Unitarian Universalism. We have the fruits of Morrison-Reed in *Black Pioneers*, and hopefully he will contribute more now in retirement. Yet we need more than Morrison-Reed, and we need more than the recounting and evaluation of the African-American experience. With a growing number of religious professions of color, Middle Eastern/Arab, Asian/Pacific Islander, Latino/a, American Indian/Indigenous, even without a growing number of People of Color adult laity, perhaps we will see more efforts on par with *Black Pioneers*. In truth it is desperately needed in an association with such deep, yet unfulfilled, promises of racial justice and equality. Continued initiatives regarding anti-racism, race relations, and racial and cultural diversity need comprehensive accounts and analysis of the experience of People of Color within the institution. This will also be meaningful and necessary to the quality of People of Color ministry, which only recently has become a theological and pastoral imperative within the UUA.

### **Race and Racism in the UUA**

The final piece in laying out a sociological context for the experience of People of Color is an accounting of some of the significant encounters of racism in the UUA. It is these incidents that have become legend within the circles of laity and religious professionals who continue to carry forward efforts at racial justice and equality, practicing and improving institutional understandings of racial ideas, and who strive to build community for People of Color.

Frederick Buechner offers this definition of racism. It is a story with a moral, and presents racism without harsh judgment. While it frames racism in Black and White racial terms, it does offer a window into how to understand the complexity of the issue. I like it, particularly from a faith perspective, as it associates racism with suffering, a state that we are called to be attentive to. One of the ways we care, and ultimately seek out justice-centered solutions, is to caucus. My paper and research is composed with this in mind, as a gentle “aide memoir” for White Unitarian Universalists, and a resource and grounding pastoral message to Unitarian Universalists of Color. Buechner writes of racism:

In 1957 when Governor Faubus of Arkansas refused to desegregate the schools in Little Rock, if President Eisenhower with all his enormous prestige had personally led a black child up the steps to where the authorities were blocking the school entrance, it might



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have been one of the great moments in history. It is heartbreaking to think of the opportunity missed.

Nothing in American history is more tragic surely than the relationship of the black and white races. Masters and slaves both were dehumanized. The Jim Crow laws carried the process on for decades beyond the Emancipation. The Ku Klux Klan and its like keep going forever. Politically, economically, socially, humanly the blacks continue to be the underdog. Despite all the efforts of both races to rectify the situation and heal the wounds, despite all the progress that has been made, it is still as hard for any black to look at any white without a feeling of resentment as it is for any white to look at any black without a feeling of guilt.

‘There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus,’ Paul wrote to the Galatians (3:28), and many a white and many a black must have read his words both before the Civil War and since, perhaps even given them serious thought. If more whites had taken them to heart, were to take them to heart today, you can’t help speculating on all the misery – past, present, and to come – that both races would have been spared.

Many must have taken them to heart but then simply not done what their hearts directed. The chances are they weren’t bad people or unfeeling people all in all. Like Eisenhower, they simply lacked the moral courage, the creative vision that might have won the day. The Little Rock schools were desegregated in the end anyhow by a combination of legal process and armed force, but it was done without some gesture of courtesy, contrition, compassion that might have captured the imagination of the world.

The experiences of racism by People of Color in Unitarian Universalism from 1980-2005, are told through a lens of anti-racism as presently articulated by the UUA Journey Towards Wholeness Committee, discussed in more depth in Chapter VIII. The reports done here vary with respect to intensity and character, however collected together they provide us with some of what Dias referred to as the strands of the “basket of history.” These incidents document the negative encounters with race, although it would be a mistake to assume that all encounters in the UUA are negative. Clearly the continuous presence and commitment of People of Color tells us otherwise. This does not mean however that we should disregard these stories. It is important to remember as well that racism in all its forms can be considered a form of trauma. While not always physically violent, the emotional, spiritual and psychological pain of negative race-related encounters leave lasting impressions as do other forms of oppression. In Unitarian Universalism the pain can be magnified by the deep commitment to free religion, stated principles of inherent worth and dignity, and the inclusiveness the UUA has articulated and struggled for in its collective history.

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### **Congregational Race Relations**

**Segregated White Universalist Churches** – In 1963, a GA resolution was brought to the floor proposing to mandate that membership in the UUA required open membership without restriction. The resolution was addressing several Universalist congregations in the American South who by bylaws or practice excluded Blacks from membership. The resolution was defeated. In 1965 a Business Resolution was passed urging open membership, but no anti-discrimination clause was mandated. It is unclear when and how it became mandatory that member congregations have open membership, but by 1980 this was, in fact, the case.

**Invisibility** – A Black person, prominent in UUA circles, was visiting a UU congregation. During the coffee hour, after the morning service, this person was ignored, not officially greeted, nor spoken to, nor introduced to a single member in attendance. Was this person invisible? Did the person imagine it all? Did other people in attendance “wish” the black person were invisible? Did they in their own discomfort fail to observe common courtesy and social graces?<sup>53</sup>

**Not Seeing the Forest Through the Trees** - Returning to the incident already reported of the black person who was left ungreeted or acknowledged at a church coffee hour, it is instructive to recount what happened when that person told other UUA leaders of that experience. Some of those leaders immediately quipped: “Oh, that’s the way they always are.” White males in the group exclaimed: “We get treated that way, too, as denominational people.” Members of the administration who were present pitched in with their own excuses for the misbehavior of their “brethren in the country.” The situation evidenced a dynamic of defensiveness toward a black person’s perceived experience of prejudicial or differential treatment. The failure to be sensitive to black people’s perceptions of events, undercutting their interpretation of reality, only exacerbates the problems of racism. As human beings, we are distinguished from other life forms by our intelligence, ability to communicate and our acts of perception. When one individual denies another his or her perception they are, in fact, denying his or her humanity. When a person who is White denies the perception of another who is of color, by attempting to excuse perceived prejudicial or racist behavior in themselves or other Whites, it represents an attempt to redefine events and reality as perceived by the person of color. To subordinate one set of perceptions to another is to subordinate one human being’s reality to

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that of another. When Whites do this to blacks, it reduces dialogue, blocks effective communication and, in fact, constitutes a subtle and insidious form of racism – to deny the validity of another human being’s perception of the world.<sup>54</sup>

**Racial Hate Crime** - A young teenage male, Joel Petty, was attacked in August of 1986 at Murray Grove Conference and Retreat Center in New Jersey, a Unitarian Universalist summer camp. He was jumped by seven youth and one adult at around 11:00 p.m. one evening after he left the camp kitchen. The attack took place in front of the youth quarters, in a lighted area in the central part of the camp. The attackers were trespassing with the intent to intimidate the Black youth. After being surrounded, threatened, insulted, and punched in the chest, the young man managed to flee into the woods around him, escaping his attackers. A video was produced three months after this incident, in a reunion held at All Souls Church, Unitarian, in Washington, D.C. In the video, several of the participants at the summer camp that week discuss how they have made sense of it all. The teenage victim was a part of the teen crew for the all ages church week. The video was created with the purpose of getting in touch with one’s own stories of being a victim of oppression, racism, and injustice.<sup>55</sup>

**Difficulty for Ministers of Color** – The UUA has recognized the intense challenge of qualified Ministers of Color seeking to be called to UU congregations. In effect, most ministers of color have served primarily in extension, new congregation, associate or assistant level positions. Senior Minister positions, including only ministers, have been held by only 20% of the fellowshiped Ministers of Color<sup>56</sup> in the last 25 years. (see table below)

### **Ministers of Color and Parish Ministry (Of Those Fellowshiped 1980-2005)**

Ministers of Color ’80-‘05	43	100.00%
Parish Ministry (ever)	28	63.64%
Currently in Parish Ministry	17	38.64%
Senior Minister (called)	8	18.18%

Although many efforts have been tried to address the difficulties People of Color ministers experience, two efforts operate to mitigate these persistent obstacles. The first is the Policy on Waivers of Rule 17 (Settlement Restrictions) of the UUA Ministerial Fellowship Committee (MFC). At their December 2001 meeting, the Ministerial Fellowship Committee resolved as

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follows: “In support of affirmative action, the MFC will look favorably upon waiver requests of Rule 17 in cases of appointed representatives of UUA anti-racism, anti-oppression, multi-cultural programs. Such waivers can be granted by the Executive Committee. This was updated in December 2003 to add, “In further support of affirmative action, the MFC moves to waive for two years (January 1, 2005 – December 31, 2005) the requirements of the first paragraph of Rule 17 for ministers of color/historically marginalized groups serving as interim Ministers of Religious Education, interim associate ministers, and interim assistant ministers.”<sup>57</sup> As of 2005, only three ministers have been in consideration for this waiver. Rev. Chester McCall, whose advocacy was instrumental in establishing the waiver, was unsuccessful in receiving all he sought as the first eligible person during his interim associate ministry at the First Church in San Diego, California. Rev. Carlton Eliot Smith accepted a called assistant minister position at First Parish in Arlington, Massachusetts after serving there as interim assistant minister.<sup>58</sup> The third, Rev. Marta Valentin, left the UU church of Arlington, Virginia after considering a waiver and instead accepted the call to be Senior Minister of the First UU Church of New Orleans, Louisiana.

The second current program of the UUA addressing the recurring obstacles People of Color ministers face is to sponsor a gathering and facilitate mentorship and support for Ministers of Color in their first or second years of parish ministry. This has developed in response to the rapid increase in Seminarians of Color who have been ordained and the subsequent increase in the number of Ministers of Color serving UU congregations. A meeting, held in May 2005, brought together several of these ministers and mentor ministers, facilitated by the Joseph Priestly District (which currently has highest number of People of Color parish ministers of any district with 4,), and the UUA Identity Based Ministries Staff Group, although not all in the target audience. This gathering provides limited support however to those it seeks to support, with its low-profile, uncertain funding, and little information as to the meeting’s content and long-term strategy.<sup>59</sup>

One cautionary tale concerns Rev. Chester McCall, an African descent minister who sought multiple positions at the UUA over several years. After receiving no interviews for any of the positions he pursued, he advocated for himself to the UUA administration, questioning why the courtesy of an interview was not even extended, and finally received one phone interview. While he was never hired by the UUA, he has since been called to the Unitarian Universalist

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Church of the Restoration in Mount Airy, a neighborhood of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Here, a widely recognized and capable minister, with strong connections to the UUA institutionally as an anti-racism trainer and consultant, struggled to be recognized as a simple candidate for a UUA staff position and only after bringing this to the attention of the UUA Executive Vice President Kay Montgomery, was he given consideration.<sup>60</sup> Incongruously, at his installation service, UUA President William Sinkford gave one of the keynote addresses, congratulating Rev. McCall and marking the importance of his ministerial call to, and for Unitarian Universalism.

**Anti-Racism Institutional Audit** – In May of 2005 the Anti-Racism Leadership Team of the Unity Church-Unitarian delivered a 51-page report to the congregation covering 1850-2005. It was written as part of their participation in the Minnesota Collaborative Anti-Racism Initiative (MCARI)<sup>61</sup>, which provides training on understanding and dismantling racism. As a foundation to the anti-racism work at Unity Church-Unitarian, the audit researched and summarized an analysis of the church's identity in relationship to racism within a historical context. "We intend to use this audit to inform us as we continue to lead the church in the process of becoming an intentionally anti-racist institution."<sup>62</sup> Their website provided a more detailed purpose and goal:

The purpose of the institutional audit is to research an institution's identity in relationship to racism. The Anti-Racism Team examined Unity Church from the time of its earliest formation to the current day in order to provide a thorough, thoughtful analysis of the church's institutional response to race. The audit will be a guide as the church moves forward in the process of becoming an intentionally anti-racist institution. The audit is an invitation to the congregation to participate in work that is extremely vital for the health and future of Unity Church and Unitarian-Universalists everywhere. We believe that we can create a church that is not only anti-racist in word, but has genuine acceptance, respect, and love for all people as a recognizable part of its identity.

In the section covering 1970-2005, the report stated, "by 1998 the church had become more 'White' identified and focused. " "Self-examination, individual, institutional and societal is needed around issues of race." "Complacent and undeniably silent on the subject of racism when, in fact, and especially because of, its geographic location in a diversely populated inner-urban neighborhood, a leadership role in this arena might have been a logical outcome." "The time has come for us to turn outward, while at the same time we begin a thorough examination of our internal processes as a congregation."<sup>63</sup> At this time, no formal action has been made public,

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although the hope is that the historical accounting will provide a foundation for improved and increased multiracial relations in the surrounding neighborhoods.

### **Denominational/Associational Race Relations**

The following incidents and encounters have to do with experiences at the level of UUA sponsored events, such as the General Assembly, UUA committees, UUA initiatives and projects, and, more globally, the state of the UUA.

**Objectifying People of Color** - When a UUA official was describing the difficulties of increasing membership among People of Color, he remarked: “The worship styles of most local congregations have little sensitivity to the worship styles of people of color. Even urban churches remain distinct from those worship styles familiar and comfortable to minorities.” The notion of attributing group characteristics to urban minority, actual or potential UUA members, is a fundamental error. The process of making choices for “them” and assuming what “they are like is a precarious and precipitous one. As such, it represents a serious potential road block to diversity within the UUA.”<sup>64</sup>

**Stalled Development of Racial Justice Curricula** – Over the last 25 years there have been three efforts at developing a curriculum for congregations that addresses the issues of race and racism. All three remain incomplete. The first, *Black America/White America: Understanding the Discord*, was envisioned in the 1970s and envisioned for completion in the early 1980s. The *Institutional Racism Audit* had this to say:

In the late 1970s, the UUA entered into negotiations for the design and publication of *Black America/White America*. A long history of writing, testing, revision, and correspondence surrounds the controversy that developed over the curriculum. In September of 1980, a letter from the major author of the curriculum suggested twice that some resolution about whether or not to proceed with publication be made by January of 1981. In early December, Community Change team members (responsible for the Institutional Racism audit) found that no decision had then been made or at that time was envisioned for January 1981; again in early January no decision had been reached. Somehow, persons responsible never got around to making a decision, or even getting the matter onto the formal agenda. Like a dead albatross, the unresolved matter of the curriculum drifts along behind the ship, whose wake periodically forces it to turn over, rise again to the surface, then silently slide once more toward oblivion.<sup>65</sup>

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In the late 1980s, Morrison-Reed wrote the framework for a curriculum building on his book *Black Pioneers*, that he called *How Open the Door*.<sup>66</sup> He reported that the outline and materials were developed, and a few congregations field tested it, but that similar to the experience of the developers of *Black America/White America*, attention and focus of the UUA lagged to the point that he gave up pushing for the finished product.<sup>67</sup>

Finally, in the mid 1990s, after the successful completion of *Weaving the Fabric of Diversity*, which includes one session on racism, the *Language of Race* curriculum made it to the manuscript stage. However it was never completed and published for distribution.

**Affirmative Action** – The UUA was slow to react around establishing affirmative action policies and goals, the top recommendation of the 1981 UUA Institutional Racism Audit. Of concern to the auditors was the tension within the UUA, making it difficult to effectively implement affirmative action policies for People of Color given the UUA philosophy and White culture. They wrote:

The twin concepts of meritocracy and democracy seem at the core of the UUA philosophy. Developing human potential and enhancing production in culture, politics, society and morality, appear as artifacts of UUA actions and worship ideals. Imagine then our dismay to hear that when the questions of people of color and the ministry was at one time put before the Ministerial Fellowship Committee, a response was characterized with the following words: Do “they” fit the mold? – Are “their” backgrounds, and experience typical of our usual placement requirements? Will we have to lower the standards?<sup>68</sup>

Presently, the goals of, and analysis by the UUA are not publicly accessible and requires several levels of investigation to collect. The GA does receive a report on the statistics of racial/cultural and gender identities of the UUA administration, without analysis or commentary aside from a statement from the 1973 GA resolution that mandated the UUA report “annually on its efforts to provide employment opportunities to women and racial ‘minorities’ at all levels of its staff...” While there used to be goal setting around affirmative action by the UUA Board, there is no evidence that this continues. In 1991 for example, the UUA Board made their stated goals public in the *UU World* (Mar/Apr 1991) stating that an “emphasis has been placed on including persons of color at higher-level exempt positions as vacancies occur, and on maintaining the number of persons of color on the staff at or above 20 percent.”<sup>69</sup> There is no regular review with the various People of Color organizations in the UUA such as DRUUMM regarding whether the UUA is in compliance with this benchmark.

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Furthermore the supervisory staff of the UUA does not receive mandatory comprehensive training around implementing affirmative action policy, although it is available upon request. In the table below you can see that over the last 6 years there has been a slight decline in the racial/cultural diversity of the UUA central staff. The all staff numbers are significantly higher than the percentage of People of Color on the Leadership Council (formerly Executive Staff Council) and those identified by the UUA as Managers. Also the Leadership Council/Managers over the last two years constituted all African descent persons except one. Asian/Pacific Islanders, Latino/as and Native descent persons were only represented among the designations of Professional, Technician, Sales, Office & Clerical and/or Service Workers.

### People of Color on UUA Staff (Headquarters and District)<sup>70</sup>

	UUA Staff	Leadership Council/ Managers
2005	14.29%	7.58%
2004	17.53%	8.82%
2003	16.59%	n/a
2002	n/a	n/a
2001	20.95%	n/a
2000	20.77%	n/a

### General Assembly (GA) Race Relations

**Thomas Jefferson Ball, Charlotte** – In 1993, a year after the Racial and Cultural Diversity resolution established the Racial and Cultural Diversity Task Force, General Assembly was held in the Thomas Jefferson District in Charlotte, North Carolina. As part of the program, the GA Planning Committee sponsored a “Thomas Jefferson Ball” with instructions to come in period dress circa 1776. In the months leading up to GA, protests were issued by Unitarian Universalists, including African descent UUs, deeply concerned that this would mean People of Color having to attend in chains, as slaves, as those were their circumstances during that era.



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Due to the miscommunication and misplaced intentions, the Thomas Jefferson Ball was still held despite concerns and communications raised in advance of GA. In response, the African-American UU Ministry organized a boycott and protest that drew hundreds of delegates outside the ballroom. The September/October 1993 World has this to say about the protest:

...the struggle for racial justice and inclusiveness was kept on the front burner...especially by the controversy over Saturday night's so-called Thomas Jefferson Birthday Ball, which occasioned a protest demonstration led by the African-American Unitarian Universalist Ministries (AAUUM). In a leaflet distributed at the demonstration, AAUUM members cited Jefferson's record as an "unrepentant slave-owner" and declared themselves "outraged" by the event, which delegates and others had originally been urged to attend in period dress. "Should African-Americans attend [the ball] in chains?" the leaflet asked. An estimated 300-400 people attended the demonstration, which took place near the foot of an escalator leading up to the Omni Hotel ballroom. To the Rev. William Jones, director of black studies at Florida State University and a newly elected UUA trustee, it was "symbolic that the administration of the denomination was up [in the ballroom] and I and other African-Americans and whites who had a clearer idea of the problem were at the bottom of the escalator. Which side was the authentic mainstream of Unitarian Universalism?" Jones asks.<sup>71</sup>

**Hotel Refusal, Rochester** – At the 1998 GA in Rochester, New York, a young adult of color routinely checking in at the front desk was informed that she had no reservation. After a period of discussion, intensified by frustration and the crushing presence of other GA delegates seeking to check-in, the young woman was dismissed with condescension. She had to seek out the UUA Director of Young Adult Ministry, a White minister with whom she had a working relationship, and together they approached the manager. In this follow-up, the room was secured. A complaint was made with the hotel and with the regional office based on the discourteous and patronizing behavior of the front desk staff and management. The loosely organized network of Young Adults of Color also came to the young woman's aid, and similar stories were shared. In conclusion, the manager of the hotel came to a gathering of the Young Adults of Color meeting to apologize and ordered a buffet of foods for the final group meeting of GA.

**Unwelcome, Cleveland** – A group of African descent youth attended GA 2001 from the Neighborhood Church of Pasadena, California. Through the Youth and Young Adults of Color caucus that had started meeting collaboratively at GA 2000 in Nashville, Tennessee, they shared experiences of being questioned by other GA delegates despite wearing their nametags. They articulated pain at being unwelcome in their own faith.

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**Commission on Appraisal Oral Report, Quebec City** – During the Commission's report to the GA 2002, a skit was performed that ended up with a woman of color speaking, then a White man suddenly and forcefully pushed her aside and remarked to now let the real report begin (from him). Many People of Color, including the woman of color who had not agreed to that particular part of the skit, raised concern and asked for some acknowledgement of the inappropriateness of the action. Instead the Commission and other UUA leadership attempted to minimize the issue. Finally, with the assistance of the Journey Towards Wholeness Transformation Committee (JTWTC) and DRUUMM leadership, an announcement was made. Rev. Susan Suchocki Brown, Chair of the JTWTC stated, "A significant number of persons present are concerned and feel the issue of the Commission on Appraisal (COA) is still unresolved and not a good way to end the GA. So we have been asked to come to you opening up the deeper and unresolved issues not presently being offered to the GA attendees. We find it regrettable that the COA was not able or willing to make a joint statement, but that a member of the COA had to speak as an individual."<sup>72</sup> Paula Cole Jones, at the time President-elect of DRUUMM added,

The situation that brings us here is not a private or a personal issue, it is a community issue. Usually we do not hear the community response when a situation leaves someone feeling slighted or devalued. This time we did. In order to establish right relationship, we have to be able to trust that our concerns are being valued and that corrections, when needed, are possible. We are working to build a community where People of Color feel welcome and where People of Color are involved in our congregations, and in the business of the UUA. We are working to create an environment where People of Color feel comfortable and supported in leadership positions. The messages that we receive let us know where the Association is on the journey and when parts of the institution need to be held accountable for making corrections that give us another chance at right relationship.

**Please Help Me With My Bags, Boston** – At the GA in Boston, Massachusetts in 2003, several People of Color reported being asked by White GA attendees to take their bags. This happened at the curb where People of Color were spending time talking when White attendees arrived, as well as by the Front Desk and Concierge.

**Special Review Commission, Ft Worth** - Prior to the 2005 GA in Ft Worth, Texas, the DRUUMM Youth of Color Leadership Development Conference (a partnership with IdBM and the UUA Youth Office) was held. At that time, several incidents internal to the First UU Church of Dallas, Texas, which hosted the conference and externally with city police were reported. The

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experience of these incidents carried over into GA the following weekend in which additional negative racial encounters occurred, culminating in a conflict at the Closing Ceremony, Sunday evening. A special meeting of People of Color was called by DRUUMM leadership where a litany of experiences were discussed, and the discussion video taped. After GA the UUA Board of Trustees and UUA Administration established a Special Review Commission to “review the trajectory of events...identify learnings about the structures of racism and ageism...and to focus on institutional learnings.”<sup>73</sup> The five member commission, including current President of DRUUMM Janice Marie Johnson, two other DRUUMM members Hafidha Acuay and Rachel Davis, LUUNA co-founder Rev. Jose Ballester and White retired minister Rev. Margaret Keip met over 8 months to prepare a final report delivered to the April 2006 UUA Board of Trustees meeting. The commission interviewed several dozen persons in preparing the report, although little of this was made public in the 25-page report. Instead, a comprehensive timeline was developed stretching back to the beginning of Unitarian and Universalist consolidation in 1961. The report concluded with a list of recommendations, focused primarily on GA structure, beginning and ending with a call for nametag wearing, and issued a vague reminder that we are responsible to “preserve and live by our covenants and to uphold and maintain the ideals of our Unitarian Universalist faith.”<sup>74</sup> The Special Review Commission is very unique, as there is no other record of such a high level group being called together in response to racism in the UUA. In truth, it is a testament to the growth and establishment of a collective of People of Color who were able to hold and listen to the experiences of one another that helped lead to this action. This institutional response is not a complete response, notes Rev. Chester McCall, a Chaplain for DRUUMM, who urges us to respond to the individuals who have been dehumanized by the experience.<sup>75</sup>

To help illustrate the challenges and opportunities for race relations, and ultimately an increased presence of People of Color in our congregations, let us hear selected responses to the question: “Do you perceive barriers in our Unitarian Universalist congregations and communities that prevent Persons of Color from joining? If so, what are your opinions of this condition?”

### **Racial Barriers in UU Congregations**

Overwhelmingly, People of Color surveyed believe there are barriers in congregations for People of Color. Many expressed the linkage to other forms of institutional oppression and

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cultural conditions of congregations, in particular the higher economic and educational class levels, that point to a difficulty in welcoming and authentically accepting People of Color, and others. There is also some attention to the fact that congregations, through religious professional leadership or laity, are ineffective in redressing these barriers, due to a lack of preparation, training, vision and courage. The responses shared below are meant to be representative of the total collection. Ideally these responses will help both the reader, and ultimately the institution, gain more clarity into the nature of the barriers, and from this diagnosis, determine more successful and precise initiatives to address the situation.

### Do You Perceive Racial Barriers In Your Congregation?

Yes	85.71%
No	10.99%
Unsure/No Church	3.30%

#### Those Who Answered “Yes” (85.71%)

“Yes. Affluence is a serious barrier on a number of different levels. Class, education, and social mores separate the vast majority of ethnic minorities from our typically affluent congregations. People of color have a difficult time relating to everything we do. This must change.”

“At first yes, because often times people speak of being accepting of blacks, gays, transgender people, etc..... and they talk about being liberal-minded but their individual lives outside of what they profess do not reflect this so when people of color or other cultures visit they are welcomed, but not embraced if you know what I mean.”

“I’ve seen social elitism where people socialize with their equals. We don’t advertise other than in the yellow pages, there is very little community outreach.”

“People in our congregation tend to socialize with people they already know, so it is difficult for new prospective members to feel welcomed on more than a superficial basis. Though our congregation is a relatively “welcoming” congregation, most do not make any sustained effort to connect with “newcomers,” regardless of color.”

“There are always barriers. UU congregations and communities may politically/religiously/culturally be more progressive than many others in the U.S., but this does not always translate into knowledge, understanding and acceptance of others. I heard about the incident at the last GA in Texas where it was assumed by some Anglo UU’s that a group of youth of color were valets because of skin color...we have a long way to go. UUs are a part of this society, and there are a great many divisions along class and race that we are clearly not confronting. I would not expect UUs to somehow be

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immune to all this. Structural/institutional racism and discrimination affects all of our perspectives, actions, attitudes, and beliefs since it pervades this society.”

“Absolutely, and that is one reason I believe the Journey to Wholeness is a great move on the part of the UU Church. The advent of both the People of Color and the White Alliance caucus will begin to make a difference. If UU haven’t already, let’s add the writings of People of Color and not only the Transcendentalist. Frederick Douglas, Harriet Tubman, Sitting Bull, Seneca and Black Elk, Lao Tzu, Ram Dass, Krishna Murtha etc. – let’s revisit our history of 1840-1870 - let’s talk about what else was going on during the Transcendentalist Movement. Like the genocide of the Native Americans in the West, Slavery in the South, U.S. Mexican War and what it was like for “civilized man” during Thoreau’s and Emerson’s time. What were the Child Labor Laws and Women’s Rights during that time as well. What made the Transcendentalist Movement occur? It just didn’t spontaneously generate. Personally, I believe the Unitarians were a response to the times. The white man had become divorced from Nature because of “civilization.” The U.S. Government was doing horrible things in the name of Jesus Christ and their Christian God.”

“I think that we as UUs have a very specific cultural experience in general. The majority being white, middle to upper middle class folks, with liberal political views. Because we don’t have a “let’s save the whole world” attitude, we have a fairly exclusionary mindset to begin with. In practice, not on paper. I think we’re rather xenophobic, across many cultural, class, racial, lines, but especially race. The growth of female ministers, for instance, has highly out lapped, many, many times over the population of ministers of color.”

“I think that Anti-Racism work functions to assuage White guilt in many places, and so when People of Color come into a Church, they are often asked to join several committees they are not qualified and do not have the capacity to sit on. No one has any real clue on how to be in community with the People of Color in a Church, so those who come often get “burned out” and frustrated with continually being treated very differently from the mass of the community. On the other side of things, some congregations do not deal with race at all. This is just as bad, because the Person of Color feels just as excluded from the community and more unwelcome.”

### Those Who Answered “No” (10.99%)

“No barriers, it is one of letting those seeking a liberal religion know we exist. One of the things that came out of a recent discussion about religion is UUs are almost alone in encouraging their members to question their beliefs.”

“To speak of “barriers” presupposes a certain frame of thought. It assumes that something within UU churches prevents outsiders from coming in and that all we have to do is remove that impediment and people will flock in. But is that really the case? And to get the most use out of the barrier metaphor, should we not also be asking if any barriers exist in non-UU circles, outside of UU control, that prevent people from stepping out of their group and into a UU church?”

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“The issues here are complex. It is difficult even to determine what all the issues are, and equally difficult to determine what can be done about them. We know there is a correlation between UU churches and low racial diversity, i.e., when you find the former, you're likely to also find the latter. But we do not know if one causes the other, or if it is the other way around, or even if other outside factors are causing both. In my own experience, I have always felt welcomed in my church. To be precise, I know what it feels to be socially rejected by a group of people, and I have never experienced that feeling in my church. On the other hand, I can not say that my church is particularly "warm" to new comers. Again, to be precise, in my previous religious affiliation, we were taught to go out of our way to act friendly to visitors, to find ways to draw them into our groups, and to constantly try to make them feel "as one of us." That is not something that spontaneously happens in my current church, despite recent efforts to behave in a more welcoming manner. How do I reconcile these two seemingly disparate conditions? I'm not sure. In part the answer lies in me. Going to new places and introducing myself to new people does not intimidate me. In part, the answer also lies with the church, because even though they're not overly open, once I introduced myself to them they were quick to accept me. Another component was the availability of alternatives, or rather the lack of them. I wanted to find a "church community," not a club or an interest group. But I required one that was intellectually open, one that would embrace science, rather than reject it. And I felt, rightly or wrongly, that the UU church was my best option.”

### **Chapter VII: People of Color Communities (1980-2005)**

Most of the UUA, congregations and affiliate organizations have a growing consciousness of People of Color. They are referred to formally in affirmative action policies, job announcements, strategic plans, and sermons. With an estimated 5% of the adult population, there are perhaps as many as 10,000<sup>76</sup> Persons of Color, and the number may well be over 20,000 in the religious education programs as anecdotal reports lean heavily towards more racial and cultural diversity among our children and youth. DRUUMM, profiled below, is the only group that has ever been organized by and for Persons of Color in an inclusive sense encompassing more than a singular racial/cultural identity and being explicitly conscious and political as a collective in mission and purpose. These short histories that follow are intended to emphasize promising People of Color ministry efforts, and to provide a better understanding of the landscape within Unitarian Universalism for People of Color.

#### **African-American Unitarian Universalist Ministries (1989-1998)**

African-American Unitarian Universalist Ministries or AAUUM (pronounced ‘a-oo-mm’) received its birthing breath in the wake of the UUA’s 1981 Institutional Racism audit. African descent ministers and religious professionals were called together in 1987 to help the UUA establish one of the audit’s recommendations: an affirmative action policy and plan. Two Black Unitarian Universalists working on the issue, Rev. Mark Morrison-Reed and Jacqui James, connected their small networks together and the idea was hatched. AAUUMM, in their June 1989 press release announcing their formation, stated “AAUUM stresses spirituality, power and justice as centerpieces of a ‘prophetic witness’ and distinguishes itself from mainstream UUs saying that they view the African-American experience and heritage, as well as action for justice, as part of the ‘essential feelings and values’ which shape their spirituality.”<sup>77</sup> AAUUM had officer positions, held an annual meeting and was heavily active in North American UUA activities. At its height in the early 1990s, the organization had a membership of over 100, and would arrange to have members lead the worship at area congregations during its annual meeting. AAUUMM struggled with how to deal with issues of gender and sexual orientation, and was experiencing a leadership vacuum by the late 1990s at the same time AAUUM leaders were coordinating with other “Persons of Color” to found DRUUMM in 1998. AAUUM leaders

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expressed intentions of becoming a caucus for persons of African descent within DRUUMM, partnering with other founders of Color who were creating a Latino/a/Chicano/a/Hispanic of Color caucus, an Asian/Pacific Islanders caucus, and a Native American/Indigenous caucus among others. Jacqui James, now retired, is acknowledged as having the most institutional memory about AAUUM, most of it as oral stories. Jacqui was a long-time religious professional as Director of Religious Education in Pittsburgh, PA, and on the UUA Staff for over 20 years in Boston, MA. Little has been published about AAUUM outside of a few references in sermons, GA Reports and a brief announcement in the *UU World*.

### Diverse & Revolutionary Unitarian Universalist Multicultural Ministries (1997- )

Diverse & Revolutionary Unitarian Universalist Multicultural Ministries, or DRUUMM was the name a group of over forty ministers, religious educators, and UUA Staff of Color, who called themselves “UU Religious Professionals of Color” or “UURPOC” adopted a year after their first gathering, underwritten by the Fund for Unitarian Universalism, in Los Gatos, California, Spring 1997. Rev. Tony Dubon, currently of Colorado, was elected Chair, although he was unable to complete his first year in office. The 2<sup>nd</sup> major gathering of DRUUMM a year later met concurrently with the final AAUUM meeting in Tampa, FL. AAUUM ceded the spotlight to the new multiracial “People of Color” organization in Unitarian Universalism, collaborating with persons of Asian/Pacific Islander, Native American/Indigenous, Latino/a/Chicano/a, and biracial and multiracial persons of Color. The group formed with an emphasis on supporting religious professionals of Color (initial goals here from founding documents). At GA 2000 in Nashville, TN, where DRUUMM holds its annual business meeting, the by-laws were changed to admit lay persons of Color, in part due to pressure from youth and young adults. Youth and young adults of Color, who were organized with the help of AAUUM members Kristen Jewett (now Rev. Kristen Harper) and Danielle Gladd, as well as activist youth of Color Layla Rivera and Alyce Gowdy-Wright, had been receiving DRUUMM sponsorship for several years for an annual conference. After DRUUMM opened its mission and organization, both to minister and advocate for all persons of Color, Youth and Young Adults became one of the first caucuses in 2001. In 2003 a group of over 30



**Janice Marie Johnson**  
(credit: Santos-Lyons)



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**2005 DRUUMM YaYA Steering Committee** (credit: Santos-Lyons)

Asian/Pacific Islanders formed another DRUUMM caucus, and in 2004, 24 seminarians of Color received permission to identify as a DRUUMM caucus. Efforts continue to form a Latino/a caucus, named “La Familia,” and an African descent caucus under the leadership of James Backman of New York City’s All Souls Church. Currently

DRUUMM is the most active public organization for Unitarian Universalists who identify as persons of Color. There is past and present conflict between several members of DRUUMM and the Latino/a UU Networking Association or LUUNA, specifically among religious professionals around the terminology and meaning of “Person of Color.” DRUUMM has no permanent staff, a minimal budget gleaned from the UUA’s financial commitment to supporting Persons of Color in congregations, and a large steering committee that meets once or twice each month by teleconference to conduct operational management. In the nine year history of the organization, only 3 face to face meetings of the steering committee have been held outside of GA and the Annual DRUUMM Conference which began in 2002 and has been held over Veteran’s Day (US) weekend at Murray Grove Conference and Retreat Center in New Jersey. The website is regularly updated, and a number of listservs exist for racial/cultural caucuses including a Multiracial People of Color caucus, leadership teams, and identity groups such as Queers and Professionals of Color. DRUUMM has received consulting services from the UUA for leadership development and conference programming.

### **DRUUMM Asian/Pacific Islander Caucus (2003- )**

The A/PI Caucus of DRUUMM has the following mission statement: to build a safe and sacred community among UU members who identify as Asian and Pacific Islander, Hapas or Asian Adoptees.

To this end, we pledge to:

- minister to one another's needs
- support one another in our spiritual journeys as A/PI UUs in our UU faith communities



**Sharmila Khare, A/PIC Steering Committee Member**  
(credit: Santos-Lyons)

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- strengthen the caucus's roles and linkages within UU Congregations to effectively advocate for our needs within the UUA
- help improve and enhance existing anti-racism work of the UUA by sharing with others our A/PI perspective and experiences
- work in synergy with DRUUMM and other identity-based caucuses to collectively identify and transform the structures of oppression towards an equitable, inclusive and just community
- provide authentic cultural resources for the UUA<sup>78</sup>

How A/PIC began by member Young Kim:

The idea for a group of Asian and Pacific Islanders Unitarian Universalists began to bounce around in my head in 1993, when I was a member of the First Unitarian Church of San Jose (CA). At that point I received exposure to the UUA's antiracism efforts, which approached the issue from a Black/White perspective. While useful, I found this Black/White-only concentration to be frustrating, as my own experiences seemed to have a unique twist. The stereotypes that I had to deal with were different. I wasn't getting the "thug" or "terrorist" label stuck to me. What I was getting was "foreigner" or "geek" or "sweatshop laborer." I also found that many UUs seemed to believe that Asian Americans didn't experience racism.

I decided to do something about it at the 2001 GA in Cleveland. I told all my friends to look for any Asian faces, get their names, and forward them to me. For my first "Asian sighting," I saw Kok Heong McNaughton riding down a hotel escalator as I was going up. I ran up the escalator, ran back down, and caught up with Kok Heong outside the hotel. I blurted out: "Excuse me ... are you a UU?" My wife ran into Mark Watanabe, who told me about a charming delegate from Oakland – Karen Eng. I also traded message board messages with Vivien Hao. Our first meeting was right at the message boards at that GA. Three of us sat on some rusty folding chairs by the message boards, and talked about our experiences. I didn't know Mark and Karen very well, but I felt a strong bond right from the beginning.

Later that summer I called Robette Dias, one of the founders of DRUUMM and a UUA staffer at the time. I asked her to give me the email address for every Asian or Pacific Islander UU that she knew. Armed with about 35 new email addresses, I took a deep breath and fired off an email into the internet ether. People answered, and Joseph Santos-Lyons set up the email list serve.

Our second meeting at the GA in Quebec had better attendance. Twelve UUs came, and we talked about the need for a national meeting. I requested and received grant funding from the UU Funding Program and in February of 2003 the A/PIUU Caucus met for the first time in Berkeley, CA.

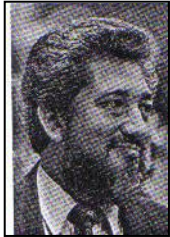
After that meeting I stepped back from leadership and then A/PIC really started to take off. I am thrilled to see what A/PIC has accomplished under the leadership of Kim [ ], Manish [ ] and Jennifer [ ]. I am even more excited to see fresh leadership stepping up to

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the plate – a sure sign of a healthy and self-perpetuating organization. And we've only just begun to scratch the surface, because more Asian and Pacific Islanders here and abroad need to hear the good news of our liberating faith.<sup>79</sup>

### Latino/a Unitarian Universalist Networking Association (1996- )



**Julio Noboa**  
(credit: The World)

Julio Noboa was quoted in a *New York Times* article on the growth of Latinos in major cities and the potential for Latinos to be “drawn to a liberal, non-authoritarian faith.” Soon after, there was an interview in the March/April 1995 *UU World* issue with Noboa, a member of the UUA Committee on Urban Concerns and Ministry and adult learning chair at First UU Church in San Antonio, Texas. Latino/as began to organize visibly in the UUA after the short

*UU World* profile in which Noboa suggested that “outreach to the Latino community should have four components: developing a strategic plan to attract Latinos to the denomination; educating UUs about Latino history and concerns; sharing aspects of Latino spiritual journeys that can enrich UU theology; and the bearing of witness, by Latinos, to UU principles and practices in their communities.”<sup>80</sup> LUUNA came into existence the following year after the 1996 Urban Ministry Conference in New Orleans, Louisiana, where a small group of Latino/as met and organized<sup>81</sup>. The bylaws were drafted later that year and adopted December 2, 1996, as “a multicultural continental association of Unitarian Universalists dedicated to:

1. Attracting more Latina/os to our Unitarian Universalist tradition and enhancing their participation within it by providing support, guidance, fellowship and advocacy.
2. Educating the larger Unitarian Universalist community about Latina/o history, culture and diversity; and facilitating Unitarian Universalist involvement in current issues that affect the various Latina/o communities.
3. Sharing aspects of Latina/o spiritual heritage, personal journeys and emerging UU Latina/o Liberation Theology with the larger Unitarian Universalist community thus enriching the worship, mission, and spirituality of our chosen faith.
4. Interacting with the Unitarian Universalist Association and other Unitarian Universalist organizations in order to enhance the justice-making abilities of LUUNA and the aforementioned organizations.
5. Interacting with other justice-making and multicultural organizations in order to bring about effective social change within our Unitarian Universalist movement so that it can truly become multicultural and empowering of traditionally marginalized and under-represented communities.”<sup>82</sup>

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Membership in LUUNA is not restricted to Latina/os, and they have been clear that they are not a People of Color organization. However People of Color are welcome to join and participate in the business of the organization. At the 1998 Urban Ministry Conference in Baltimore, LUUNA members released a collection of articles entitled the “Baltimore Papers,” which helped define in detail positions and concerns of LUUNA. Presently, LUUNA has nominal public presence, with no website, email listserv, or membership gatherings outside of an annual meeting at GA. They continue to be recognized as an affiliate organization of the UUA with a listing in the UUA Directory. Rev. Jose Ballester is the contact for the organization, although there is no information available, from the UUA or otherwise, as to the officers or steering committee members.

Since 2001, LUUNA has been successful in advocating for the UUA staff position dedicated to Latino/a concerns, the job initially being held by Marta Valentin<sup>83</sup> and now by Rev. Sophia Craethnenn. The staff were located in the newly formed Identity Based Ministries Staff Group of the UUA, directed by Taquiena Boston, a former Faith in Action Department Anti-Racism Associate out of Washington, D.C. While this position is not directly accountable to LUUNA, there is a symbiotic relationship as both share Latino/a concerns within Unitarian Universalism. Little documentation in detail is available about the UUA staff work around Latino/a concerns except for the few sentences in the GA Annual Reports. A survey was attempted in 2003-2004, and several intentional gatherings of Latino/a descent persons at GA outside of the LUUNA Annual Meeting have taken place, but no record of history is available publicly. At the 2004 GA, the new UUA office was formally named the Office of Latina/o and Hispanic Concerns and went by the nickname “LaLoHip.” The three sentence staff report in 2004 stated: “LaLoHip completed a survey focused on how congregations can become more welcoming to Latinas/os and Hispanics. Survey results are being used to develop information on “How to Be More Welcoming to Latinas/os and Hispanics,” and a workshop with this theme was presented at several District Annual Meetings in Spring 2004. In addition, LaLoHip has been involved in the publication of several bilingual Spanish/English worship resources.”<sup>84</sup> The 2005 Staff Report includes no details about the work of this office, except the vision of seeking to make the UUA “more welcoming, inclusive, empowering and just”<sup>85</sup> for Latino/a and Hispanics, in part due to a

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period of vacancy when Valentin left the position and before Craethnenn began in September 2005.

### **UU Network on Indigenous Affairs (1992- )**



**Benjamin Pease** (credit: The World)

The UU Network on Indigenous Affairs, or UUNIA, is an advocacy organization for issues of First Nations Canada and American Indian/Native American concerns. It is not a caucus of persons of North American Native descent, although several of the leaders identify as Native American/First Nations. Long-time board member and spiritual mentor Benjamin Pease died in 2003, leaving a powerful void in the organization. Pease was a member of the Crow Nation in Montana, whose parents and grandparents were converted to Unitarian Christianity. The peak of UUNIA work was in the mid 1990s, specifically under the coordination of Helen Henry of Denver, Colorado who worked on UUNIA affairs out of the local American Friends Service Committee office. After GA 1997 in Phoenix, UUNIA and DRUUMM coordinated a pilgrimage to the sacred San Carlos Apache site Dzil Nchaa Si An or Mt. Graham with local leaders. A multiracial group of 20 attended, witnessed and advocated for the retention of the lands in the face of massive scientific development by a consortium of universities. They were buoyed by a resolution passed by the GA entitled “Solidarity with the San Carlos Apache Regarding Mt. Graham” as an Action of Immediate Witness. Currently a White Minister, Robert Thayer, is identified as the contact for UUNIA, and while little has happened over the last two years, a pilgrimage to Cahokia, the largest city north of Mexico before the 18<sup>th</sup> century, is planned during GA 2006. This event is being planned by Thayer and Frank Carpenter of the UU Historical society.<sup>86</sup>

### **UU Ministers Association**

The UU Ministers Association or UUMA is one of the most powerful independent organizations within UUism with a membership of over 1,000 ordained clergy. There continue to be very few people who identify as persons of Color in the UUMA, and the handful that are

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constituents are heavily involved in UUA and internal committees related to anti-racism/anti-oppression and multiculturalism. It is a heavy and profound responsibility, particularly for newly minted ministers, adding anxiety and potential dissatisfaction to a demanding and low-paid profession. It is also chronic and at times debilitating for those ministers of Color who have been leaders for so long without any reprieve. Burnout and frustration have been noted regularly, and there still is no significant, consistent and meaningful community for ministers of Color as a whole within the UUMA. There is a two-year old Hispanic Ministry Caucus, and a handful of ministers of Color sit on the Anti-Racism/Anti-Oppression/Multiculturalism Committee. Little has been made public as to the UUMA's commitment to creating community and support for ministers of Color since the 1998 Journey Towards Wholeness Anti-Racism Stakeholders Meeting in Kansas City. There are presently about 50 ministers who identify as persons of Color or racial/cultural minorities distinct from White/European-descent persons. Of these, only a dozen are serving UU congregations.

### UUA Board of Trustees

The #1 recommendation (of 25) of the 1981 UUA Racism Audit Team, led by Rev. Horace Seldon at the call of the UUA Board and President, reads, *Increase the number of People of Color on the UUA Board of Trustees. Mechanisms suggested: increasing the number of at-large Trustees or reserving two of the current at-large seats for People of Color.* By a vote of 8



**Leon Spencer and Ione Vargas** (credit: Santos-Lyons)

to 15, an effort to institutionalize this recommendation was defeated in April 1981. In October 1981, the Board considered three more resolutions that (1) encouraged districts to *adopt affirmative action perspectives wherever possible with regard to the selection of future district trustees*, adopted by a vote of 20-3 (2) *encourage the Nominating Committee to always include at least one person of color among its nominees for the Board*, which failed 8-11 with three abstentions and (3) *encouraging the Nominating Committee and Committee on Committees to adopt affirmative action perspectives*, which passed 18-3 with one abstention. Since 1981, there

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are seven persons who have or are identified as People of Color who have served : Damas Taylor, Norma Poinsett , William Jones, Leon Spencer, Tamara Payne-Alex, Adele Smith-Penniman, Jazmin Sandoz-Rosado and Charles Redd have served on the Board, with only three, Redd, Spencer and Smith-Penniman coming from a District constituency, the rest serving in at-large seats. Currently the Board has only one member who identifies as a Person of Color, Payne-Alex, and one who identifies as Hispanic or Latino but not as a Person of Color, Jose Ballester, who won an at-large seat in 2001.

### **Young Religious UU**

Young Religious Unitarian Universalists (YRUU) was founded out of the ashes of the Liberal Religious Youth (LRY) in 1982 after the second LRY Continental Conference at Macalaster College in Minnesota. LRY, which has two notable histories written about it, *Follow the Gleam* by Wayne Arnason<sup>87</sup> published in 1980 and *We Would Be One* also by Arnason with Rebecca Scott<sup>88</sup> as an updated and revised 2005 version makes virtually no mention of persons of Color in LRY or YRUU. Continental YRUU began supporting community for youth of Color in 1998 collaborating with the 4-year-old Young Adults of Color Network sustained by funding and facilitation from the UUA Office of Young Adult and Campus Ministry. Several youth, notably Layla Rivera who was a keynote speaker for the 1996 Youth Focus GA in Indianapolis, IN, were now young adults and helped to bridge the community building and provide leadership. 1998 also marked the first ever Youth and Young Adults of Color Conference held at the Northwest Atlanta Congregation in Georgia in the fall. In 2001, the YRUU Steering Committee, a continental body, established a People of Color Advisory Committee of three members, originally selected by an all-White Steering Committee but since by a multiracial group that has been marked by complications and inconsistency in process and vision. In addition, a People of Color Caucus was established for the annual continental Youth Council, a group of six to ten youth who are appointed and funded by YRUU. The first self-identified Person of Color to work in the Youth Office is Joo Young Choi (formerly Lily Sparks) of New Hampshire in the spring of 2005. Marissa Gutierrez was hired three months later and the two currently work together concurrently at the Boston UUA Office. Several dozen youth of Color have been in leadership within YRUU over the last four years, many of them coming from the first Youth of Color Leadership Development Conference held before GA 2003 in Boston. The YRUU Steering



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Committee, which previously had one or zero youth of Color, now consistently has four or five members who are people of color. These include the first adult of Color, Tony Brumfield, who has served on the steering committee since 2002.

### Continental UU Young Adult Network

The Continental UU Young Adult Network, or C\*UUYAN, was founded in 1985 by a group of ex-Continental Youth leaders. Over the next 10 years, there is no record of a community of young adults of color within C\*UUYAN, nor engagement organizationally with issues of racism. In 1995 the Office of Young Adult Ministry (as it was known then, now it is Young Adult and Campus Ministry), under the leadership of Donna DiSciullo sponsored meetings at GA for young adults of Color. Led initially by Kristen Jewett, Danielle Gladd and Alyce Gowdy-Wright, a group of young adults age 18-35 grew relatively informally to have a database of over 100. The Ferment newsletter, published from 1994 to 2000, and jointly produced with C\*UUYAN, had a regular column entitled “Shades of UU” written by members of the Young Adults of Color Network. At the primary spiritual conference, Opus, from 1996 to 2005 there have been an increasing number of People of Color present, and beginning in 2000 a People of Color caucus has been held during Opus and ConCentric, the annual business meeting adjacent to Opus. There have been between a half a dozen to as many as twenty present. As of 2000, C\*UUYAN leadership has made public statements of support for the development of DRUUMM Young Adults of Color, and has begun to act intentionally about the growing presence of People of Color at events and in leadership. Expressions in Color, a pre-Opus retreat for young adults of color, started in 2005 as a way to draw together a community and establish a space to reflect on Unitarian Universalism and C\*UUYAN from a People of Color perspective. Currently C\*UUYAN does not have a formal role in organizing People of Color. This falls primarily to staff in the Office of Young Adult and Campus Ministry which partners with C\*UUYAN and DRUUMM to serve young adult People of Color and anti-racism efforts in congregations and at large. Programs such as the DRUUMM Youth and Young Adults of Color Conference, the Young Adults of Color Leadership





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Development Conference, and activities at GA for Young Adults of Color have received volunteer and financial support from C\*UUYAN.

### **District People of Color Efforts** *(see map on previous page)*

There have been conferences, meetings and communication between People of Color in the following UUA Districts: Mass Bay, Clara Barton, Pacific Northwest, Pacific Southwest, Pacific Central, Thomas Jefferson, Joseph Priestley, Metro New York. This represents 8 of the 20 UUA Districts. There has been no known community building among People of Color in the Canadian Unitarian Council. There has not been an official standing organization of People of Color affiliated with any UUA district. The vision and action has been initiated or shared with UUA staff and DRUUMM leadership. Between 1999 and 2002 six DRUUMM Multiracial & Families of Color retreats were held across the three western districts with sponsorship by the district's religious education committee. There have been no retreats planned since the UUA Faith in Action Department was disbanded. Presently only Mass Bay, Joseph Priestley and Thomas Jefferson have gathered People of Color together in the last year.

### **Congregational People of Color Ministries**

Over the last 25 years there is little evidence of People of Color meeting intentionally in congregations, and tracking down this information is difficult for several reasons. First is that the UUA Administration and Board do not mandate the census of racial/cultural diversity in congregations. Nearly all other mainstream religious denominations do record this data. Without this information, it is not only extremely hard to support efforts at ministry to and with People of Color, but it is very difficult to recognize the racial/cultural diversity present. This problem is magnified given the repeated UUA commitment to racial and cultural diversity, as mandated by the 1992 UUA GA. A major block to much of this is the reluctance—to outright rejection—of any census strategy that asks religious professionals to count People of Color in their congregation. This was discussed in depth by the UUA Anti-Racism Core Organizing Team in 1999 when seeking to identify Persons of Color in congregations. The tactic that was used at that time was to place a 4 page insert into an edition of the UU World print magazine. Over 600 responses came back, although this data has since been missing and unutilized since the termination of the UUA Faith in Action Department in 2002.

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UU congregations have evidently had Black Concerns Working Groups, which likely came out of the 1960s and 1970s when Black membership in UU congregations rose during the civil rights era. While there is no directory of groups or database of persons, a GA Resolution in 1985 called for the establishment of continental, district and local Black Concerns Working Groups, of which only the continental working group, later renamed the Jubilee Working Group, has any substantial documentation.

The first reported People of Color or DRUUMM group was at First Church of San Diego, in 2002. An offshoot of ongoing anti-racism efforts and thanks in large part to the leadership of Tony Brumfield and Chester McCall, this group of over a dozen People of Color has met several times each year over the last three years. They identify as a DRUUMM chapter, although no official policy exists within DRUUMM to recognize and support such entities. The oldest group of People of Color over the last 25 years is the Oscar Romero fellowship within the First Church of Los Angeles that is primarily Spanish-speaking. While they have not articulated an identity as People of Color, they have partnered with DRUUMM and begun to speak more intentionally with such notions. In 2004, the Oscar Romero fellowship, which number about 20, DRUUMM and LUUNA, co-sponsored the guest engagement of Dolores Huerta at GA 2004 in Long Beach, California. Huerta spoke both at the convention center and at the First Church LA.

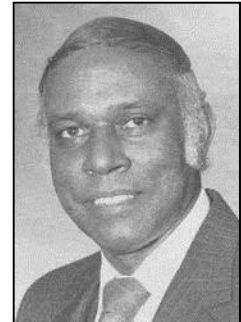
Other People of Color groups have been meeting sporadically at All Souls DC, All Souls New York, First Church Oakland, CA, Neighborhood Church in Pasadena, CA and Davies Memorial in Prince George County, Maryland (which new African-American minister John T. Crestwell reported has over 40 Black members). Each of these groups struggle with the perception of being segregationist, although the core members and leaders are active in the life of the congregation and worship. The group at All Souls NYC started as a support group for People of Color, and All Souls DC has had a Latino caucus as well as a People of Color group. Few if any of these churches have received sustained religious professional leadership, and are isolated from one another. Several of the leaders have been very active in DRUUMM, Paula Cole Jones at All Souls DC, James Coomes at Neighborhood Church, James Backman at All Souls NYC and Tony Brumfield of First San Diego.

DRUUMM has identified developing local chapters as a priority and have asked for help in creating a resource guide to assist persons in congregations. Currently nothing has been published, however the initiative remains on the DRUUMM Steering Committee agenda.

See Table 1: Racial Ideas Timeline 1980-2005 (*see page 133*)

## **Chapter VIII: Racial Ideas in Unitarian Universalism 1980-2005**

The understanding and practice related to race and racism have consistently matured in the UUA over the last twenty five years. There have been continuous efforts to develop a more comprehensive, nuanced, inclusive, and justice-centered analysis. The forming and norming process has primarily involved a critical engagement of People of Color, anti-racist activists, urban ministry lay and religious professional leadership, and UUA staff. This has had the effect of shaping a consciousness primarily at the associational level of the UUA and affiliate organization leadership teams. This overview of the development of racial ideas in the UUA is similarly focused on the continental, and now chiefly national character of an understanding of race and racism.<sup>89</sup>



**David Eaton**  
(credit: *The World*)

In this review, there are five periods of time at the association level that are easily marked by encounters with race and racism that have initiated or continued serious attention to these matters by UUA leadership. As with the Empowerment Controversy discussed earlier, the bulk of these encounters involved the GA and the UUA staff. What is evident by this examination is the constant reminder of the dynamic nature of race and racism, and the need to keep in front of us the adage of Rev. Jones, “DDT: Diagnosis Determines Therapy”.

### **1980-1983: Post-Empowerment Controversy**

By 1980, much of the dust had settled from the Empowerment Controversy, and UUA Moderator Sandra M. Caron wrote the following to the UUA Commission on Appraisal in October 1979:

I wonder if there would be any interest in the Commission in exploring the meaning of the black empowerment era in the denomination. It swept through every denomination and some responded more ably than others. I am curious as to how we stacked up. Would that topic serve as a vehicle for exploring our whole approach to social action, which is, in my opinion, a very much knee-jerk, ill-thought-out approach? ... I think the difficulty goes very deeply into our organizational and thought process.<sup>90</sup>

The late Paul Carnes, President in the UUA at the end of the Empowerment Controversy who died suddenly during his first four year term, and his successor, Eugene O. Pickett, also had urged the UUA to process this history. There was, however, no apparent encouragement from

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persons of African descent so intimately involved with the UUA, many of whom reportedly left

**All Souls Church, D.C.**, deserves special mention here, given its place as one of the flagship UU congregations located in Washington D.C., and for their long efforts at racial and cultural diversity. All Souls owes much to ministers A. Powell Davies, David Eaton, and Duncan Howlett, who, in the mid-1900s, were forceful advocates for civil rights. Early in the civil rights struggle All Souls was one of the very few places in Washington available for interracial meetings. The Rev. Davies took the lead in the movement to desegregate public facilities in Washington. The early desegregation efforts provided the foundation for the church's entry into the civil rights movement in the 1950s and 1960s.

Shana Goodwin, the current associate minister, has a focus on multicultural ministry – growing the racial and ethnic diversity of the congregation – as part of her portfolio, along with senior minister Rob Hardies. "Because Washington, D.C., itself is diverse, and because All Souls has a legacy we were handed by previous ministers, we have a unique opportunity to be as diverse as possible. That's at the very front of our agenda," says Goodwin. Fifteen to 20 percent of All Souls friends and members are people of color, making it among the most culturally diverse congregations in the UUA. (Interconnections, Jan '06)

after the great walk-out in 1969 at the Boston GA, never to return. However, Rev. Mark Morrison-Reed, who was not known to be active in the Empowerment Controversy, published *Black Pioneers* in 1980 and referred to the Empowerment Controversy as a source of his inspiration, and trepidation, in his reasons for writing. Initially, he considered exploring the controversy between the champions of integration and the advocates of Black Power within the UUA, particularly after the infamous Walkout in 1969 that he stated "almost tore the Association apart."<sup>91</sup>

Many UU ministers, such as Rev. Duncan Howlett, Rev. Victor Carpenter and Rev. Jack Mendelsohn, were advocates as well, in large part due to their continued individual engagement with race and racism. Howlett was instrumental in preparing his All Souls Church, Washington, D.C., to call an African-American Minister, Rev. David Eaton in 1969. Howlett believed that All Souls needed a young African-American as its new leader given the racial demographic changes in All Souls due to the urban flight of White families and the growing presence of poorer African-American families.<sup>92</sup> Eaton, who died in 1992 after a two-year battle with hepatitis B, was the first African-American to serve as Senior Minister of a UU congregation. Mendelsohn, active in FULLBAC and having served churches in Chicago and Boston, who incidentally came in a close second to Pickett in the election to replace the late Paul Carnes, was a leader in the UUA's Urban Ministry and Concerns efforts that began as a response to mainly American urban crises in the early 1970s.

The UUA Commission on Appraisal committed to study the issue after its meeting in January 1980, which it would do over the next four years,

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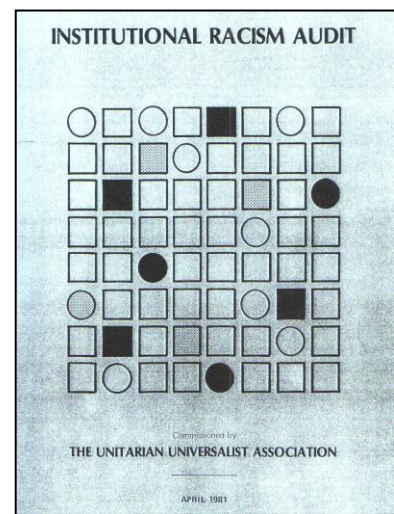
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culminating in a published report, *Unitarian Universalism and the Quest for Racial Justice: 1967-1983*.

The report attempted to document the era, to place it in a historical context, and not to report on a successful set of solutions, but rather to begin to “attempt to gather materials that may help the UUs overcome a numbed and painful inaction, the end product of anguished, confused, and conflicting years. There are, indeed, some successes, and some possible models of approach that to the author’s knowledge have not been properly publicized. Perhaps even more important, this report can help create understanding and reconciliation, from which may come determination for a fresh start.”<sup>93</sup>

Concurrently, the UUA Board of Trustees voted at its April 1980 meeting to authorize the UUA administration to contract with Community Change, Inc., of Boston, to conduct an institutional racism audit of the UUA, limited to the UUA central offices and association leadership. This effort gathered quantitative and qualitative data that was documented in a 59 page report presented to the UUA Board in April of 1981. The report was not celebrated by the UUA Board however, with a small majority voting to accept the audit, 14-10 with one abstention. The audit report contained 32 carefully developed recommendations for the UUA, focusing on the twin goals of addressing racism within the institution and supporting efforts at racial and cultural diversity. These were published in *The World*, and assessed briefly in the Commission on Appraisal report. In all, many of the recommendations only survived as action items for a few years, others were tabled or ignored completely. The UUA Board did, however, adopt a business resolution after accepting the report stating, “the UUA shall seek to eliminate institutional racism,” establishing the first explicit commitment to address racism within its own community.<sup>94</sup> This resolution elicited intense debate centering on the point that those dissenting felt that the word imperative was too strong.<sup>95</sup> This leadership hesitation continued over the next five years within the institution of the UUA as no more Board-initiated anti-racism efforts took place.

During this period, the UUA opened itself up for self-reflection, and in nurturing these efforts at historical research and institutional assessment, established a new level of foundational



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materials, ideas and strategies for race and racism. The *Quest for Racial Justice* illuminated the issue of power, in particular the difficulty UUs felt in sharing power meaningfully with People of Color, the potential for significant and accountable relationships with People of Color, and the history of the Empowerment Controversy that influenced heavily the current thinking of UUA leadership. The *Institutional Racism Audit* examined and described in detail the culture of the UUA leadership and the attitudes of, opportunities, and barriers for People of Color. Both publications touched on tensions within Unitarian Universalist theology, liberalism, rationalism and individualism, which were cited as contributing factors to the complexity of race relationships within the UUA. Finally, both provided conclusions and recommendations for next steps.

The intense questioning and examination of history that led to the institutional and cultural research of Unitarian Universalism provided powerful momentum that carried the UUA into more advanced stages with respect to race relations. In general, the results of *Black Pioneers*, *Quest for Racial Justice*, and the *Institutional Racism Audit*, built upon one another, provided a solid, reasonable and historical foundation that continues to be built on today. Through these publications and the ensuing debate and discussion, particularly among UUA staff, lay and religious professional leadership, the conclusions and ideas discerned became a call for new action.

Aside from the critical investigation and reporting on the history of the Empowerment Controversy, and the even older history of the liberal Black Unitarian ministers documented by Morrison-Reed, the significant change *within* the UUA conception of race was the intense recognition that racism was a reality within the institution, not just a social ill that needed responding to in society at-large. *Black Pioneers* highlighted this reality in 1980. The *Institutional Racism Audit*, accepted by the UUA Board in 1981, made plain the lack of serious, formal efforts to sustain a racially and culturally inclusive environment at the associational level, and the need for clear institutional leadership coming to terms with racism. Indeed, there was concern expressed about the lack of affirmative action policy and procedure within the UUA, and in response to the audit team's inquiry about such policy, one board member was quoted in the final report as saying "we must not lower the standards,"<sup>96</sup> implying not only ignorance of the purpose of affirmative action, but also emphasizing a position of superiority of the virtually all-White institutional leadership. *Quest for Racial Justice*, in 1983, referenced both of these

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publications and made the singular recommendation, aside from requesting that the GA 1983 accept its report, that the UUA Board “propose to the 1984 GA a new body, with appropriate staff and funding, to begin a fresh response to the issues of racism, as a major priority for the UUA.”<sup>97</sup>



**Loretta Williams**  
(credit: The World)

Dr. Loretta J. Williams was hired in 1980 as UUA Director of the Section on Social Responsibility. She perhaps best expresses the concern, from the perspective of a Person of Color, for the need to rethink racism theologically, and make a serious institutional commitment. She states:

Advocacy cast in racial terms is viewed more often than not in UU circles now as a special pleading of an interest group whose moral claims for justice are more ambiguous than they once were. What a travesty of principle of the UUA to affirm, defend, and promote the supreme worth of every human personality! Until sufficient resources, staff and financial, are earmarked for substantive development of multiculturalism within the UUA continent wide, Unitarian Universalists will continue the pattern of rhetoric substituted for intentional activity to combat racism within and without the UU movement. Fiscal support is vitally needed for creditable change efforts to occur.<sup>98</sup>

Racial ideas began to shift on many fronts as a result. Radical change institutionally began developing a broader analysis of racism in comparison and in contrast with the notion of prejudice. *Quest for Racial Justice* made clear the need to improve the understanding of race prejudice, and individual, institutional and cultural racism. In particular, it noted in its study how the psychology of racism in institutional life perpetuates conflict between Whites and People of Color through the practices and policies of the institution.<sup>99</sup> This is a significant development, both in that it establishes a priority on understanding the systemic nature of racism, and recognizes that White identity and White supremacy have a role and an institutional identity.

An attempt was made to shift the focus of racism from individual to institutional. Rev. Jones's work was incorporated to address victim blaming and purely victim-orientated racial justice efforts, to turn attention to the underlying structural factors. This effort sought to distinguish between a focus of concern on the objects or effects of prejudice, (i.e. symptoms), and the root causes. Jones also criticized a simple focus on individual racism as being akin to Social Darwinism, in that “it seems to support the concept that stronger and more advanced racial groups will naturally triumph over the weaker and less civilized ones.”<sup>100</sup> Addressing

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racism institutionally was seen as a more genuine way of attempting to solve the apparent persistence of racism even within a self-proclaimed liberal institution such as the UUA.

At issue theologically, in this period, was an attempt to come to terms with the intense individualism, rationalism and liberalism which manifested in the belief and practice of tolerance. *Quest for Racial Justice* suggested, with the use of a quote from Beacon Press Author and philosopher Herbert Marcuse, that “what is proclaimed and practiced as tolerance today, is in many of its most effective manifestations serving the cause of oppression.”<sup>101</sup> Tolerance, long an article of faith for religious liberals, was not only something that Unitarian Universalists were extremely proud of and acted upon, particularly around efforts at racial integration, but something considered to be near sacred and difficult to criticize. The Commission on Appraisal then asked, “What are Unitarian Universalists to think, then, when it is announced that racial integration means racial disintegration, that what Unitarian Universalists have been serving is not the cause of tolerance but the cause of intolerance, not generosity but selfishness?”<sup>102</sup>

The conflict centers on the paternalistic character of tolerance as practiced by the White institution, and the belief by some, both Whites and People of Color, that there needs to be an effort at empowerment with internal work to be done by Whites and by People of Color separately in order to bring about authentic racial and cultural diversity. For some, “there could be no compromising any of these principles, the ends do not justify abhorrent means,” with respect to the wishes of People of Color, and in the case of the Empowerment Controversy, of Blacks, to assert their own power and control without the superior authority of Whites. We can also assume that the fact that the UUA had committed, yet never fully funded, one million dollars (\$1,000,000) to Black Unitarian Universalist caucus efforts only served to heighten the sense of frustration and tension.

This remains an acute dispute twenty five years later, despite broader institutional acceptance of People of Color caucusing at the associational level. The extreme belief in tolerance ignores the relationship of the history of oppressor and oppressed, and the extent to which the oppressed finds its power and strength to liberate themselves. *Quest for Racial Justice* stresses this point in other Jewish and Christian theological traditions, such as the “view from the cross”, that those who see most clearly from where they languish, suffer the sin of their oppressors that would rescue them using imperfect means. This analysis of tolerance also draws upon Paolo Freire’s



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*Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, in which he writes “Only power that springs from weakness of the oppressed will be sufficiently strong to free both.”<sup>103</sup>

To what extent, of course, Unitarian Universalists were able to identify the “oppressed” within their midst – and, thence, to identify with them – was and still is problematic. The question of color to a religious association (UUA) that aspired to be color-blind rankled. A large number of black and white religious liberals found the accusation that their high-minded commitment to tolerance, integration, and the democratic process was “sinful,” that it “missed the mark,” that it served the cause of oppression, specious and self-serving. They rejected it and deplored attempts made to establish a separate caucus of the “oppressed” within the Association, arguing that such action was, for all its claims on behalf of justice, merely a resort to sectarianism.<sup>104</sup>

The belief in tolerance in this light is further complicated by the intense individualism considered to be supreme and vital to its practice. This limits the ability of corporate action, particularly internal to the UUA institution and culture, even to address issues of oppression. Freedom of individuals, championed by liberalism, combined with the massive social change around segregation and integration in the 1960s and 1970s, clouded the waters and prevented institutional efforts from listening to Unitarian Universalist People of Color about their experiences in the church. The Unity-Unitarian congregational racism audit observed this confusion, and subsequent inaction in their own history: “We chose not to grapple with the tension between individual freedom and the need for an institutional commitment to confront racism.”<sup>105</sup>

The issue of liberalism was picked up by a member of the *Institutional Racism Audit* team, Lori Miola, a Unitarian Universalist who wrote a chapter entitled “The Liberal Syndrome.” In it she recognizes the positive trends in liberalism, but takes on the factors that block the UUA from racial justice, terming them the Liberal Syndrome. She addresses institutional attitudes and behaviors that on the surface appear inclusive, but are effectively exclusive. She writes,

For instance, while talking about racism, many UUs assumed the liberal church to be enlightened and, therefore, not needing to do any more in the way of action. Several people report that liberals “welcome all views...all people” and then assumed that “we don’t have to think about ‘color’ or ‘group...or inclusion.” This sense of “openness” or enlightenment makes people feel comfortable with the situation as it currently exists. The situation as it exists is clearly illustrated in the racial make-up of major decision-making boards and the UUA staff, which are overwhelmingly white...UUs love to talk...and the endless debate, the semantics of looking for clarity, postpones action long after sufficient data proves or disproves a point. There is something wrong when people delay by waiting for more detail, more debate over issues which affect others so urgently. Racism and inclusion of all peoples in our organization is in need of immediate action.

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Another behavior characteristic which is related perhaps to the “endless debate syndrome” is the propensity toward intellectualism and the reluctance to deal with “difficult” emotions. Nowhere in my professional interviewing experiences have I been so aware of the difference between expressions of thought and expressions of feeling. In our collective interviews, often questions about “feelings” of interviewers elicited “thought” responses. To get to some feelings about racial issues demanded a skill that could be referred to as “verbal dentistry.”<sup>106</sup>

Christine Murphy, who worked for the UUA Faith in Action Department and wrote her Masters of Divinity Thesis on *A History of Institutional Unitarian Universalist Anti-Racism: 1969-1997*, made similar conclusions about the history leading into this period of time. She notes the “dichotomy between individual action and institutional inertia”<sup>107</sup> that needs to be understood less the two become conflated to the detriment of positive institutional change. She also remarks constructively on the “interconnection between oppressions” developing among feminists, gay rights, anti-war and racial justice activists.<sup>108</sup>

In all, this period marked a critical inquiry into race and racism in the UUA, both historically and in the current context. The emerging ideas of institutional racism, broadening of those understood to be impacted by racism beyond African-Americans, the need to examine White paternalism in addressing racism, and a call to listen to the experience of those affected directly by racism are noteworthy and present in today’s dialogue on race in the UUA.

### 1984-1991: Racial Code Talking

Murphy writes that the anti-racism work began by the Black Unitarian Universalists in the 1960s and 1970s was kept alive by the formation of the Urban Church Coalition in 1975, and makes the claim that “Urban Concerns” became the new code word for anti-racism within the UUA.<sup>109</sup> Urban Ministry and Concerns, through UUA sponsored committees and with the support of UUA staff, in addition to the religious professionals and lay leaders of urban churches that were unable to escape the White urban flight of the decades before, continued in various forms and fashions to deal with the issues involving their neighborhoods, including racism.

During this period, a number of advancements continued to be made with respect to how race and racism were understood. Institutionally, primarily African-Americans became organized through several associational efforts. In 1985, the GA passed a resolution establishing a UUA Black Concerns Working Group (BCWG), and called upon congregations and districts to

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develop equivalent groups. This was the first formal attempt by the White UUA leadership to gather People of Color in order to address institutional racism, in contrast to the Black Unitarian Universalist-led efforts of the 1960s and 1970s. The BCWG signaled a change towards education and training of UUs, predominately White UUs, in congregations through workshops led by BCWG members. This is in sharp contrast to the 1960s Black UUs who were not interested in training or educating White UUs around racism and instead sought to develop autonomous Black communities, both UU and non-UU affiliated. The resolution was specific about Blacks, and although failing to state an analysis of racism's impact on People of Color more broadly, it is important to note that a decade later the association level Black Concerns Working Group changed its name to the Jubilee Working Group in direct response to a consensus understanding of the effect of racism on all People of Color. The resolution in full form states,

### **Establishment of a Black Concerns Working Group (1985)**

WHEREAS, racism against Blacks is a pervasive social problem; and

WHEREAS, our denomination believes in the inherent worth and dignity of every person, in the democratic process based on equality and freedom, and in the individual right to enjoy all of our constitutional and other legal rights; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees of the Unitarian Universalist Association has recognized the presence of racism in our denomination, as evidenced in conclusions of the Institutional Racism Audit; and

WHEREAS, our religious beliefs and our faith in the democratic principles impose upon us an obligation to oppose racism wherever we find it, and we recognize that our efforts to end racism against Blacks are also means of ending racism against all oppressed people in our society;

BE IT RESOLVED: That the 1985 GA of the Unitarian Universalist Association recommends that there be established a Black Concerns Working Group of the Social Responsibility Section to assist in the implementation of the Report of the Task Force on Racism as approved by the 1984 GA whose tasks shall be:

1. Helping Unitarian Universalist societies increase their awareness of racism and showing them how to reach out to minority groups by:
  - a. providing educational material on the nature, causes, and consequences of racism to be made available to individual members of every congregation; and

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- b. encouraging our societies, area councils and districts to establish Black Concerns Subcommittees or to appoint individuals to deal with the issue of racism as it pertains to individual societies both as a moral imperative and as a means of creating an environment within our association more inclusive of diverse races, cultures, and classes;
  - c. drawing upon and publicizing the experience and knowledge of individual members of Unitarian Universalist societies who can contribute special insights into the issue of racism;
2. Initiating and suggesting activities designed to influence our political leaders at every level of government to eradicate racism whether imbedded in law or in social custom or practice; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED: That this Assembly urges that an adequate budget be established for the realization of the intent of this resolution.

Organizing of African-American UUs reached its peak after this resolution was passed. African-American ministers held a conference at the Howard Inn in Washington, D.C., in November 1988 with the goal of forming an organization “to carry out our purposes, among which are the provision of an ongoing structure for communication with and support for one another and the monitoring of the UUA in regard to its response to and involvement of African-Americans.” In June 1989 this group issued a press release announcing the formation of “African-American UU Ministries” (AAUUM) convened initially by Rev. William Jones, Rev. Mark Morrison-Reed and Rev. Adele Smith-Penninen.<sup>110</sup> At the time of this formation, the UUA had recently hired Rev. Mel Hoover and Religious Education Director Jacqui James, both African-Americans, who were present at the founding and contributed significantly through their positions as UUA staff. This support came especially in the areas of administration, record keeping, communication and networking.<sup>111</sup>

The role Hoover stepped into changed dramatically during his nearly 15 years on the UUA staff. Soon after being hired though, he moved into what may be considered the first institutional anti-racism role in UUA history, as a Person of Color. He was given a “wide berth to develop anti-racism activity” within the UUA, and reported to the UUA President Schultz himself. With this development, a clearinghouse was established, both fulfilling one of the recommendations of the 1981 *Institutional Racism Audit*, and allowing the work to be more fully documented, processed and sustained as an institutional priority.<sup>112</sup>

From the vision, energy and partnership with the UUA established predominately by Black ministers, the Black Concerns Working Group, and high-level Black volunteers and UUA

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staff, a number of new initiatives kept the development of racial ideas active. In particular, attention to People of Color in the Ministry, not only African-American but also persons of other racial/cultural backgrounds gained special recognition, thanks to the advocacy of AAUUM. Rev. Diane Arakawa, of Asian descent, was recruited for UUA committees, serving terms on the Ministerial Fellowship Committee and the Commission on Appraisal during this period. Funding and support for new congregations and extension ministry were developed, seeding nearly two dozen projects across the United States with the expressed goal of increasing the UUA's racial and cultural diversity. These were attempted in Korean, African-American, and Latino/a communities intentionally.

The broadening understanding of race and racism, as extending beyond Black and White persons, was evident in a 1986 UUA Board resolution deploring anti-Arab racism, and culminated in the 1992 GA resolution on Racial and Cultural Diversity which asked the internal diversity question with the support of a broad coalition of UU affiliate organizations and People of Color. The next year, in 1993, GA passed the resolution Justice for Indigenous Peoples, calling for significant action on behalf of Canadian First Nations and American Indians/Native Americans that recognized the influence of racism upon their communities.

During this time an analysis of White identity and an explicit role for Whites in addressing racism and racial and cultural diversity developed, with beginning efforts to name and frame White privilege at the core. Then-UUA President William Schultz wrote an Open Letter to White Unitarian Universalists in the 1988 World calling for the need for collective action by Whites on racial and cultural diversity.<sup>113</sup> Many White UUs, before and after Schultz's call took action during this time. Collectively, these centered primarily through the vehicle of Urban Ministry; individually, they were numerous as congregations addressed South African apartheid, American neo-colonialism in Central/Latin America, and responded to various racial hate crimes in towns and cities across North America. Rev. Rob Eller-Isaacs, formerly of the First UU Church in Oakland, California deserves special mention here, in part for his role in mentoring and assisting in the ministerial formation of a number of Ministers of Color, including Rev. Yielbonzie Charles Johnson, Rev. William Sinkford, and Rev. Chester McCall. Eller-Isaacs was also a member of the UUA's Affirmative Action Task Force with Morrison-Reed, and of various committees of the UUA's Urban Ministry efforts. Now co-minister of the Unity-Unitarian Church of St Paul, Minnesota, Rob and his co-minister and wife Janne, have strived to bring an

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anti-racism consciousness to the congregation, including establishing an Anti-Racism Leadership Team. These institutional developments have been critical throughout the years in both welcoming People of Color, and educating the larger White-majority congregation about the realities and barriers racism engender. The role of the institutional team, working internally as well as collaborating externally with a statewide coalition of churches engaging in anti-racism work, is as follows:

### ***Anti-Racism Leadership Team***

The congregation of Unity Church-Unitarian commissioned the Anti-Racism Leadership Team in January 2003. The ten-member team has participated in several training sessions to learn about the power of systems and institutions with regard to race, as well as how to function as a leadership team. They have crafted vision and mission statements to guide them in their work and in spring 2005 they completed an institutional audit of the Unity Church.

### **Vision Statement**

Unity Church - Unitarian is an anti-racist community that is actively engaged in dismantling racism both internally and in the wider community in a manner that is accountable to communities of color.

### **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Unity Church Anti-Racism Leadership Team is to lead the church in developing and living out an intentionally anti-racist identity in all aspects of church life. The team will seek opportunities to:

- promote dialogue and learning within the church community about the origins and functioning of systemic racism
- integrate an anti-racist perspective into the identity documents, religious education and member development curricula, worship service, and governance of Unity Church<sup>114</sup>

It is apparent that during the decade after the *Quest for Racial Justice*, *Black Pioneers* and the *Institutional Racism Audit* were published, attention to matters of racism stagnated within the institution. Even with the establishment of the BCWG, considered to be the primary institutional vehicle for addressing racism, funding was meager at best for their efforts. In the first year of existence they were given the charge of “eradicating racism, both within the denomination and beyond”, and a budget of \$5,000 in 1985.<sup>115</sup> Even with the UUA Board renewing its interest, thanks to the strategic efforts of African-American UUs and their White allies, there was general reluctance among the majority of institutional gatekeepers. While the

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BCWG eventually came to receive more substantial funding, and led approximately 20 workshops a year in local congregations with coordinative and administrative support from the UUA staff, this has deteriorated since the dissolution of the Faith in Action department and by 2005, only three Jubilee One workshops were led.<sup>116</sup>

The endeavors, opportunities and successes during this time have little collected documentation. This fact in itself reminds us of the subterranean nature of racial justice work of the period. The use of code-talking in order to avoid the past conflict as well as to continue to build racial justice efforts with a reluctant and even resistant community makes it even more difficult to do a quality assessment. Much of the material, particularly related to the ethnic new starts and extension ministry efforts, is available in unorganized pieces, without any analysis or conclusions publicly available. This is distressing given the several hundred thousand dollars allocated to the projects. Transparency appears to be a chronic problem within the UUA. The UUA has funded and staffed well-intentioned and even well-planned programs to serve institutional goals of racial justice, yet without the follow through of detailed reporting that allows the next generation of leadership to learn from this history. There is also an opportunity lost in not maintaining an accessible archive of this information, particularly if racial justice is intended to be an institutional priority, which the evidence of decision-makers point to.

In 1991, a UUA staff group formed in 1989, to study the anti-racism initiatives of other religious denominations, and after two years of work presented a UUA Ten-Year Plan to Improve the Racial and Ethnic Diversity of Our UU Community, modeled loosely on the work of the Lutherans.<sup>117</sup> It sought to foster diversity work in all aspects of UUA life, and to "define and develop an urban outreach plan including extension ministry; create new congregations which are intentionally racially and ethnically diverse; and seek out and develop community-based ministries that are intentionally racially and ethnically diverse," as well as "reckon with our classism, as a movement."<sup>118</sup> While the plan was functionally unrealistic, it did provide the seeds for the historical 1992 GA Resolution for Racial and Cultural Diversity in Unitarian Universalism.

### **1992-1997: A Question About Racial/Cultural Diversity**

The 1991 UUA Ten Year Plan to Improve the Racial and Ethnic Diversity of Our UU Community UUA Vision for Racial and Cultural Diversity was considered by the UUA staff as a

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potential business resolution to the 1992 GA held in Calgary, Alberta. However, in April, two months before the GA, it was decided instead to be submitted as a report, entitled, “Long Term Initiative for Racial and Cultural Diversity.”<sup>119</sup> Outgoing President William Schulz and Moderator Natalie Gulbrandsen, presidential candidates John Buehrens and Carolyn Owen-Towle, and Denny Davidoff, candidate for Moderator, showed their support of the initiative. In response to the report, a group of UUA affiliate organizations presented a resolution to the GA called “Racial and Cultural Diversity in Unitarian Universalism”. The delegates adopted the resolution overwhelmingly.

### **RESOLUTION ON RACIAL AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY (1992)**

WHEREAS President Schulz and Moderator Gulbrandsen have called on Unitarian Universalists to support a vision of a Unitarian Universalist faith which reflects the reality of a racially diverse and multicultural global village; and

WHEREAS the candidates for President and Moderator of this faith community stand in solidarity with this vision; and

WHEREAS the Board of Trustees and staff of the Unitarian Universalist Association have worked to bring this vision to life; and

WHEREAS the individuals in our congregations who bring our visions to life need a process to articulate their concerns and ideas on how we can make this vision a substantive reality; and

WHEREAS our first principle calls on us to affirm and promote the inherent worth and dignity of every human being; and

WHEREAS this resolution was prepared by a coalition including the African-American Unitarian Universalist Ministry, the Black Concerns Working Group, the Coalition of African-American Unitarian Universalist Organizations, the Continental Women and Religion Committee, the Covenant of Unitarian Universalist Pagans, the Ministerial Sisterhood of Unitarian Universalists, the Network of Black Unitarian Universalists, the Society for the Larger Ministry, the Unitarian Universalist District Presidents' Association, Unitarian Universalists for Lesbian and Gay Concerns, Unitarian Universalists for a Just Economic Community, the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, the Urban Church Coalition, the Unitarian Universalist Women's Caucus, the Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation, Young Religious Unitarian Universalists, the Youth Caucus, and others;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that we, the delegates of the 1992 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association, affirm and support this vision of a racially diverse and multicultural Unitarian Universalism;



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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the 1992 General Assembly urges the Board of Trustees of the Unitarian Universalist Association to develop and implement a process involving a broad representation of congregations, organizations, and staff to realize this vision of a racially and culturally diverse Unitarian Universalist Association; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the 1992 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association call on the Board of Trustees to present to the 1993 General Assembly a report of progress in research and planning to realize this vision of our faith community.

This resolution generated another round of serious institutional self-examination around race and racism, and again hunted for a strategy to the vision for an increase in the number of People of Color in Unitarian Universalism. The resolution was essentially a big question to the UUA, one that would not be answered for nearly five years. The UUA Board agreed to implement a Task Force on Racial and Cultural Diversity, which met from 1993 until 1997, culminating in their proposed answer, the 1997 GA Resolution Towards An Anti-Racist/Multicultural UUA.

The work of the Task Force was substantial, with concurrent projects being implemented by UUA staff. These included curriculum development, initiating, tracking and supporting additional racial/cultural diversity projects in congregations, in part financed by the Whitney Young fund. The Whitney Young Fund was established in 1982 for urban ministry, but its mission changed in relationship to the UUA's changing understanding of racial ideas and a growing analysis of anti-racism and White privilege by the Task Force, the BCWG, and core trainers and organizers, both experienced and new to racial justice work within the UUA.

The Task Force, established in October 1992, planned Racial and Cultural Diversity Days for the 1993, 1994, 1995 and 1996 General Assemblies, gathered congregational and ministerial information, developed a congregational assessment tool, conducted research, reported back to each GA, and began the process for institutional change in UUA affiliate organizations, congregations, and the UUA staff and board. Barbara Major, a New Orleans-based community organizer and anti-racism trainer with the People's Institute for Survival and Beyond, was special keynote speaker for Racial Justice Day in 1993 and 1994, introducing the idea of institutional anti-racism transformation to the 1,000+ participants. In 1993, the focus was on getting people to acknowledge there is a problem with racism, and this was done in part emotionally, thanks to Rev. Morrison-Reed's address in which at one point he "broke down in tears, apparently moved

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by the indignities suffered by African-American UUs, and Aler-Maida (who was co-presenting) had to take over for him.” The post-GA September/October 1993 *UU World* reported that,

This was a pivotal movement, according to Deborah Weiner, director of Public Relations and Marketing at the UUA, who says, “If Mark had not spoken and broken down, no one would have had the success with the day that they had. People told me, ‘I really had never understood that the issue affected people directly.’ Several said they were ashamed that this was our history and knew they had to change.”<sup>120</sup>

While it is welcome to see change in people, the experience of Morrison-Reed in front of 1,800 participants in 1993 underscores the prevalent idea in the UUA that People of Color are required to share their most intimate and painful feelings in order for White persons to understand the importance and impact of racism.

In 1994 the next step was to teach participants ways to understand racism institutionally and take action to change the system.<sup>121</sup> Small group ideas reported out in the September/October 1994 *UU World* included “better support for UU ministers of color and African-American ministerial students, sister church relationships with black congregations, including urban/suburban relationships, antiracist religious education materials, district antiracism workshops, and a Welcoming Congregation-like program to show churches how to welcome people of color.”<sup>122</sup> In 1996, the Task Force called upon congregations to come to GA 1997 prepared to discuss, debate, and take action on specific recommendations for dismantling racism in the UUA and working for racial justice in our communities.

During this time, the UUA Office of Racial Inclusivity was renamed the Office of Racial and Cultural Diversity, which according to the March/April 1995 *UU World*, found itself “swamped with calls from congregations, districts and individual members who had been inspired by the GA’s Racial Justice Day activities to seek out materials on fighting racism in their communities. To handle the request, the UUA Board mandated the recruitment and training of 24 volunteer racial justice resource managers. Volunteers will attend a three-day training session, where they will receive a manual that answers commonly asked questions, a congregational needs assessment questionnaire, a list of steps to take to become an antiracist institution, and a comprehensive list of UU and non-UU resources.”<sup>123</sup> Kathy Huff served as contact on the UUA Staff in the Department of Social Justice.

The racial ideas around racism beyond Black and White, linkage of oppressions, White privilege, institutional racism, and the need for comprehensive institutional support continued to

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strengthen, popularize, and become more widely accepted and adopted within the UUA. *Weaving the Fabric of Diversity*, one of the only completed curriculums addressing racism, in complement with other “isms,” made a point of dealing with the complexity of language, self-identification, and the multiplicities of identities we claim. Challenges still persist however, as in spite of broad based efforts and high profile activities at GA during this era. The problem of racism is still understood primarily as a People of Color issue or problem, and the institution is only beginning to pay attention to a concerted collective of People of Color, primarily AAUUM, in seeking to develop an institutional response and strategy. Forward looking efforts at uniting People of Color and providing consistent staff and financial resources are still lacking and lead to minimal leadership development, stunting the potential growth of People of Color community and ministry. People of Color continue to report negative racial encounters within the UUA.

### **1997-2001: An Answer To Racial/Cultural Diversity**

#### **1997 RESOLUTION TOWARD AN ANTI-RACIST UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST ASSOCIATION**

**WHEREAS** the 1996 General Assembly resolved that all congregations, districts, organizations, and professional and lay leaders participate in a reflection-action process throughout the 1996-97 church year using the Congregational Reflection and Action Process Guide and the Anti-Racism Assessment; and

**WHEREAS** our Unitarian Universalist principles call us to affirm and promote "justice, equity, and compassion in human relations" and "the goal of world community"; and

**WHEREAS** our history as Unitarian Universalists includes evidence of both great commitment and individual achievement in the struggle for racial justice as well as the failure of our Unitarian Universalist institutions to respond fully to the call for justice; and

**WHEREAS** racism and its effects, including economic injustice, are embedded in all social institutions as well as in ourselves and will not be eradicated without deliberate engagement in analysis and action; and

**WHEREAS** because of the impact of racism on all people, and the interconnection among oppressions, we realize we need to make an institutional commitment to end racism; and

**WHEREAS** the social, economic, and ecological health of our planet is imperiled by the deepening divisions in our world caused by inequitable and unjust distribution of power and resources; and

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**WHEREAS** we are called yet again by our commitment to faith in action to pursue this anti-racist, multi-cultural initiative in the spirit of justice, compassion, and community;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the 1997 General Assembly urges Unitarian Universalists to examine carefully their own conscious and unconscious racism as participants in a racist society, and the effect that racism has on all our lives, regardless of color.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the General Assembly urges the Unitarian Universalist Association, its congregations, and community organizations to develop an ongoing process for the comprehensive institutionalization of anti-racism and multiculturalism, understanding that whether or not a group becomes multi-racial, there is always the opportunity to become anti-racist. Early steps toward anti-racism might include using curricula such as Journey Toward Wholeness for all age groups, forming racial justice committees, and conducting anti-racism workshops.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the General Assembly urges all Unitarian Universalist leaders, including ministers, religious educators, leaders of associate and affiliate organizations, governing boards, Unitarian Universalist Association staff, theological schools, and future General Assemblies to engage in ongoing anti-racism training, to examine basic assumptions, structures, and functions, and, in response to what is learned, to develop action plans.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that Unitarian Universalists are encouraged to enter into relationships of sustained engagement with all people of color with a goal of opening up authentic dialogue that may include, but is not limited to, race and racism. Such dialogue should also include how to appropriately honor and affirm the cultural traditions of all people of color.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the General Assembly requests that the UUA Board of Trustees establish a committee to monitor and assess our transformation as an anti-racist, multi-cultural institution, and that the Board of Trustees shall report annually to the General Assembly specifically on the programs and resources dedicated to assisting our congregations in carrying out the objectives of this resolution.

**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED** that in order to transform the racist institutions of our world, the General Assembly urges the Unitarian Universalist Association and all its parts to establish relationships with other international and interfaith organizations that are working to dismantle racism.

This resolution emphasizes the importance of moving toward anti-racist multiculturalism where we deal with the issues of white power and privilege at the various levels of our religious institution. It also calls on us as Unitarian Universalists to make a commitment to doing this work in our congregations.

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At the 1997 GA in Phoenix, Arizona, after significant and impassioned debate, the assembly passed the resolution entitled *Toward an Anti-Racist Unitarian Universalist Association*, with only a handful of no votes. This became known as the Journey Towards Wholeness Resolution, or the JTW resolution. Over the next five years, during the last half of UUA President John Buehren's term, the UUA and all of its parts would embark on the most significant and sustained work around race and racism in the history of Unitarian and Universalism. A full complement of staff was funded, hired and gathered into a newly established UUA Faith in Action Department (FIA), which addressed all issues of justice-making throughout the UUA including anti-racism, ableism, classism, environmental justice, homophobia, and legislative issues through an office in Washington, D.C. A newsletter was established called *Faith in Action*, to share news and resources twice a year. In the Fall/Winter 1997 edition, Susan Leslie, previously an administrator in the Racial and Cultural Diversity Office and now Programs and Communications Coordinator for FIA, wrote of the JTW resolution:

We have declared our intention to actively struggle to become an anti-racist, multicultural faith. While our denomination has been involved in efforts to eradicate racism at various times in our history, what is new here is an implicit understanding that racism is rooted in white power and privilege, and that Unitarian Universalist institutions must themselves be transformed as part of larger societal efforts.<sup>124</sup>

In effect, the JTW resolution was an answer to the question posed by the 1992 GA Resolution for Racial and Cultural Diversity. This resolution was the final recommendation of the Five-Year Task Force on Racial and Cultural Diversity, made after extensive dialogue in congregations, districts and at GA via the Racial Justice Days.

This period is being reviewed and documented in a book to be published by the UUA Skinner House in the coming years, tentatively entitled *Journey From Calgary*. The richness of this period, and the more readily available material due to the collections posted online as well as the substantial collaboration of UUA staff along with nearly all affiliate organizations and over 10% of the congregations will be a revelation and hopefully an inspiration for those who seek racial justice.

Hundreds if not thousands of anti-racism trainings, congregational assessments, small grants, consultations, anti-racism team formations, written reports, community partnerships,

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sermons and essays were published over these five years. While no centralized archive exists, the material is all available for review, including grant applications and final evaluations, UUA staff reports, job descriptions and minutes of the Journey Towards Wholeness Transformation Committee.

There are several significant racial ideas that gained traction during this time. First was a deeper understanding that institutional change is ultimately a long-term process about re-shaping, or transforming the institutional identity of the organization. This was a goal at all levels of the UUA. Second was the need for permanent, authentic accountability with collectives of People of Color. The awareness developed that the presence of an individual person of Color, often one Black UU, on a committee or board was not enough to denote institutional change with respect to racism. Having a voice was important, but the analysis evolved that the voice of a collective of People of Color mobilized for anti-racist action was necessary. Such was the mission of AAUUM and DRUUMM, for example. Lastly, a new focus on racial identity development emerged within the UUA, in large part due to the work of Dr. Leon Spencer, who served on the UUA Board from the Thomas Jefferson District and later as President of the Thomas Jefferson District.

Experiments with new racial ideas also brought about disappointment, often due to conflict around language. A proposal to change the name of the Thomas Jefferson District to the Towards Justice District, failed by a few votes to garner the super majority needed. DRUUMM was established, but soon after, several founding members associated with LUUNA left, in conflict over the language of People of Color. An attempt to publish a religious education curriculum entitled the *Language of Race* made it to manuscript stage but was never realized due to incomplete funding, staffing and content.

In 1998, a Consultation on Racial Justice was held in Chicago, January 16-18, co-sponsored by Starr King and Meadville-Lombard, with over 100 participants. Attended by ministers, UUA staff, members of the JTW Transformation Committee, and other activists including a number of People of Color, the conference was an attempt to forge more unity around the strategies for addressing racism. Discussed were the ideas of the JTW process calling upon UUs to acknowledge racism, renounce White privilege, and claim an anti-racist identity. Debated was some of the terminology around racial justice, including the word “anti” within anti-racism. Rev. Jones commented, “I have no problem with ‘anti’ because once you’ve

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committed yourself to racial justice...you're saying that something out there is wrong or bad and you are committing yourself to getting rid of it, eradicating it."<sup>125</sup> This, and other issues such as the way to approach White UUs, definitions and strategies for addressing institutional racism, the role of People of Color, and the contract with Crossroads Ministry, an interfaith but predominately Protestant Christian anti-racist training organization, were addressed with little formal agreement or consensus.

Many anti-racist activists consider this to be the golden-age of collaboration, institutional support, vision, and grass-roots organizing around racism, in spite of the challenges. There were significant conversations being held throughout the reaches of the UUA, with complementary resources and services being provided by the UUA staff. The JTW Transformation Committee was focused on identifying and organizing leadership of congregations, districts and affiliate organizations to take responsibility around racism, and working with the UUA to provide assessment, programming, training and strategic planning. Clearly it can be said that without the intentional and multifaceted strategy of engaging all parts of the institution, from the credentialing of religious professionals, to the mission and purpose identities of congregations themselves, from the organizing and community building for People of Color, to the clear questioning of White privilege within the UUA, there probably would have been no resistance.

Resistance did materialize in force however, a backlash that has some of its roots in the Empowerment Controversy thirty years earlier. Predominately White UUs, in particular religious professionals, and more specifically White Ministers, tended to be both reluctant, and at times actively resistant and disparaging of the type and tone of anti-racism manifested by the JTW resolution. The JTW Transformation Committee struggled to respond effectively, both tactically and in terms of reshaping the strategic vision. Conflict arose over the impression that addressing White privilege and power within an institutional framework, which the anti-racism initiatives did, translated into an emphasis on White guilt, sin and a concept of evil. Although the leadership of the anti-racism initiatives during this period attempted to answer, clarify and relate directly with those who held objections, the dialogue was essentially a one-way street with most of those who opposed the effort at anti-racism choosing to complain loudly but refusing to engage when invited to help change or better understand goals and tactics.

Much of this came to a head in 1999 when Rev. Thandeka, a founding member of AAUUM and now professor at Meadville/Lombard theological school, gave a workshop at GA

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entitled “What’s Wrong With Anti-Racism: Why Anti-Racism Will Fail.” Her points were as follows:

- They violate the first principle of our UU covenant together to actively affirm and promote the inherent worth and dignity of every person.
- They make an erroneous assumption about the nature and structure of power in America; and
- They misinterpret actions resulting from feelings of shame and powerlessness as evidence of white racism.<sup>126</sup>

The crux of her protest was that the definition of racism used by the JTW committee, racism=racial prejudice + the misuse of systemic/institutional power, is essentially a modern definition of original sin for White persons. She complained that the teaching included the notion that “all whites in our country are born racist.”<sup>127</sup> Thandeka refused several offers to dialogue about her concerns both before and after her workshop, and ultimately her presence as an African-American voice gave reason for many White UUs to disengage and ignore anti-racism. The Jubilee Working Group, formerly the BCWG, charged with providing the introductory anti-racism workshops to congregations, had this to say about the JTW in their public response to Thandeka:

The focus of the Journey Towards Wholeness is that we are indeed broken and in need of healing. But individual healing, which is necessary, will not be enough; we seek the wholeness of the systems and institutions that impact the lives of all of us. We are enmeshed in a social and economic system that oppresses many and privileges others on the basis of arbitrary characteristics such as skin color, race, sex, gender orientation, age, and physical ability. We assert that this system, which abuses and diminishes all of us (although in different ways), was made by human beings and can be unmade by human beings. In the work of the Jubilee Working Group for Anti-Racism, as in the work of all of our Journey Towards Wholeness teams, we focus on active responsibility, not paralyzing guilt. Our goal is to move toward the reconciliation and restoration of all people to full personhood and participation in the Jubilee World of love, justice, and equity.<sup>128</sup>

This period saw the establishment of many mechanisms that were designed to change the institutional culture of Unitarian Universalism, broaden the awareness of UUs (in particularly White UUs) to privilege and power, and foster ways for People of Color to connect more intentionally with Unitarian Universalism. For example, in the ministry, serious efforts were made to assess barriers to ministry and successful parish ministries by the UUA and the UU



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Ministers Association. The UUA Diversity on Ministry Team was established in order to achieve an anti-racist, anti-oppressive, and multicultural ministry. The key purpose of this committee is to welcome, recruit, and advise ministers and seminarians from historically marginalized communities; to identify and work to remove institutional barriers that prevent their fullest participation in the ministerial credentialing process and the achievement of successful ministerial settlements or professional ministerial employment; and in maintaining their access to ongoing professional development.<sup>129</sup>

In sum, the effects of these institutional experiences and advances are still being processed with respect to the development of racial ideas in the UUA. There were incredible strides, and the deep engagement of thousands of UUs, White UUs, around racism individually and institutionally. These stories and the people involved need to be recognized, for their anti-racist actions have only served to make the UUA a more welcoming and inclusive place for People of Color. This period also saw White UUs contributing significantly to racial justice efforts in their congregational communities, with partnerships and relationships forming with other churches and community groups.

The institutional highlight of this work was the coming together of over 50 leaders, from constituencies within the UUA including religious professionals, association leadership, youth, young adults, and People of Color for a long weekend stakeholders meeting. Held in Kansas City, Missouri in Spring of 1998, the meeting was called by the JTW Transformation Committee and supported by trainers from Crossroads Ministry, an interfaith anti-racism ministry which the UUA Board contracted with in 1992 to provide anti-racism development for the UUA. Out of this meeting, where stories and strategies were shared with respect to institutional anti-racism work, the UUA gained deeper insight and direction on the path towards institutional transformation, and the individual organizational stakeholders worked independently and interdependently to develop a new round of informed goals and strategic tactics to address race and racism.

This era with respect to the development of racial ideas was extremely rich due to the serious commitment by congregations and the association to the development of anti-racist/anti-oppression multiculturalism. The UUA facilitated relationships between of congregational and district teams, with other faith based anti-racism initiatives, as well as within the People of Color community, namely DRUUMM, helped many new notions of race and racism evolve within the

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culture of Unitarian Universalism. The importance of identity work, both individually and institutionally, accountability relationships in justice-making, and strategic thinking, all became central to the work of anti-racism. Racial ideas in general were receiving considerable “air time” in various UU communities, from congregations to affiliate organizations, generating an enormous amount of feedback, new ideas and adaptations regarding theory and practice. The Faith in Action Department deserves considerable credit in their role as facilitators, but equally important in their efforts to process, synthesize, and understand trends and best practices that could be communicated to the anti-racism initiative.

The intensity of the push back from congregations, their ministers and members, however, is perhaps the most important realization. In part it is about finding the right language, both politically but more importantly theologically; to inspire, covenant and sustain efforts at addressing race and racism. On the other hand, it is also the reality of attempting to engage an overwhelmingly White institution on an issue that has historically been proven to be extremely controversial, painful, and easier to ignore in our places of worship and spirituality.

### **2002-2005: Black President of a White Denomination**

In 2001, Rev. William Sinkford was elected President of the UUA by a wide margin over Rev. Diane Miller. The race pitted what would be the first Black President against what would be the first Woman President of the UUA. Both identity issues were discussed at length during the year-long campaign. After Sinkford’s election, a new era in the UUA began, one in which a Black person, who understands himself as a Person of Color, active in the affairs of AAUUM and a founding member of DRUUMM, was now in the highest elected position of the UUA.

The media and UUs themselves marveled at the story of Sinkford, how he had been President of Liberal Religious Youth (UUA) in the 1960s, had left the UUA over the racial discord of the Empowerment Controversy, and had rejoined the church in Cincinnati after a career in corporate America, graduating from Starr King School for the Ministry in the mid-1990s. Sinkford’s election represented to some the end of the problem of racial and cultural diversity within the UUA, now that a Person of Color was in the top position. To others, particularly People of Color, it was a remarkable acknowledgement of Sinkford’s talents and gifts, but only one step in the continuing process towards anti-racist institutional transformation. Sinkford himself noted the disparity in opinions about his presence and legacy, and understood

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the complexity of his position should he choose to continue the critical engagement of racism that his predecessor (and college roommate at Harvard) Rev. John Buehrens had supported.

Indeed much changed, under Sinkford's leadership. Sinkford authorized the dismantling of the UUA Faith in Action Department and the downsizing of staff support and funding for anti-racism and People of Color ministries. This was in part due to financial difficulties suffered post September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001, when the stock market crashed (the UUA is sustained heavily by stock indexed endowment funding), and in part due to the recognition that the baggage of championing a struggling and controversial anti-racism initiative might risk effectiveness with other important UUA matters, particularly around issues of growth, fundraising, public witness for marriage equality, and a new faith foundations curriculum.

Racial ideas continue to percolate through the system, but few institutional efforts are underway that measure close to the peaks of 1997-2001. The major change with respect to education and organizing was the establishment of the JUUST Change Consultancy, that shifted the priority of having a team of UUA staff coordinate, train, process and evaluate anti-racism initiatives with congregations, districts and affiliate organizations to a team of selected paid consultants. These consultants are trained to consult with these groups on all anti-oppression issues and relevant justice-making services of the UUA, with an emphasis on anti-racism. Managed by Rev. Tracey Robinson-Harris, Director of Congregational Services and Paula Cole Jones, lead JUUST Change Consultant, this program was explained thus:

[it draws] on insights and experiences from work with linked oppressions. We want to reach out to congregations with support for justice work already being done, with an offer to work with them to identify their next steps and help to build on their strengths, and with encouragement to expand their capacity to engage the work of justice - including work on racism - that is rooted in Unitarian Universalist identity, theology and values.<sup>130</sup>

As of 2005

- Over 200 congregations have experienced a Jubilee One workshop in the past 10 years.
- More than 4,000 religious and lay leaders have participated in anti-racism events, including the Jubilee Two power analysis training.
- More than 350 congregations have participated in Beyond Categorical Thinking.<sup>131</sup>

The UUA identifies these 10 steps towards anti-racist/anti-oppressive/multicultural congregations:

1. Intentionality

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2. Committed leadership
3. Anti-racism training
4. Multi-level educational programs
5. Worship
6. Social Justice
7. Accountability
8. Anti-Racist Caucuses: White Anti-Racists and People of Color
9. Anti-racist identity and practice being fostered in the various program areas of the church
10. Clear and measurable movement from stage two (Passive, a “Club” Institution) to stage three (Symbolic Change, A Multicultural Institution) or stage three to stage four (Identity Change, an Anti-Racist Institution).<sup>132</sup>

With respect to White UU anti-racist action, a new UUA organization of anti-racist Whites was formed in November 2005 in response to a call from DRUUMM for such a formation. Leading into General Assembly 2006, after conducting a community survey including People of Color, the group settled on the name Allies Toward Racial Equality, or A.R.E. While this does not clearly state that it is an organization of White anti-racists, leaders have sought to find a name under which the most persons would feel comfortable joining. White Ministers continue to struggle to address racism, and in 2005 formed a new focus group: *The European-American Anti-Racist Transformation Focus Group* of the UU Ministers Association. Their charge is as follows:

Many UU ministers who identify as white seek to dismantle racist attitudes and systems. Out of this motivation, a new focus group of the UUMA has formed, the “European-American Anti-Racist Transformation” focus group, in collaboration with Clyde Grubbs, leader of the Anti-Racism, Anti-Oppression, Multiculturalism portfolio. Our mission is to create a European-American anti-racist presence within the UUMA, a network by which ministers who identify as Euro-American may grow as individuals and religious leaders towards addressing the problem of racism in our ministries, our congregations and communities and the world at large. We do this work in conversation and collaboration with other professional alliances and identity-based organizations.<sup>133</sup>

The publication of *Soul Work: Anti-Racist Theologies in Practice*, in 2003, signaled another excellent collection of works from a theological symposium hosted by the UUA. The guests, including non-UUs, dialogued for a weekend with formal presentations and responses, plus discussion. In their conclusion, editors Rev. Marjorie Bowens-Wheatley and Rev. Nancy Palmer Jones identified key observations that had to do with the best sense of racial ideas and Unitarian Universalist theology. These were:

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1. Robette Dias feels that it is important to acknowledge the centrality of worldview and the context for its development in human beings. She is disappointed that there was no articulation of how evil came into our world (in Unitarian Universalism and the larger world), specifically, the evil manifested as colonialism, racism, sexism, and heterosexism.
2. Bill Gardiner says that in doing our theological work, it is important to have some understanding of the historical roots of our collusion with racism. He recommends two books that focus on the impact of our Puritan heritage: *The Name of War: King Philip's War and the Origins of American Identity* by Jill Lepore and *Seeds of Racism in the Soul of America* by Paul Griffin.
3. Susan Leslie observes that it is a continuing challenge to remain focused on theology versus sociology, and she appreciates that participants took "risks of faith" in looking at the theological implications of where oppression is located.
4. Victor Lewis believes that the failure of empathy is intimately related to the question of self-understanding. "Perhaps we have no obligation to become experts in an oppression that is not our own," he says.<sup>134</sup>

Despite a general feeling of malaise within the community of those who have engaged traditionally with anti-racism, and the reduction in dedicated UUA staff and funding for anti-racism, Sinkford expresses a deep commitment to the work of welcoming People of Color and several renewed efforts are underway institutionally in addition to what is reviewed here. First, while the vision for anti-racism congregational change is now held within the JUUST Change Consultancy and a small group of advanced anti-racism trainers known as Jubilee 2 trainers, a new curriculum designed for congregations to self-explore issues of race and racism is being commissioned by the UUA with Mark Hicks, faculty at George Mason and member of All Souls Church, D.C. This curriculum, which is still several years in the making, will help congregations go through an extensive educational process with the goal of making more welcome People of Color. The UUA is also moving to prioritize work with multiracial and families of color, something that DRUUMM had initially raised over a decade earlier. Efforts to complement DRUUMM programming at GA have focused on transracial adoption, multiracial identity, and racial identity development, and are being considered by the UUA and the Family Matters Task Force. A week long multiracial and families of color summer camp is being envisioned for 2007.

The discussion of racial ideas continues across the UUA in earnest, with special attention being rededicated to involving congregations in the dialogue. All parts of the UUA administration, UUA committees, and many of the UUA affiliate organizations continue to address anti-racism in some capacity. The challenge continues to be the ability to find clarity in

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the goals and strategies for anti-racism work that unite Unitarian Universalists together to address race and race relations internally, so that their external work in the community is accountable and authentic. The JTW Transformation Committee, considering a name change to the Transformation Committee for Wholeness and Justice, continues to be the primary body responsible for directing and sustaining the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations efforts.

Racial ideas have changed profoundly over the last twenty five years, with the application of Unitarian Universalist theology and accountability to the experiences of the collective People of Color having the largest impact. Theologically, we have come to understand the roots and vestiges of racism within Unitarian Universalism, and this has motivated us to continue to work internally both theologically and politically to dismantle racism and transform our institution into a place that is welcoming and meaningful for People of Color. Understanding who is a Person of Color has contributed to a series of consistent changes that have both incorporated more historically and experientially accurate discernments and have repeatedly deepened and broadened the imagination of the institutional anti-racist transformation we seek. Anti-racism work is not strictly a Black-White issue, and it is not strictly a racial issue. Racism is slowly being understood, and re-understood, in a variety of conditions, circumstances, and institutional structures.

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### Chapter IX: People of Color History in Unitarian Universalism 1980-2005

*In They Dark Eyes  
Deep down in they dark eyes  
A world of longing lies  
Of sweet desire,  
Of hopes, of doubts, of fears,  
And just a trace of tears  
Quenched by the fire  
Of love's perpetual glow,  
Of passion's ebb and flow,  
As they arise  
In they dark eyes.*

-Lewis H. Latimer, undated<sup>135</sup>

See Table 2: Ministers of Color Fellowshiped 1980-2005 (*see page 136*)

My highest hope is that the accounting of the activities of People of Color, and the recognition of People of Color community development within Unitarian Universalism, will serve to inspire and motivate others to document and share their narratives. Due to the time table, scope, and access to information, what follows are truly highlights that only begin to tell the history of People of Color from 1980-2005.



**DRUUMM Logo 2003**

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### **Religious Professionals of Color**

This is an area that is in need of more extensive research and writing, and this is beginning with the People of Color archive at Meadville/Lombard Theological School by Michelle Bentley. In Unitarian Universalism, religious professionals, specifically ministers, directors of religious education and association staff, are the backbone of the community. The UUA does not have the same quality of lay leadership development, roles, or recognition as other denominations. With congregational polity firmly adopted, ministers in congregations retain powers, particularly related to networking and the communication of General Assembly initiatives, which place ministers in a primary gate-keeping role. As most congregations are small or mid-sized (150 average), ministers are often the only full-time staff person, and this increases their command over extra-congregational endeavors given this primary position, while at the same time limiting their capability through limited resources and manifold responsibilities. Association-wide efforts to build organizations and initiatives to support People of Color have been historically tied to the presence of religious professionals of color, in particular ministers of color. These factors, although brief, underscore the importance of religious professionals of color to general efforts of building a People of Color community within Unitarian Universalism.

Table 2 lists People of Color who have been fellowshipped by the UUA since 1980. Some of these persons are referred to in the chronological narratives presented next. Others are omitted, for the most part due to a lack of available information on their lives. Examining the growth of ministers of color is helpful in studying the concurrent growth in the People of Color community. Several of the ministers fellowshipped in the early 1990s, namely William Sinkford and Chester McCall recall the importance of other ministers of color who spent time face to face with them as they prepared for fellowship with the UUA.<sup>136</sup> AAUUM was instrumental in creating these opportunities, with the support of the UUA, starting around 1993. Unfortunately these have died out since 1998, and at this time, there is no clear strategic plan to organize space. This is even more regrettable and adverse given the sudden growth in seminarians of color, organized in 2003 by DRUUMM, that now tracks thirty-two People of Color preparing for the Unitarian Universalist ministry.

What is missing from this table and from this particular thesis, is the issue of seminarians of color who have attempted to gain fellowship but have resigned. Knowing why this occurs is



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important in the context of anti-racist multiculturalism. Chester McCall, chaplain for DRUUMM, remarked that there were around twenty seminarians of color in 1997 when he received fellowship, and that today less than a handful made it through to that stage.<sup>137</sup> There is anxiety amongst the other seminarians of color I know about the reality and sustainability of our presence within Unitarian Universalism with respect to racial and cultural issues. There is a need to assess and analyze this for trends, challenges and opportunities. To build a strong and supportive People of Color community and ministry, we need to commit to developing more religious professionals of color.

The narrative history below is broken into three time periods, 1980-1989, 1990-1999, and 2000-2005.

### **1980-1989**

If only Eugene Sparrow was another Howard Thurman. The barriers of race were so overwhelming that only someone with the spiritual depth and national stature of a Howard Thurman could have succeeded.<sup>138</sup>

In 1980, Mark Morrison-Reed's book *Black Pioneers* was published detailing the difficulty of African-American ministers succeeding in Unitarian Universalism. His efforts further connected and grounded the African-American experience, fostering relationships between the other twelve known ministers of African-descent. Morrison-Reed would be a touchstone for African-Americans, along with Rev. William Jones and Rev. David Eaton, with their positions of ministry and in the case of Jones, professorship, over the next decade. African-American women ministers would also become very prominent and important as Rev. Yvonne Chappelle and Rev. Adele Smith-Pennimen would be ordained in 1982 and 1983 respectively. Rev. Michelle Bentley would be ordained a few years later in 1986, and these three women would serve equally in the various organizing and community building efforts. African-Americans would be the most organized People of Color community consistently until the late 1990s.

African-Americans continued to meet one another intentionally, thanks to various UUA committees and task forces they were asked to serve on. These included the UUA's Urban Ministry committees in various configurations, the UUA Affirmative Action Task Force which had a specific emphasis on the recruitment and retention of African descent persons, and in the new ethnic start and extension ministry efforts, largely connected to the urban ministry efforts of

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the UUA. Community building, both in terms of numbers as well as political consciousness, grew significantly after the 1985 GA Resolution established the Black Concerns Working Group. This group, which included Whites and eventually other People of Color, charged with eradicating racism in the UUA and the world (with an annual budget of \$5,000) developed into the leading advocacy, training and consciousness-raising group for anti-racism over the next 15 years. It also fostered a new meeting place for lay and professional African descent persons to meet. Key lay members included Norma Poinsett and Leon Spencer, both of whom would later serve terms on the UUA Board. Poinsett offers her perspective on the work:

Over the years I have been an unpaid professional volunteer for the Unitarian Universalist Association. Working to build a more just world is hard work and time consuming, but working with an association that is committed to building an anti-racist institution makes the work gratifying. I dream of a world where all of the UUA groups will look at their work through an anti-racist lens. So often we hear the statement, "Education is a necessity in bringing racial and social justice to all people." We Unitarian Universalists, who make up one of the most educated and intellectual groups in the world, should meet the challenge to live the principles we mouth from the pews and pulpits.

As an original member of the UUA's Black Concerns Working Group, started in 1985 and now renamed the Jubilee World Working Group, I helped develop the "Jubilee World Anti-Racism Workshop," a weekend workshop that is still in great demand by congregations and for conferences throughout the continent. Within the past three months I co-led Jubilee workshops in Monte Clair and San Mateo, California. This workshop is a rich resource for congregations or groups that are beginning anti-racist work.<sup>139</sup>

The first demographic description of African descent UUs came in 1989 when the Commission on Appraisal in their survey entitled the "Quality of Religious Life in UU Congregations," included a question about respondents' race. Morrison-Reed, then a member of the commission, wrote a summary analysis, based on the small sample (16) who responded out of 1,286 received, highlighting the characteristics both sociologically and spiritually of the sample. He noted that "in socio-economic status the Afro-American UU is very similar to that of the Euro-American UU, but the former's attitude toward worship is significantly different." Morrison-Reed's words were adopted by the commission in their final report to the GA, and in summary he wrote:

We have made no great inroads into the African-American community over the past 20 years. Those African-American individuals that have found Unitarian Universalism attractive resemble the typical UU in regard to socio-economic status. However, when

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we consider the worship needs, the theological perspectives and expectations of the ministry expressed by many black UUs we notice a significant variance from the norm. This reality speaks to the necessity of changing our style of worship if we are to have a broader cultural appeal. Furthermore, the difference in value systems between Unitarian Universalist and black protestants may be an additional reason that African-Americans have not sought out our churches.<sup>140</sup>

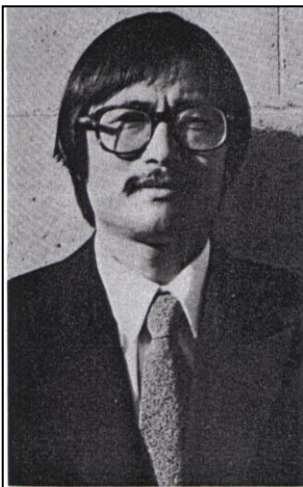
The 1989 report estimated that there were approximately 1,800 African descent UUs, predominately in the United States, in congregations.

Ethnic new start and extension ministry efforts in this period gained financial support and ministerial presence from People of Color. These, and other new efforts, continued into the 1990s, dying out or transitioning off UUA dollars by the year 2000. While no detailed documentation is available, a little may be learned from the locations and expressed racial/cultural focus. Momentum for this work was provided in part from the recommendations

of the *Institutional Racism Audit*. This information was gained from a summary of activities of Urban UU ministry in a report made available on a now out-of-date UUA webpage:

- First UU Church Los Angeles, CA: Korean
- First UU Church San Jose, CA: Latino
- First UU Church Roxbury, MA: Multiracial

Rev. Hyun Hwan Kim, a Korean-American, was hired as minister of the First Church Los Angeles in 1984, and maintained a national profile through writing columns for the *UU World* over the next four years.



**Rev. Hyun Hwan Kim**  
(credit: *UU World*)

Rev. Philip Zwerling,  
minister at First LA

when Kim arrived, had set the stage for People of Color outreach by establishing a Racial Growth Committee in 1981, with members who identify as Latino, Korean, Black and Pacific Islander, focused on drawing from the integrated community around the church.<sup>141</sup> By 1982, the *UU World*



**First Church Los Angeles, 1982** (credit: *UU World*)

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had again profiled the efforts of First LA with an article entitled “Los Angeles Opens Liberal Religion to Asian-Americans,” focusing in particular on their efforts within the Korean immigrant community. The article stated:

For a denomination which is predominately white, Protestant, and European in its thought forms, the opening towards Asian-Americans is without precedent. “These are people who are on fire with Unitarian Universalism,” the Rev. Philip Zwerling, minister of the First Unitarian Church of Los Angeles, remarked recently. The newcomers are members of a burgeoning Korean community in southern California...Although the numbers of Koreans who have joined the church is small, the contacts between the congregation and the Korean community are substantial and promising. A Korean, Woon-Ha Kim, occupied the pulpit last December. Koreans serve regularly as greeters and ushers at morning services. A five-week course in UU history for Koreans was offered last year. Koreans contribute pulpit editorials on the theme, Why I Am a Unitarian Universalist.<sup>142</sup>

In Roxbury, Massachusetts, the UUA eventually partnered with United Church of Christ (UCC) minister and African-American, Graylan Hagler, by 1983 to build around the multiracial community south of Boston at the historic First Church in Roxbury, a congregation that had seen significant decline after years of White flight from the urban neighborhood. Hagler had previously served the Third Unitarian Church of Chicago in the 1970s, although never fellowshiped by the UUA. Hagler came to work with Elizabeth Ellis, a White UU minister, and together they sought to build a multiracial liberal religious church tri-associated with the UUA, UCC and the Disciples of Christ USA.<sup>143</sup> (Hagler photo by Dorthea von Haaftan)



**Rev. Graylan Hagler**  
(credit: Petra Foundation)

Three People of Color, of African descent, were hired onto the UUA staff in program positions. The first was Loretta Williams, who was hired as Director of Social Responsibility in 1980. The second was Jacqui James, formerly a Director of Religious Education at the First UU Church in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in 1986 to work on the new Hymnal Commission. The third was Mel Hoover, hired to work with Urban Ministry in 1989. Williams would resign by the second term of UUA President William Schultz; James retired from the UUA just after 2000, and Hoover left the UUA to co-minister with his wife in Charlestown, West Virginia.

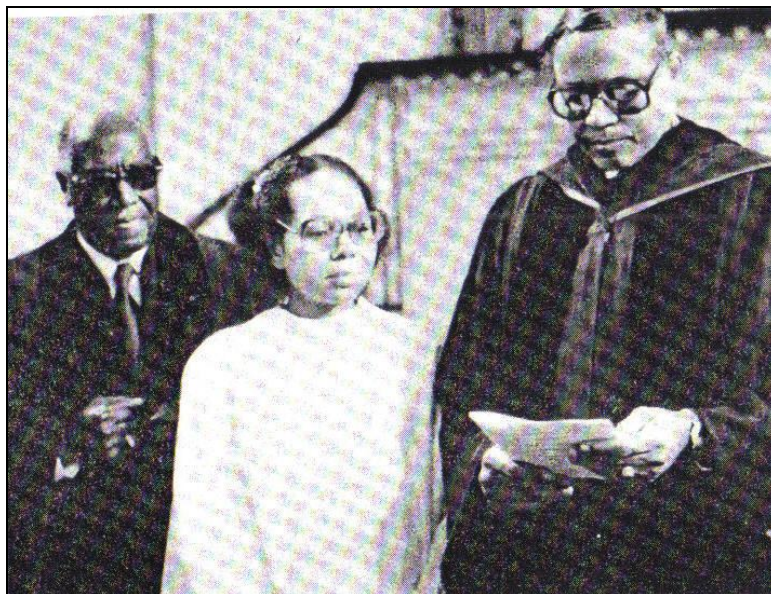
Morrison-Reed singled out first James, then Hoover, for their efforts at building community and providing real ministry to African descent UUs in the 1980s. James in particular was one who kept excellent notes and facilitated communication and networking among African

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descent UUs. She would later work in the Religious Education department at the UUA. Williams was less involved in People of Color ministry, having demanding responsibilities across multiple social justice issues.

In 1982, the UU World ran a cover interview entitled “UUA’s First Black Woman Minister Shares Her Views.” Dr. Yvonne Reed Chappelle, who received her Ph.D. in 1974 in African and Afro-American Studies, when asked “How have you found the road so far as a black and a woman in a predominately white and male denomination?”, remarked that she had little worry about being a woman but stated, “Being black in this denomination is very lonely.”<sup>144</sup> While she sought to “express black culture, to be open to all people whatever their religious background, and to call people to their own spirituality,” through her ministry, Chappelle (later Chappelle-Seon), would not find success in UU parish ministry.



**Rev. Leon Wright, Howard University, Rev. Yvonne Chappelle, listen to the charge to the ministry of the Rev. David Eaton at All Souls, D.C.**  
(credit: The World)

In 1989, the African-American Unitarian Universalist Ministry, or AAUUM, was formed. In addition to what was profiled earlier (see Chapter VII), AAUUM became an important networking and support system for religious professionals, and a force for positive racial relations that would complement the UUA’s racial justice efforts and eventually plant the seeds for the broader People of Color organization of DRUUMM founded a decade later. AAUUM, with its membership limited to religious professionals, saw itself in religious and spiritual terms



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first, not just as an African descent caucus. Their goal was “to mobilize the African-American Unitarian Universalist Ministry as a prophetic witness for spirituality, power, and justice.”

### **1990-1999**

The 1990s brought about an ever increasing circle of who was understood to be a Person of Color and ended up fostering a broad based coalition of religious professionals of color who founded DRUUMM in 1998. Efforts at organizing Latinos/as reached a peak, again through the Urban Ministry efforts of the UUA, and the various constituencies of People of Color were meeting and finding common solidarity through the racial and cultural diversity, and anti-racism efforts of the UUA.

By 1991, lay leaders and ministers from six new intentionally racially diverse congregations the UUA were funding and working with had met several times face to face to share experiences. The congregations represented were: Sojourner Truth Congregation, Washington, DC; Church of the Restoration, Tulsa, OK; North River UU Church, Chicago, IL; Oscar Romero UU Congregation, Los Angeles, CA; UU Society of the Palisades, Englewood, NJ; and the organizing congregation of Thurman Hamer-Ellington UU Church, Atlanta/Decatur, GA.<sup>145</sup> Of these six, only Restoration, and the Palisades congregations still exist independently. The Oscar Romero Fellowship is now a part of the First Church Los Angeles, CA.

The African descent experience remained the most prominent activity within the People of Color history during the first part of the 1990s. The advent of AAUUM, along with the Black Concerns Working, was complemented by a third group of African descent UUs, primarily lay members called The Network of Black Unitarian Universalists, or The Network. The Network was a group that primarily met at GA, and worked to “increase the involvement of African-Americans in the Unitarian Universalist movement, and at its annual meeting at General Assembly provides an opportunity to identify common concerns.”<sup>146</sup> In 1992, these three groups established the Coalition of African-American Unitarian Universalist Organizations, and together hosted the largest known gathering of People of Color, specifically African descent persons, in the last twenty five years.

The Coalition had as its mission the vision of assisting the three founding member organizations, to help formulate a collective agenda, to maintain an executive council, and to host an annual Continental Congress of African descent UUs. On September 25<sup>th</sup>, 1992, in

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Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, over 100 persons gathered for the first, and only congress of the Coalition. At the heart of the congress was a commemoration of Frances Ellen Watkins Harper (1825-1911), a Unitarian laywoman, abolitionist, novelist and poet, first woman faculty at Union Seminary in Columbus, Ohio, and a powerful orator on issues of racism and sexism in her day. The congress held a memorial service and laying of a headstone at the Eden Cemetery in Philadelphia on Sunday, September 27<sup>th</sup>, 1992.



**Frances Watkins Harper  
Commemoration**  
(credit: *UU World*)



**Congress of African UUs 1992, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania** (credit: *UU World*)

The Coalition Executive Council gathered together leadership from the three organizations, and was a significant achievement of partnership and harmony within the Black UU community. Rev. Daniel Aldridge Jr., who was initially called to an ethnic new start<sup>147</sup> in Decatur, Georgia, the Thurman-Hamer-Ellington Church, was the Chair of the coalition. Norma Poinsett served as Vice-Chair; Ray Olive Clark, Chair of The Network, as Secretary; Leon Spencer as Vice-Secretary; Carol Walker, The Network Vice-Chair as Treasurer; Yvonne Chappelle Seon and Rev. Charles Yielbonzie Johnson as members-at-large. The Coalition was staffed very part-time by Nik-ki Whittingham, sister of Rev. Michelle Bentley, out of Chicago, Illinois.<sup>148</sup>

In 1995, AAUUM itself reached a new peak, with 25 members coming together for their annual January meeting. Noteworthy was the presence of a number of gay and lesbian AAUUM members, roughly 1/3 according to Morrison-Reed, and his sense was there was no longer a lingering ambivalence about being a part of the UUA that had been present earlier in the organizations history.<sup>149</sup> Complementing this development, AAUUM member, faculty and Dean of Students at Meadville-Lombard Theological School, Rev. Michelle Bentley, directed as part

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of her Doctor of Ministry degree, a new Multicultural Ministry Program (MMP)<sup>150</sup> from 1993 to 1996. Bentley, who was the first and only female of color Meadville/Lombard graduate (1986) at the time, and first faculty member of color at a Unitarian Universalist theological school, sought to bring more People of Color into the UUA, as well as significantly improve multicultural ministerial education for White seminarians. The MMP was funded at an annual average budget of \$44,447, with in-kind contributions from Meadville-Lombard.<sup>151</sup>

The MMP was truly unique in the history of theological education, and partnered with AAUUM in hopes of increasing the pool of ministers of color in order to both test the UUA's commitment to diversity among its leadership, as well as improve the quality of life for existing ministers of color through educating ministers about multiculturalism. Bentley also hoped that "such leadership would attract congregants of color."<sup>152</sup> The program was extraordinary in scope and implementation, with a series of worships, workshops, speakers, conferences, and grassroots outreach conducted by Bentley and associates. The heart of the MMP was at Meadville/Lombard, however participants and supporters of the effort came from across North America. Bentley had a significant challenge that despite good attendance from students and UUA guests, few faculty members chose to participate.<sup>153</sup>

Despite the personal, and in some respects institutional excitement at the MMP, in Bentley's own words, "the beautiful flower that had begun to open at Meadville/Lombard now began to wilt." Few students of color recruited during this era went into UU ministry, and the program itself was terminated by 1997. She described in detail the experiences of leadership of the MMP, student experiences, and identifies clearly the difficulty in developing an anti-racist multicultural program in an institution fraught with institutionalized racism and prejudice. There were struggles with pedagogy, tension between the analysis of the 1960s versus the 1990s, faculty who were unskilled at facilitating intense dialogue about racism and multiculturalism that would inevitably present itself in classroom discussion, and her own challenges balancing her high hopes to see institutional transformation and growth in the community of People of Color.<sup>154</sup>

By 1997, the year the JTW resolution passed the General Assembly, only AAUUM and the BCWG remained, and The Coalition and The Network were defunct. There was also a sense of burnout among African-Americans, and other People of Color in the UUA such as Rev. Diane Arakawa (first Asian UU minister fellowshipped in 1979), many of whom had been serving in association-wide capacities for over a decade. This was a particular problem for religious



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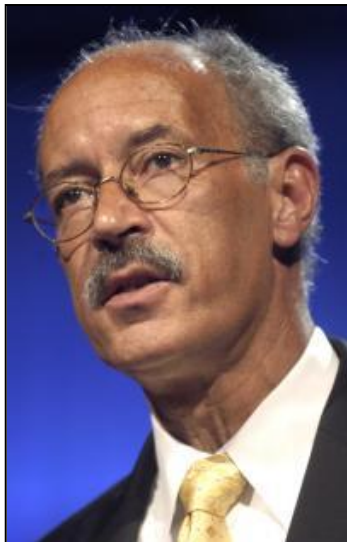
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professionals, who found themselves stretched to serve the interests and needs of a White church that sought their advice and counsel in fostering racial and cultural diversity.

The anti-racism efforts generated from the JTW provided cause for celebration among many of the People of Color who had helped to bring about the resolution. It helped bring about a shared approach to the racial and cultural diversity question as Whites were now expected to engage in their own soul work around racism. People of Color continued to organize, but without the same urgency as the UUA Board and staff moved to provide significant institutional support and funding for anti-racism.

Through the anti-racism efforts, the vision for building People of Color community more intentionally and collectively took off, culminating in the founding of DRUUMM by religious professionals of color in 1997. In a grant to the UU Funding Panel, a group of People of Color wrote:

Since 1987, AAUUM has served the needs of African-American religious professionals within the UUA and provided a voice for their concerns within the Association. The creation of AAUUM grew out of the unique needs of African-American religious professionals and the recognition that the UU Ministers Association did not provide an adequate network of support for the small but growing number of persons of African descent being personally called to service within Unitarian Universalism. Since its



creation, AAUUM has worked to support African-American religious professionals, mentored students of color (more broadly) and those seeking transfer or dual fellowship with the Association, and increasingly, AAUUM has been called to serve as the voice for professionals of color in UUA institutional contexts.

The needs and the voices of Latina/o, Asian and Native American professionals has no comparable channel. Since 1992, AAUUM had considered the possibility of opening its membership and redefining its mission as service to all religious professionals of color. Increasingly, Latina/o, Asian and Native American religious professionals have sought relationship and support from AAUUM. Finally in January 1996 at its annual meeting in Fort Worth, Texas, AAUUM voted unanimously to invite all religious professionals of color into conversation about our particular and our collective needs.<sup>155</sup>

**William Sinkford** (credit: UUA)

In 2000, two years after DRUUMM had been operational, a motion was carried to open DRUUMM up to lay members as well. This was in part due to the advocacy of youth and young adults of color who had been increasingly connected as People of Color and were working more intimately with DRUUMM leadership to address their needs. There has been concern, however,

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that the shift to a lay *and* professional organization has left the religious professionals without a space to caucus and address their distinctive needs. In effect, the close connections and working relationships between religious professionals of color, chiefly ministers, has declined since this change. Furthermore, the DRUUMM Vice-President position focused on ministerial concerns has been largely vacant without any significant action since 2000.

On the UUA Staff, as program staff, Lola Peters was hired in 1990, as Associate Director for Racial and Cultural Diversity, and William Sinkford was hired in 1994 as Director for Congregational and District Services. In 1998, Joseph Santos-Lyons was hired in the Office of Young Adult and Campus Ministry, the first Asian/Pacific Islander on the program staff. Soon thereafter, Robette Dias (Native American/Karuk), Taquiena Boston (African-American), and Danielle Dibona (Native American/ Wamponoag) were hired in the Faith in Action department. Dias was the first person to hold the People of Color ministry portfolio beginning in 2001.

### **2000-2005**

In 2000, the UUA identified 45 People of Color in the ministry.<sup>156</sup> While the majority of these were of African descent, the racial and cultural diversity of those seeking to be fellowshiped has increased substantially. While the number of People of Color in Unitarian Universalism is still relatively unknown, the presence and visibility of People of Color within the Association is considerable. People of Color serve on nearly all major UUA committees, and with the election of Rev. William Sinkford, the public face of Unitarian Universalism identifies as a Person of Color.

People of Color ministry efforts, in large part due to the anti-racism efforts, continue to develop at the congregational and national level, although the efforts are unconnected and independent of one another. DRUUMM is considered the primary collective voice of People of Color in the UUA, although LUUNA has established itself as a voice for Latino/as. Youth and Young Adults of Color mobilize to gather at various YRUU and C\*UUYAN conferences, meetings, and have their own events through the leadership of the DRUUMM Youth and Young Adults of Color Steering Committee. Many consider the efforts of the younger generation to be the vanguard activities with respect to People of Color, as the institutionalization of structure, support, funding and leadership development has continued to mature with support from the UUA.<sup>157</sup>

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Since 2002, People of Color now gather annually at the DRUUMM Annual Conference, generally held in November around the US Veterans Day holiday. This is the first annual gathering held consecutively by and for People of Color in the last twenty-five years. People of Color continue to meet at General Assembly, primarily through DRUUMM and LUUNA programming. Ministers of Color and other religious professionals of color do not have a standing organization or meeting. Youth and children of color continue to be considered the vanguard of the growth in racial and cultural diversity. As a result, DRUUMM and the Asian/Pacific Islander Caucus (APIC) have organized several intentional programs, Multiracial and Family of Color district retreats, and major speakers at General Assembly to draw attention to this development. At GA 2005, transracial adoption was a significant program organized by APIC, a caucus of DRUUMM, that was widely attended. Within the youth community (YRUU), a growing number of youth of color identify as transracially adopted, and the implication and meaning of this development has yet to be fully considered or understood.

The UUA Staff has taken a major step back from providing organizing and networking support for People of Color, focusing instead on advocacy for People of Color within the institution on various UUA committees, particularly for religious professionals, and advising the UUA around existing programs and services. There has been a reduction in the number of program staff at the UUA, and thus the capacity for services has been similarly reduced. The Identity Based Ministries Staff Group remains the primary body at the UUA responsible for the People of Color ministry portfolio, although with limited staff, there has not been the broad, comprehensive awareness and networking focus of the former Faith in Action Department. This has resulted in a sense of discord and confusion among the larger People of Color community, with the various movements of People of Color existing and developing for the most part separately and without the common vision and cohesion experienced a decade earlier.

### **Chapter X: Conclusion and Recommendations**

This history of People of Color in Unitarian Universalism is a drop in the ocean of experiences, struggles and accomplishments over the last twenty-five years. There is indeed a rich history of activism, education, and empowerment by People of Color for their own community and for the UUA as a whole. People of Color who are chronicled here have proven to be deeply committed to UU theology and principles, in spite of the paternalistic questioning of White UUs. The 1980s saw major efforts to achieve a presence within the UUA. The 1990s realized this presence at the associational level, and People of Color successfully organized themselves and within the UUA to bring to the attention of White UUs issues of importance to People of Color through the JTW anti-racism initiatives. In the first part of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, People of Color remain visible, yet there is much labor to be done to sustain the community building efforts of the earlier generation.

People of Color exist in a very unique circumstance in Unitarian Universalism. Being outnumbered, so to speak, twenty five to one, or in many cases, fifty to one, makes life “lonely,” as Yvonne Chappelle Seon stated in her interview as the first Black Woman UU minister in 1982. This loneliness can undermine and demoralize even the most independent, strong-willed and proud Person of Color who seeks to sustain their spiritual life in a Unitarian Universalist congregation. The UUA in general still struggles with overconfidence in the area of race relations, taking one step forward and two steps backward in the dance of working towards racial justice. Importantly, a critical mass of White UUs have recognized the importance of working internally on racism as part and parcel of working externally for racial justice in the world.

There is a deep need among People of Color for community, political action, mentorship, and pastoral care. In essence, a People of Color ministry is sincerely needed in the UUA, and if anything comes of this thesis, it is my hope that more persons, White and People of Color, will take up the responsibility and vision for this ministry.

In writing this thesis, I carry with me a deep wellspring of hope around issues of racial justice. This hope is based on my profound experiences with Unitarian Universalism, both within People of Color communities, as well as in our congregations. These experiences, both relational and theological, remind me of the significance of liberal religion in my life. This faith tradition has empowered me with its spiritual soul-saving message for this life’s suffering, and

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for the passionate and meaningful communities that have evolved into DRUUMM, congregations and other itinerant gatherings of Unitarian Universalists. We have a legacy of social engagement, and have historic voices on issues of race and racism that give hope when hope is hard to find. This inheritance is still a part of our customs today, and I believe that we will continue to articulate, even through difficult struggle, our contemporary voice.

I have two pieces of advice for congregations. Foremost is to remain patient as they develop strategies. We have common goals, increasing racial and cultural diversity, dismantling racism. Our tactics will be diverse, but not severely different; but developing our own norms and rituals around change is important. Anti-racist multicultural transformation is a generational shift, and daily mindfulness and institutional vision are equally necessary. Second is theological and social teaching. William Ellery Channing, a Unitarian forbearer, offers us the idea that each of us has the potential to develop our “free spiritual powers”.<sup>158</sup> As human beings, we have the unique ability to nurture and bring forth the sacred from within to touch the holy. In this spiritual act of seeking to foster our own sense of sacredness, Channing does not only advocate for our traditional corporate worship, but also for worship within our peer groups to help give shape to these free spiritual powers. Our peer groups share deep connections, experiences, and meaning, and our ability to support such opportunities for People of Color is essential in our racial justice efforts. We must encourage People of Color within our congregation to bond, and to meet other People of Color in the district. Through these communities of People of Color, wide-ranging and diverse opportunities for the whole church will arise.

Finally, I offer two sets of recommendations based upon this research. The first is for nurturing a People of Color Ministry. The second is around race relations in the UUA.

### **Recommendations for Unitarian Universalist People of Color Ministry:**

1. Conduct a comprehensive census of People of Color in UUA congregations, district boards and committees, and UUA Board and committees every four years. Include survey questions related to multiracial families and transracial adoption. Request that congregations to provide this information, with appropriate educational materials, during the annual congregational certification process. Work with UUA District Staff to track district board and committee data. Publish this statistical information so it is available for use by UU community organizations such as DRUUMM, and for the UUA Journey

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Towards Wholeness Transformation Committee charged with implementing the Anti-Racist/Multicultural UUA vision established by GA 1997. Maintain a database of People of Color who have given permissions through the UUA.

2. Encourage negotiations between the UUA Administration and the DRUUMM Steering Committee to establish DRUUMM as a Sponsored or Associate organization of the UUA with increased access and funding to the institutional support systems for ministry, community-building and communications. Ideally develop a relationship similar to the UU Women's Federation, UU Service Committee, Continental UU Young Adult Network and Young Religious Unitarian Universalists where historically significant funding, access and support have been provided to nurture an interconnected mission and purpose. Funding for DRUUMM annually would preferably provide a ½ time administrator and a ½ to full-time coordinator position, in addition to \$30,000 USD annually in program expenses. As part of this increased support, offer a pre or post two-day Anti-Racism for People of Color Leadership Institute adjacent to GA or the Annual DRUUMM Conference.
3. Provide full support for the emerging People of Color Archive being organized by Rev. Dr. Michelle Bentley at Meadville-Lombard in Chicago. Highlight this effort through UUA media outlets, the congregational mailing and at GA. Use this archive as a center for People of Color in Unitarian Universalism to connect, study, and deepen their understanding.
4. Fund and staff an annual Multiracial & Families of Color weekend retreat in each UUA District based on the model developed in the Pacific Northwest District 1998-2001 and adapted recently by the UUA Identity Based Ministries Staff Group and the UUA Family Matters Task Force. Establish a central administrator at the UUA to provide technical assistance, communications and outreach services. Have each retreat sponsored by the district, and managed jointly by the District Staff, District LREDA and UUMA chapters, with representatives as able from the Youth and Young Adult communities.
5. Publish an annual Directory for People of Color that includes religious professionals of color, local and district chapters of People of Color (i.e. DRUUMM), contacts for District Multiracial & Family of Color Retreats, DRUUMM leadership including the Steering Committee, Racial Identity Caucuses (i.e Asian/Pacific Islander Caucus), Seminarians of

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Color Caucus, UUA Affirmative Action Data, and a Calendar of Events for the upcoming year.

6. Fund and support additional research and writing on the history and experience of People of Color in Unitarian Universalism.
7. Host a funded gathering of religious professionals of color every three years, sponsored jointly by DRUUMM, UUMA, LREDA, SCM, AUUM, UUMN and the UUA. Provide priority attention, and funding if needed, for the reconciliation of religious professionals of color.
8. Review and update a UUA process for handling and tracking bias and/or hate incidents at all levels in the UUA. Make this information available annually through the congregational mailing. Compile statistics annually, by the UUA and publish the data.
9. Complete and promote a new curriculum on anti-racism/multiculturalism. Ensure that it is being utilized by at least 10% of the congregations in each UUA District. Track this information and make available online similar to the UUA's Welcoming Congregation Program.
10. Provide intentional support and mentorship for Seminarians of Color.

### **Recommendations for UUA Race Relations**

1. Fund and staff a UUA anti-racism/anti-oppression stakeholders meeting every four years consistent with the repeated recommendations of the UUA Journey Towards Wholeness Transformation Committee.<sup>159</sup>
2. Conduct a major attitudinal survey of Unitarian Universalists, modeled on the survey of attitudes towards Gays and Lesbians in 1987.<sup>160</sup>
3. Review and provide a 30-year progress report on the 1981 UUA Institutional Racism Audit. Publish summary results in the *UU World* print magazine by 2011.
4. Develop at least two additional courses on race relations in the ministry and make mandatory for the credentialing of religious professionals.
5. Mandate that each UUA District host at least one open-attendance day-long anti-racism workshop consistent with the Journey Towards Wholeness Transformation Committee goals each year. Make special invitation to religious professionals.

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6. Continue to improve the transparency and reporting of efforts to conduct racial justice throughout the UUA. Mandate that the Journey Towards Wholeness Transformation Committee provide an annual report on their assessment of UUA transparency.
7. Support the efforts of Anti-Racist White Unitarian Universalist organizing, educating and mobilizing. This includes the recent efforts of a UUMA Focus Group for White/European descent Anti-Racists to form.<sup>161</sup>
8. Adapt, study and incorporate Morrison-Reed's "Common Ingredients For The Multiracial UU Church" into an annual virtual class offered by the UUA or UU affiliated seminary.

Briefly, these are:

- Established in Urban Area
- Large Middle Class of People of Color
- Minister and Congregation visibly and vocally concerned with issues of race relations and justice, concerned with a PoC agenda
- Intentionality in planning and action
- Patience and focus over time<sup>162</sup>



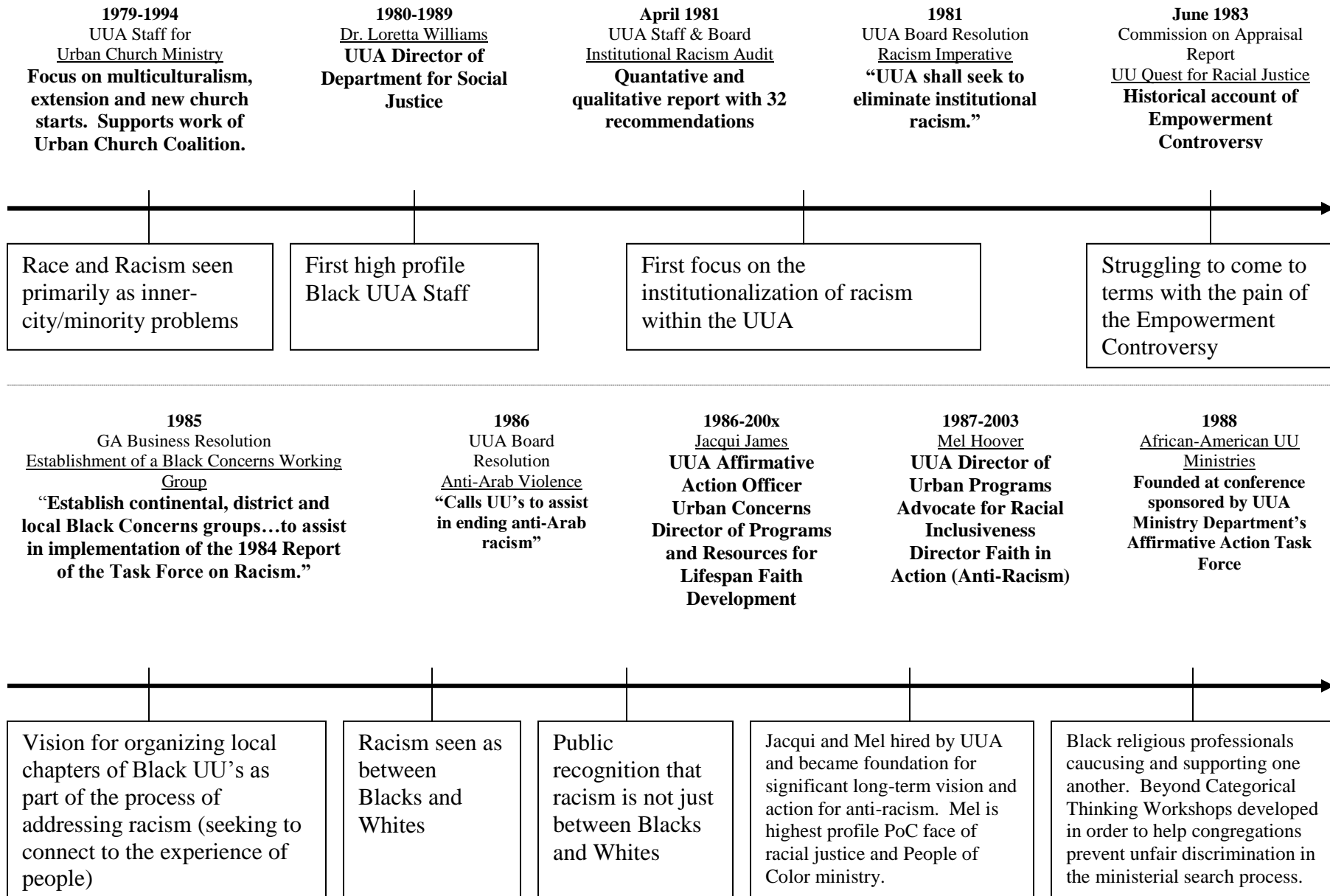
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**Table 1: Timeline of Racial Ideas 1980-2000**



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**1990-1992**

UUA Funding  
Extension & Ethnic New Starts  
**\$276,200 over 2 years**

**1992**

GA Resolution of Immediate  
Witness  
Racial and Cultural Diversity  
**“Seeking a vision of a  
racially diverse and  
multicultural UUA.”**

**1993**

GA General Resolution  
Justice for Indigenous  
Peoples  
**“Endorse UN  
International Year of  
Indigenous  
Peoples...call UU to  
(education and  
action).”**

**1995**

Latino/a UU  
Networking  
Association  
**Founded**

**1995**

Young Adults of Color  
Network  
**Founded**

Direct funding and technical support to start up or grow UU congregations with intentional community of People of Color. 9 of 12 new starts fail to survive. Tahlequah, OK: Native American, Raleigh, NC: Christian, Washington, DC: Beacon House make it. All 9 extension ministry efforts see some success working with existing congregations. Most notably Oakland, CA, Jamaica Plain, MA and San Jose, CA.

First specific explicit call for racial diversity in the UUA, asks Board to investigate *How*

Expansion of understanding of race, racism to include colonized and Indigenous and Latino/a Peoples. People of Color community building at multiple levels.

**1997**

GA Business Resolution  
Toward an Anti-Racist UUA  
**“Examine our conscious and unconscious racism...and the effect that racism has on all our lives...engage in anti-racism training...transform all our institutions.”**

**1997-2000**

UUA Anti-Racism Core  
Organizing Team  
Staff-Volunteer Group of nearly 20 convened by the Faith in Action Department to provide accountability, organizing vision and support for anti-racism.

**1998**

Diverse &  
Revolutionary UU  
Multicultural  
Ministries  
**Founded**  
A UU People of Color Organization

**June 1998**

Kansas City, MO  
Anti-Racism Stakeholders  
Meeting  
Over a dozen UU organizational leadership teams meet to discuss vision, strategy and implementation of anti-racism goals.

**2000**

GA Statement of Conscience  
Economic Injustice, Poverty,  
and Racism  
**“Rededicate ourselves to pursuit of economic justice and an end to racism.”**

Journey Towards Wholeness Transformation Committee established by UUA Board to direct anti-racism transformation.

Focus on organizing at all levels of the institution, forming congregational teams, updating training goals and methods, and including youth and young adults.

First intentional organization by and for People of Color in the UUA.

Anti-racism at all levels, importance for People of Color in leadership to meet.

**Table 2: List of Ministers of Color Fellowshiped by the UUA 1980-2005**

1980	<i>Marshall Grigsby</i>	<i>Ronald White</i>
1981	<i>Yvonne Seon</i>	
1982	<i>Adele Smith-Pennimen</i>	
1983	<i>T Ewell Hopkins</i>	<b>Hyun Kim</b>
1984	<u>Melvin Hoover</u>	
1985		
1986	<b>Charles Yielbonzie</b>	
1987	<u>Jose Ballester</u>	
1988	<i>Daniel Aldridge</i>	
1989	<i>Toni Vincent</i>	
1990		
1991	<b>Don Robinson</b>	<b>Cheng-Imm Tan</b>
1992		
1993		
1994	<u>Marjorie Bowens-Wheatley</u>	<b>Patricia Jimenez</b>
1995	<b>William Sinkford</b>	

1996	<b>Michelle Bentley</b>	<b>Thandeka</b>	<u>Carlton Elliot Smith</u>		
1997	<u>Chester McCall</u>	<b>Alma Crawford</b>	<i>Tim Malone</i>		
1998	<b>Danielle Dibona</b>	<i>John Gilmore</i>	<u>Abhi Janamanchi</u>		
1999	<b>Laurie Auffant</b>	<u>Shana Goodwin</u>	<u>Kristin Harper</u>	<u>Peter Morales</u>	<u>Rosemary Bray McNatt</u>
2000	<u>Monica Cummings</u>	<b>Toby Dubon</b>	<b>Karen Tse</b>		
2001	<b>Gordon Bailey</b>				
2002	<u>Hope Johnson</u>				
2003	<b>Sofia Craethnenn</b>	<u>Marta Valentin</u>			
2004	<u>Alicia Forde</u>	<b>Addae Watson</b>	<u>Leslie Takahashi-Morris</u>		
2005	<u>John Crestwell</u>	<u>Jennifer Ryu</u>	<u>Manish Mishra</u>		
Presently there are 32 members of a newly formed DRUUMM Seminarians Group seeking fellowship 2006-2010					

People listed here have either (1) self-identified as a Person of Color; (2) participated in an event for People of Color such as the Religious Professionals of Color Network or a DRUUMM event; (3) been members of a UU organization such as Asian/Pacific Islander or African-American UU Ministries that understood its membership to be People of Color.

**Legend:**

*Italic – Retired or no longer affiliated with the UUA*

**Bold – Community ministry or further education or work outside UU congregation**

Underline – Parish ministry in some capacity

## Appendix A: Survey of Unitarian Universalist People of Color 2005

### PURPOSE

The main goal of this survey is to understand the attitudes, hopes and concerns of Unitarian Universalist Persons of Color. The responses will be used for a Senior Thesis on “A 25 Year History of People of Color in Unitarian Universalism 1980-2005”.

### STUDY CONTACT

The Principle Investigator is Joseph Santos-Lyons, Harvard University Masters of Divinity Student, who can be reached at (503)490-5639 or [jsantoslyons@hds.harvard.edu](mailto:jsantoslyons@hds.harvard.edu). The survey may be emailed, or mailed hard copy to 1a Eliot St, Somerville, MA 02143 by December 1<sup>st</sup>. My advisor is Professor Wallace Best.

*We would like your name and contact information for possible follow-up interviews. By providing us with your name, you consent to follow up. We will request written permission if your name is to be used in any publication or website.*

Name:

Phone:

Email:

10 QUESTION SURVEY (please write as much as you like, use additional paper if necessary)

Personal/Reflective

1. How do you identify racially, ethnically and/or culturally?
2. What does the term “Person of Color” mean to you?
3. What does the term “Community of Color” mean to you?
4. Why are you a Unitarian Universalist and/or Why have you chosen to remain a Unitarian Universalist?

Historical

5. What do you consider to be important historical moments in Unitarian Universalism for you?

Social/Cultural

6. Are you aware of the Unitarian Universalist Association’s Anti-Racism efforts advanced primarily from the 1997 Journey Towards Wholeness resolution of the GA? If yes, what is your opinion of these efforts?

7. What is the racial/cultural diversity of your chosen community of worship?
8. Statistically, congregations in Unitarian Universalism are over 90% White racially, culturally and ethnically. What is your opinion of this state of affairs?
9. Do you perceive barriers in our Unitarian Universalist congregations and communities that prevent Persons of Color from joining? If so, what are your opinions of this condition?
10. What elements are needed for a growing, organized, active Community of Color within the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations?

#### Identifying Background Information

11. Are you a member of a Unitarian Universalist congregation? If yes, for how many years have you been a member? Circle one: YES / NO
12. What geographic area do you most identify with as your region of origin? (circle one)
  - a. South
  - b. North
  - c. Midwest
  - d. Northwest
  - e. Southwest (i.e., California)
  - f. International/Outside the United States of America
  - g. None of the Above
13. What gender do you identify as? (circle one)
  - a. Male
  - b. Female
  - c. Transgender
14. In your own opinion, how would you identify your level of involvement in the wider Unitarian Universalist Association beyond your local community? (circle one)
  - a. Very involved
  - b. Somewhat involved
  - c. Limited involvement
  - d. Not involved beyond my local Unitarian Universalist Community
15. Have you ever attended an event for Unitarian Universalist People of Color? (circle one)
  - a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. Not sure
16. What age range best describes you? (circle one)

- a. Under 25
- b. 26 to 35
- c. 36 to 50
- d. Over 50

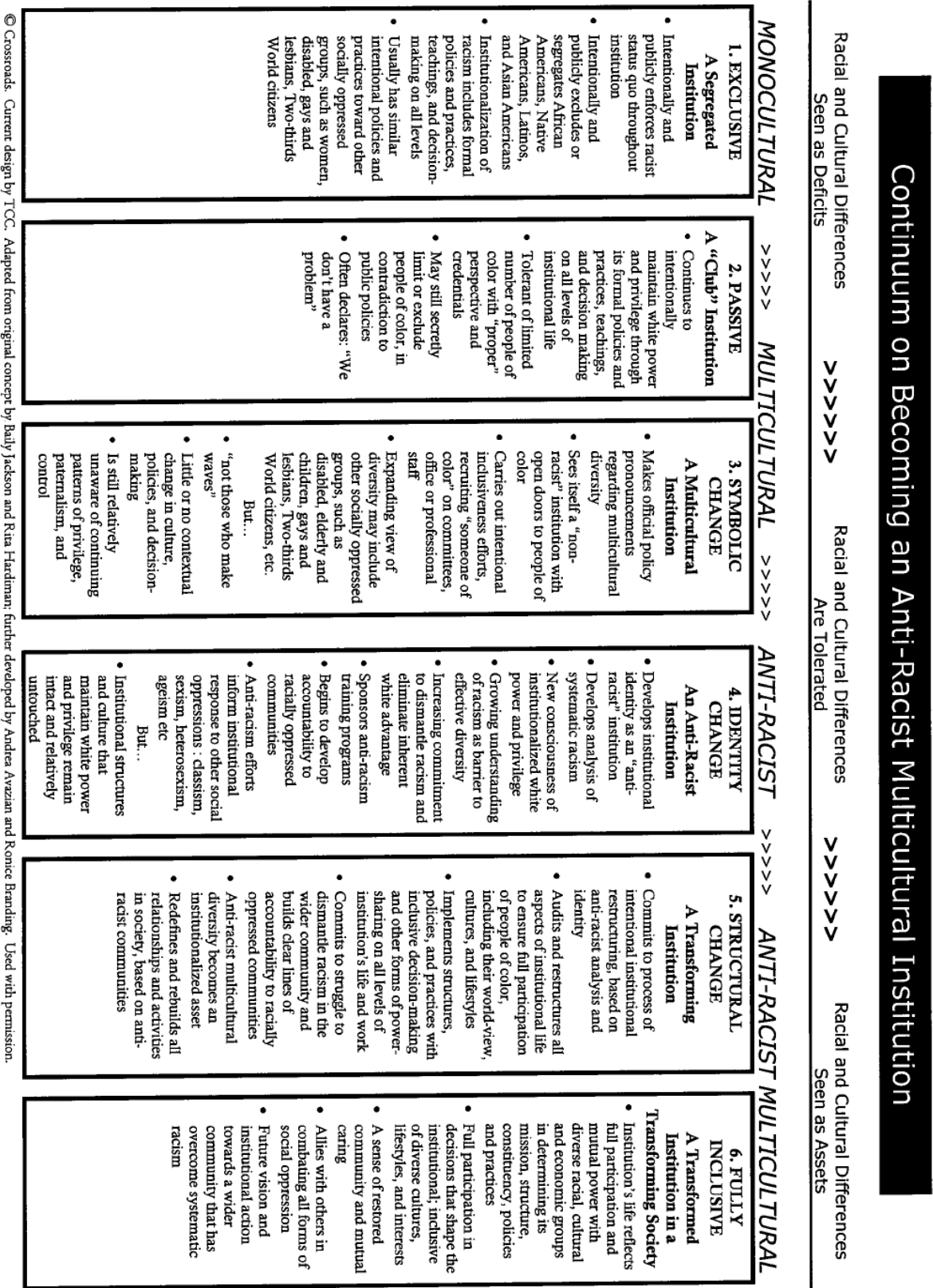
Survey Deadline December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2005

Mailing: Joseph Santos-Lyons, 1a Eliot Street, Somerville, MA 02143

Email: [jsantoslyons@hds.harvard.edu](mailto:jsantoslyons@hds.harvard.edu)



Appendix B: Crossroads Continuum on Becoming an Anti-Racist Multicultural Institution



## **Appendix C: Meadville/Lombard Theological School, Multicultural Ministry Program (MMP) Components (credit: Rev. Dr. Michelle Bentley)**

### COLLOQUIA

January 1994 – “A Model of Oppression with Application for Ministry.” Dr. Bill Jones, Florida State University and UUA Board of Trustees.

February 1994 – Dr. Prathia Hall Wynn, University of Chicago, IL.

February 1994 – “Faith, Hope and Struggle: Liberation Theology’s Challenge to the Liberal Church.” The Rev. Susan Harlow, Meadville/Lombard Winter Institute.

November 1994 – “Dreams of the Good: White Supremacy.” Dr. Sharon Welch, University of Missouri, MO.

December 1995 – “Society in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.” Dr. Jewel Graham, Antioch College, OH.

February 1996 – “Turning Back the Tide of Violence.” Geoffrey Canada, New York, NY, Meadville/Lombard Winter Institute.

April 1996 – “Liberating Liberal Theology.” Dr. Elias Farajaje-Jones, Howard Divinity School and Starr King School for the Ministry.

### ANTI-RACISM TRAINING

January 1994 – Dr. Bill Jones

February 1994 – “Doing Theology Justice.” Dr. Thandeka, Williams College, MA.

April 1994 – “Creating a Jubilee World.” The Black Concerns Working Group, UUA (Norma Poinsett and Dr. Harvey Thomas).

May 1995 – “Anti-Racism/Anti-Oppression All-Day Workshop.” Presented by PeopleWorks, Karen Hutt.

April 1996 – Rev. Mel Hoover, Department of Social Justice and Racial and Cultural Diversity, UUA.

### RELIGIOUS LEADERSHIP SEMINARS

February 1994 – “Conversations with Rev. Mark Morrison-Reed.”

February 1994 – “How Open the Door.” Video and discussion, a UU historical religious education documentary by Morrison-Reed.

February 1994 – “UU Responses to Slavery in the South.” Rev. Morris Hudgins, Minister-in-Residence.

May 1994 – “Substance Abuse, etc.” Mike Cebuhar, AIDS Specialist, Department of Alcohol and Substance Abuse.

May 1994 – “A Look into the UUA’s Diversity Initiative.” Rev. Michelle Bentley, Meadville/Lombard Theological School.

May 1994 – “The Rose Bud Reservation Experience.” David Scheuneman.

November 1994 – “Multiculturalism, Pluralism, Anti-Racism: A Panel Discussion with African-American Unitarian Universalists.” Norma Poinsett, Gwen Thomas, Michelle Bentley.

February 1995 – “Beacon House Community Ministry.” Rev. Donald Robinson, Washington DC.

April 1995 – “A Multicultural New Church Start.” Rev. Charles Yielbonzie Johnson, Tulsa, OK.

May 1995 – “Men’s Anger Network.” Ben Watende Mtundu.

October 1995 – “The World of Social Service.” Dr. Jewel Graham, Scholar-in-Residence.

November 1995 – “Legal Issues Continued.” Jewel Graham.

January 1996 – “Just Works.” Rev. Jose Ballester, UU Service Committee and Latino UU Ministers Group.

February 1996 – “Clergy Sexual Conduct/Misconduct.” Rev. Terasa Cooley, First Church, Chicago.

March 1996 – “Clergy Sexual Misconduct II.” Rev. Cooley.

May 1996 – “Visions, Actions, Interactions and Relations Between African-American Forebearers and the Universalist Church.” Dr. Willard Frank, Jr., Meadville/Lombard Board member, Norfolk, VA.

May 1996 – “Conflict Management I.”

May 1996 – “Conflict Management II.”

May 1996 – “The Center for Religion and Psychotherapy.” Sister Phyllis Sheppard and Nadine Swahnberg.

#### CONFERENCES/SOCIAL ACTIVITIES (selected)

January 1994 – “African-American UU Ministries Meeting.”

November 1994 – “Black Universalist Centennial 1894-1994.” Norfolk, VA.

December 1994 – “UUA Diversity Consultation.”

January 1996 – “Renewing Our Faith in the City.” UUA Urban Church Conference, New Orleans, LA.

#### WORSHIP/SOCIAL EVENTS (selected)

November 1993 – “A Cultural Diversity Worship Service.” Students representing five countries led worship at Central Midwest District annual meeting.

December 1993 – “Drum Service on Racism.” Barbara Hoag.

October 1994 – “African-American Faculty and Student Reps Tea.”

November 1994 – “Sankofa.” South African movie production of the Middle Passage.

April 1995 – “Reception for African-American Theologians at the University of Chicago Convocation.”

May 1995 – “The Afro-Centric Idea.” Alex Poinsett, President-elect First Unitarian Church, Chicago IL, and Rev. John Gilmore, Meadville/Lombard graduate.

June 1995 – “Encounters with Another Kind.” Abhi Prakash Janamanchi, a Hindu/UU Vespers.

April 1996 – “Japanese Tea Ceremony.” Keiko Utsunomiya.

#### COURSE WORK

Fall 1994 – “African-American Literature and Spirituality.” Visiting professor, Dr. Gwen Thomas, Meadville/Lombard Board of Trustees.

March 1995 – “Should Holy Unions Be Legalized?” The Jerry Springer Show – Bentley performed two unions, used video in RLS class on weddings and holy unions.

April 1995 – “Our God is Able: A Retrospective on the Civil Rights Movement as an Ecumenical and Interfaith movement.” University of Chicago Convocation.

Spring 1995 – “Multicultural Religious Education and Community Ministry.” Bentley and Harlow co-teachers with trips into the community.

On-going – “Training for Cross-Cultural Ministry.” Professors Barbour and Doidge – Trip to the Lakota nation, Rose Bud Reservation.

### RECRUITMENT TRAVEL

February 1994 – Atlanta University Complex: Spelman University, Morehouse University, Morris Brown University, Atlanta University, Clark College, and Emory University.

November 1994 – Hampton University, VA, Norfolk State University.

October 1995 – Howard University Divinity School, Morgan State University, Wesley Theological School.

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- Gilbert, Richard. *The Prophetic Imperative*. Boston, MA: Skinner House, 2000.
- Grady, Charles. *Arlington's First Parish (MA)*. Arlington, MA: First Parish Unitarian Universalist Church, 2000.
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- Ross, Warren R. *The Premise and the Promise: The Story of the Unitarian Universalist Association*. Boston, MA: Skinner House Books, 2001.

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- Farajaje-Jones, Elias. "Queer(y)ing Religious Education: Teaching the R(evolutionary) S(ub)Versions! Or Relax!...It's Just Religious Education." *UUMA Selected Essays*. Boston, MA: Unitarian Universalist Association, 2001. 13-38.
- Hampton, Henry. "Little Rock Through A Big Window: Reflections on Media and The Movement." *UUMA Selected Essays*. Boston, MA: Unitarian Universalist Association, 1987. 25-40.

Morrison-Reed, Mark. "After Running Through the Thistles the Hard Part Begins." *UUMA Selected Essays*. Boston, MA: Unitarian Universalist Association, 2001. 1-12.

Morrison-Reed, Mark. "How Open the Door? How Loud the Call?" *UUMA Selected Essays*. Boston, MA: Unitarian Universalist Association, 1993. 87-98.

Muir, Frederick J. "Unitarian Universalist Diversity and New Transcendentalism." *UUMA Selected Essays*. Boston, MA: Unitarian Universalist Association, 1997. 35-56.

### Articles

*Note: The flagship publication of the Unitarian Universalist Association since merger in 1961 has had three names: Register-Leader, UU World, The World. UU World was used twice, in the early 1980s, and again after 2000.*

"A Conversation on Race and Class." *The World* Jul/Aug 1998. 12-15.

"A Liberal Religious Response." *UU World* 15 July 1981. 4.

"A Look At Mixed Marriages." *UU World* 15 September 1982.

"A Vote for Diversity." *The World* May/Jun 1992. 59-60. 37.

"Affirmative Action: Clearing the Clutter." *UU World* Supplement 15 August 1980.

"Antiracist Congregations Meet." *The World* Mar/Apr 1997.

"Congress Report." *The World* Mar/Apr 1993. 37-38.

"Final Black Affairs Council Settlement Checks Mailed." *UU World* 15 May 1980. 2.

"Harper Resurrected." *The World* Mar/Apr 1993. 38-39.

"In LA: A Racial Growth Unit." *UU World* 15 November 1981. 1.

"Latino UU Network." *The World* Mar/Apr 1995. 33.

"Los Angeles Opens Liberal Religion to Asian Americans." *UU World* 15 September 1982. 3.

"Minority – Simply a Half Tone?" *UU World* 15 March 1981.

"Multiracial Families Gather." *The World* Jan/Feb 1998.

"People's Church in Chicago: New Wine in Old Skins; Will It Work?" *UU World* 15 June 1984. 1, 9.

- “Planning for Diversity.” *The World* May/Jun 1993. 36-37.
- “Racial Audit Recommendations, Implementation.” *UU World* 15 March 1982. 7.
- “Racial Justice II.” *The World* Sep/Oct 1994. 49.
- “Racial Justice: For Such A Time As This.” *The World* Sep/Oct 1993. 42-44 .
- “Racially Diverse Groups Meet.” *The World* Jan/Feb 1991. 22.
- “Religious Liberals Share Views on Black Empowerment.” *UU World* 15 March 1984. 4-5.
- “Unanimous Vote for Diversity.” *The World* Sep/Oct 1997. 40.
- “Unitarian Universalist Statement of Consensus on Racial Justice.” *The Register-Leader* Midsummer 1966. 35-37.
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- “UUA Team Seeks Way to Racial Balance.” *UU World* 15 November 1980. 6.
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- Chethik, Neil. “Outside Church Walls.” *The World* Sep/Oct 1994. 18-22.
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<[www.enquirer.com](http://www.enquirer.com)>.
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King Jr., Martin Luther. "Don't Sleep Through The Revolution: Ware Lecture at UUA General Assembly." *The Register-Leader* Midsummer 1966. 9-11.

Merrill, Charles. "Negro Pressure and White Liberals." *The Register-Leader* June 1967. 3-6.

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Sewell, Marilyn. "Repression of the Sublime." *UU World* 15 August 2005.

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## **Endnotes**

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<sup>1</sup> Unitarian Universalist Association. *Journey Towards Wholeness Report*. June 1997.

<sup>2</sup> The General Assembly is the annual gathering of Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations, or the UUA for short. Delegates are elected by the congregation and attend a series of business plenaries over the course of a weekend. There are also hundreds of workshops and other events, drawing additional participants to GA who are not business delegates. Attendance at GA has grown to over 3,000 annually, with less than 50% attending as delegates.

<sup>3</sup> Morrison-Reed, Mark. *Black Pioneers in a White Denomination*. Boston: Skinner House Books, 1980.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. viii.

<sup>5</sup> DRUUMM is the Diverse and Revolutionary Unitarian Universalist Multicultural Ministries, a Unitarian Universalist People of Color organization founded by religious professionals of Color in 1998.

<sup>6</sup> The training at Youth Council was led by the UUA Faith in Action Department trainers: Rev. Mel Hoover and Christine Murphy.

<sup>7</sup> Institutional Racism definition utilized by Crossroads Ministry, People's Institute for Survival and Beyond and others. Key components are understanding the difference between individual prejudice and the systemic/cultural manifestations, plus the clear focus on power within institutions, individuals, over and with communities. Documentation may be found at <[www.crossroadsministry.org](http://www.crossroadsministry.org)>.

<sup>8</sup> Zinn, Howard. *You Can't Be Neutral on a Moving Train*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2002. 1.

<sup>9</sup> Dias, Robette. *Historical Development of Institutional Racism*. Crossroads Ministry Co-Executive Director. Chicago, IL, 2005.

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- <sup>10</sup> Morrison-Reed, Mark. "How Open the Door? How Loud the Call?" *UUMA Selected Essays*. Boston, MA: Unitarian Universalist Association, 1993. 87-98.
- <sup>11</sup> Morrison-Reed, Mark. *Black Pioneers in a White Denomination*. Boston: Skinner House Books, 1980.
- <sup>12</sup> The Ministerial Fellowship Committee of the Unitarian Universalist Association publishes an annual reading list from which candidates for the ministry must study in advance of their interview in order to be fellowshiped and eligible for general ordination. The list contains over 50 books from which they have to select and sign a statement confirming that these books have been read. Reading requirements related to People of Color and multiculturalism include: *Weaving the Fabric of Diversity* curriculum which includes one session on racism, the 1983 Commission on Appraisal Report *Unitarian Universalism and the Quest for Racial Justice*, and the 1996 *Journey Towards Wholeness Report* to the General Assembly. The current list is available at <[www.uua.org/programs/ministry/credentialing/preparation/reading.html](http://www.uua.org/programs/ministry/credentialing/preparation/reading.html)>.
- <sup>13</sup> While the American Unitarian Association and Universalist Church of America merged officially 1961, youth and young adults merged their organizations in 1954. Discussions were underway during the decade leading up to the official merger. For more background see: Ross, Warren. *The Premise and the Promise*. Boston, MA: Skinner House Books, 2001.
- <sup>14</sup> According to the American Federal Bureau of Investigation annual Uniform Crime Report, in 2004, racial bias motivated more than half (53.9 percent) of the 9,021 reported offenses within single-bias hate crime incidents; religious bias accounted for 16.4 percent; bias regarding sexual orientation, 15.6 percent; ethnicity or national origin, 13.3 percent; and disability bias, 0.8 percent. <<http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/hc2004/section1.htm>>.
- <sup>15</sup> Star Trek popular culture reference to the *cyborg* or "borg," who assimilate and readily adapt to maintain power and privilege.
- <sup>16</sup> In 2004, racial bias motivated more than half (53.9 percent) of the 9,021 reported offenses within single-bias hate crime incidents; religious bias accounted for 16.4 percent; bias regarding sexual orientation, 15.6 percent; ethnicity or national origin, 13.3 percent; and disability bias, 0.8 percent. <http://www.fbi.gov/ucr/hc2004/section1.htm>
- <sup>17</sup> Kein, Sybil, ed. *Creole: The History and Legacy of Louisiana's Free People of Color*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2000. 131. Also see: <[www.frenchcreoles.com/CreoleCulture/freepeopleofcolor/freepeopleofcolor.htm](http://www.frenchcreoles.com/CreoleCulture/freepeopleofcolor/freepeopleofcolor.htm)>.
- <sup>18</sup> Western States Center. *The Construction of Race and Racism*. Portland, OR: Western States Center, 2003. 13.
- <sup>19</sup> Diverse and Revolutionary UU Multicultural Ministries. *By-Laws Article II, Section I: Mission*. 2000. Available online at [www.druumm.org/Bylaws2000.html](http://www.druumm.org/Bylaws2000.html)
- <sup>20</sup> Crossroads Ministry. *Racial Identity Caucusing: A Strategy for Building Anti-Racist Collectives*. Chicago, IL: Crossroads Ministry, n.d.
- <sup>21</sup> Dias, Robette. Personal Interview. November 5, 2005.
- <sup>22</sup> Brumfield, Tony. Personal Interview via Email. February 23, 2006.
- <sup>23</sup> Dibona, Danielle. Personal Interview via Email. March 15, 2006. Action steps were agreed upon at a meeting of DRUUMM Religious Professionals, May 14, 2001, that were never completed. The first and primary step was to work to create different language (inclusive and agreed upon) to describe DRUUMM membership. Attending the meeting were Diane Arakawa, Marjorie Bowens-Wheatley, Mel Hoover, Jose Ballester, Danielle Dibona, Patricia Jimenez, Mark Morrison-Reed, Michelle Bentley, John Gilmore and Peter Morales. Kenn Hurto, UUMA Vice-President took notes.
- <sup>24</sup> Unitarian Universalist Association. *General Assembly Business Resolution: Establishment of a Black Concerns Working Group*. 1985.
- <sup>25</sup> DRUUMM MultiRac in 2005-2006 was convened by Catie Chi Olson and Kelli Eng.
- <sup>26</sup> McCall, Chester. Personal Interview. May 9, 2006. Noted that some in the community of People of Color still feel that we are owed several hundred thousand dollars from the UUA commitments to the Black Affairs Council in 1968.
- <sup>27</sup> Brumfield, Tony. Personal Interview via Email. February 23, 2006.
- <sup>28</sup> Steinman, Harry. "Milk Allergy and Lactose Intolerance." *Science in Africa*. May 2002. <[www.sciencein africa.co.za](http://www.sciencein africa.co.za)>.
- <sup>29</sup> Unitarian Universalist Association. "Institutional Racism Audit." Boston, MA: UUA, 1981. 39.
- <sup>30</sup> Morrison-Reed, Mark. *Black Pioneers in a White Denomination*. Boston: Skinner House Books, 1980. xvii, 109

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- <sup>31</sup> Organizations for African-Americans, Latino/as, Asian/Pacific Islanders and American Indians/Native Americans continue to ebb and flow without staff support, consistent annual budgets and active participation at the congregational level. See Chapter VII for more discussion.
- <sup>32</sup> Carpenter, Victor. *Long Challenge: The Empowerment Controversy (1967-1977)*. Chicago, IL: Meadville Lombard Press, 2004.
- <sup>33</sup> Morrison-Reed, Mark. *Black Pioneers in a White Denomination*. Boston, MA: Skinner House Books, 1980. xii.
- <sup>34</sup> Carpenter, Victor. *Long Challenge: The Empowerment Controversy (1967-1977)*. Chicago, IL: Meadville Lombard Press, 2004.
- <sup>35</sup> Ross, Warren. "The UUA Meets Black Power: BAC vs. BAWA, 1967-1971." *UU World* (March/April 2000).
- <sup>36</sup> Black and White Alternative. *Prospectus Paper circulated at General Assembly 1968 in Cleveland, Ohio*. Cited in: Carpenter, Victor. *Long Challenge: The Empowerment Controversy (1967-1977)*. Chicago, IL: Meadville Lombard Press, 2004. 37.
- <sup>37</sup> Carpenter, Victor. *Long Challenge: The Empowerment Controversy (1967-1977)*. Chicago, IL: Meadville Lombard Press, 2004. 2.
- <sup>38</sup> Unitarian Universalist Association. *Unitarian Universalism Needs and Aspirations Survey*. Boston, MA: UUA, 1998. 7892 respondents answered the question phrased "What is Your Racial/Cultural Identity?". 8118 total respondents from 118,000 copies of the September/October UU World distribution, on the UUA website, and to people who called the UUA for copies.. Percentages total more than 100% as people could check all that apply. Summary by: Stites, Tom. "Needs and Aspirations Survey Results." *UU World* (May/June 1998).
- <sup>39</sup> McIntosh, Peggy. "Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack." *White Privilege and Male Privilege: A Personal Account of Coming to See Correspondences through Work in Women's Studies (Working Paper)*. Ed. Peggy McIntosh. Wellesley, MA: Wellesley College Center for Research on Women, 1988. The working paper contains a longer list of privileges and analysis.
- <sup>40</sup> Sewell, Marilyn. "Repression of the Sublime." *UU World* (Fall 2005).
- <sup>41</sup> Schultz, William. "An Open Letter to White Unitarian Universalists." *The World* (Mar/Apr 1988).
- <sup>42</sup> DRUUMM Seminarrians in 2005-2006 met twice a month with guest speakers. Rebecca Parker spoke to the group on February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2006.
- <sup>43</sup> Unitarian Universalist Association. "Institutional Racism Audit." Boston, MA: UUA, 1981. 35.
- <sup>44</sup> Parker, Rebecca. President of Starr King School for the Ministry (Unitarian Universalist) in presentation and discussion with the DRUUMM Seminarrians Caucus February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2006. Used with permission.
- <sup>45</sup> Stites, Tom. "Racism." *UU World* (March/April 2000).
- <sup>46</sup> Schultz, William. "An Open Letter to White Unitarian Universalists." *The World* (Mar/Apr 1988).
- <sup>47</sup> Diverse and Revolutionary UU Multicultural Ministries. *By-Laws Article II, Section II: Racial Justice Covenant: Resistance and Harmony*. 2000.
- <sup>48</sup> Walton, Christopher. "Exclusive: Point of Personal Privilege to the Moderator, June 24, 2002." *UU World* (Sep/Oct 2002).
- <sup>49</sup> Sinkford, William. Introduction. *Long Challenge: The Empowerment Controversy (1967-1977)*. By Carpenter. Chicago, IL: Meadville-Lombard Press, 2004. viii-ix
- <sup>50</sup> Stites, Tom. "New Survey of UUs Shows Theological Differences, Common Values." *The World* (May/June 1998).
- <sup>51</sup> Unity Church-Unitarian. *Institutional Audit of Unity Church-Unitarian*. St Paul, MN: Unity Church-Unitarian, 2005. 48.
- <sup>52</sup> Morrison-Reed, Mark. *Black Pioneers in a White Denomination*. Boston: Skinner House Books, 1980. 192.
- <sup>53</sup> Unitarian Universalist Association. "Institutional Racism Audit." Boston, MA: UUA, 1981. 36.
- <sup>54</sup> Ibid. 37.
- <sup>55</sup> *Our Continuing Pioneers: Our UU Youth of Color*. Letter. Chicago, IL: Mark Morrison-Reed Archive, 1986.
- <sup>56</sup> This includes Latino/a ministers who may or may not identify as "Ministers of Color."
- <sup>57</sup> Unitarian Universalist Association. *Ministerial Fellowship Committee Policies*. <[www.uua.org/programs/ministry/mfc/policies.pdf](http://www.uua.org/programs/ministry/mfc/policies.pdf)>.
- <sup>58</sup> McCall, Chester. Personal Interview. May 9, 2006.
- <sup>59</sup> There is no information available in detail to seminarrians of color or through the Office of Identity Based Ministries. Currently the program, which was held once in 2005, is again on hold for lack of funding and staff support.
- <sup>60</sup> McCall, Chester. Personal Interview. May 9, 2006.
- <sup>61</sup> Trained by Crossroads Ministry.

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- <sup>62</sup> Unitarian Universalist Association. "Institutional Racism Audit." Boston, MA: UUA, 1981. 6.
- <sup>63</sup> Ibid. 46-49.
- <sup>64</sup> Ibid. 38.
- <sup>65</sup> Ibid. 36.
- <sup>66</sup> The March/April 2000 World marks this date in a timeline as 1989, however evidence from meeting notes proves this to be erroneous.
- <sup>67</sup> Morrison-Reed. Personal Interview. February 2, 2006.
- <sup>68</sup> Unitarian Universalist Association. "Institutional Racism Audit." Boston, MA: UUA, 1981. 37.
- <sup>69</sup> "UUA Affirmative Action Report." *The World*. Mar/Apr 1991. 36.
- <sup>70</sup> Unitarian Universalist Association. *Affirmative Action Reports to the General Assembly*. 2000-2005 except 2002. Available from the UUA Director of Human Resources or online in the UUA Staff Reports at [www.uua.org/ga](http://www.uua.org/ga)
- <sup>71</sup> "General Assembly Report." *The World*. Sept/Oct 1993. 42-43.
- <sup>72</sup> Walton, Christopher. "Exclusive: Point of Personal Privilege to the Moderator, June 24, 2002." *UU World* (Sep/Oct 2002).
- <sup>73</sup> Unitarian Universalist Association. *Special Review Commission Final Report to the Board of Trustees*. Boston, MA: UUA, April 2006. 2.
- <sup>74</sup> Ibid. 25.
- <sup>75</sup> McCall, Chester. Personal Interview. May 9, 2006.
- <sup>76</sup> "Statistical Summary." *Unitarian Universalist Association Online*. 2006. 158,076 certified adult members. [www.uua.org/aboutuua/statistics.html](http://www.uua.org/aboutuua/statistics.html). children's, quote from recent UUA growth reports
- <sup>77</sup> Congress of African-American Unitarian Universalist Organizations. Press Release. *New African-American UU Organization Forms*. June 22, 1989.
- <sup>78</sup> Diverse and Revolutionary Unitarian Universalist Multicultural Ministries. *Asian/Pacific Islander Caucus By-Laws*. 2003. <[www.apiuu.org](http://www.apiuu.org)>.
- <sup>79</sup> Kim, Young. "How We Began." *Asian/Pacific Islander Caucus Online*. March 2005. <[www.apiuu.org/began.htm](http://www.apiuu.org/began.htm)>.
- <sup>80</sup> "Latino UU Network." *The World* Mar/Apr 1995. 33.
- <sup>81</sup> **UU World Article that refers to this**
- <sup>82</sup> Latino/a Unitarian Universalist Networking Association. *Bylaws*. 1997. On file with the Unitarian Universalist Association, 25 Beacon St, Boston MA 02108.
- <sup>83</sup> Now Rev. Marta Valentin-Chase, serving as Senior Minister of the First UU Church of New Orleans, Louisiana.
- <sup>84</sup> Unitarian Universalist Association. *Staff Report to General Assembly*. UUA Annual Reports 2004. 17, 35.
- <sup>85</sup> Ibid. 15.
- <sup>86</sup> "EUROPEAN UU's" Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association News Winter 2006 page 19
- <sup>87</sup> Arnason, Wayne. *Follow the Gleam*. Boston, MA: UUA, 1980.
- <sup>88</sup> Arnason, Wayne, and Scott, Rebecca. *We Would Be One: A History of Unitarian Universalist Youth Movements*. Boston, MA: Skinner House Books, 2005.
- <sup>89</sup> In 2002, the Canadian Unitarian Council separated formally from the Unitarian Universalist Association. The UUA still provides various programs and services to Canadian congregations, such as ministry, religious education, young adult and campus ministry, and youth. The UUA is primarily an American organization, although Canadian congregations were permitted to retain their membership with the UUA, and several international congregations have grandfathered membership including ones in Australia and the Philippines. Currently any international congregation seeking direct services and membership in an association are directed to the International Council of Unitarian Universalists.
- <sup>90</sup> Unitarian Universalist Association Commission on Appraisal. *Unitarian Universalism and the Quest for Racial Justice*. Boston, MA : UUA, 1983. 1.
- <sup>91</sup> Morrison-Reed, Mark. *Black Pioneers in a White Denomination*. Boston: Skinner House Books, 1980. viii.
- <sup>92</sup> Howe, Charles. David Eaton. *Dictionary of Unitarian and Universalist Biography*. Unitarian Universalist Historical Society. 1999-2006. <[www.uua.org/uuhs/duub/articles/davidheaton.html](http://www.uua.org/uuhs/duub/articles/davidheaton.html)>.
- <sup>93</sup> Unitarian Universalist Association Commission on Appraisal. *Unitarian Universalism and the Quest for Racial Justice*. Boston, MA : UUA, 1983. viii.
- <sup>94</sup> Unitarian Universalist Association. *Racial Imperative*. UUA Board Resolution. 1981.
- <sup>95</sup> Montgomery, Kay. Personal Interview. March 25, 1997. Qtd. Murphy. 20
- <sup>96</sup> Unitarian Universalist Association. "Institutional Racism Audit." Boston, MA: UUA, 1981. 37.

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- <sup>97</sup> Unitarian Universalist Association Commission on Appraisal. *Unitarian Universalism and the Quest for Racial Justice*. Boston, MA : UUA, 1983. 183.
- <sup>98</sup> Ibid. 161.
- <sup>99</sup> Ibid. 162.
- <sup>100</sup> Ibid. 165.
- <sup>101</sup> Wolff, Robert P, Moore, Barrington, and Marcuse, Herbert. *A Critique of Pure Tolerance*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1965. Qtd. Unitarian Universalist Association Commission on Appraisal. *Unitarian Universalism and the Quest for Racial Justice*. Boston, MA : UUA, 1983. 81.
- <sup>102</sup> Ibid. 172.
- <sup>103</sup> Ibid. 173.
- <sup>104</sup> Ibid. 173.
- <sup>105</sup> Unity Church-Unitarian. *Institutional Audit of Unity Church-Unitarian*. St Paul, MN: Unity Church-Unitarian, 2005. 48.
- <sup>106</sup> Unitarian Universalist Association. "Institutional Racism Audit." Boston, MA: UUA, 1981. 31-32.
- <sup>107</sup> Murphy, Christine. "A History of Institutional Unitarian Universalist Anti-Racism: 1969-1997." MDiv Thesis. Harvard Divinity School, 1997. 4-5.
- <sup>108</sup> Ibid. 16
- <sup>109</sup> Ibid. 18
- <sup>110</sup> African-American Unitarian Universalist Ministries. *African-American Ministers Conference Goal, Purposes and Agenda*. November 13-16, 1988.
- <sup>111</sup> Morrison-Reed, Mark. Personal Interview. February 2, 2006.
- <sup>112</sup> Montgomery, Kay. Personal Interview. March 26, 1997. Qtd. Murphy page 28
- <sup>113</sup> Schultz, William. "An Open Letter to White Unitarian Universalists." *The World* Mar/Apr 1988. 2.
- <sup>114</sup> Unity-Unitarian Church of St Paul, MN. *Anti-Racism Team*.  
<<http://www.unityunitarian.org/antiracismteam.htm>>.
- <sup>115</sup> Spencer, Leon. Personal Interview. November, 18, 1997. Qtd Murphy, Page 23.
- <sup>116</sup> Martin, Diane, and Robinson-Harris, Tracey. Congregational Services Report on Anti Racism/Anti-Oppression for the UUA Committee on Committees. March 21, 2006.
- <sup>117</sup> Hoover, Melvin. Personal Interview. March 26, 1997. Qtd. Murphy Page 29
- <sup>118</sup> URBANUU. *Unitarian Universalist Association Online*. <[www.uua.org/urbanuu/history.html](http://www.uua.org/urbanuu/history.html)>.
- <sup>119</sup> Unitarian Universalist Association. *Journey Towards Wholeness Transformation Committee Vision, Charge and History*. Report to the UUA Board. January 2004.
- <sup>120</sup> "Racial Justice: For Such A Time As This." *The World* Sep/Oct 1993. 43 .
- <sup>121</sup> "Racial Justice II." *The World* Sep/Oct 1994. 49.
- <sup>122</sup> Ibid. 49.
- <sup>123</sup> "Latino UU Network." *The World* Mar/Apr 1995. 33.
- <sup>124</sup> Leslie, Susan. "Continuing the Journey Towards Wholeness." *UUA Faith in Action Newsletter*. Fall/Winter 1997.
- <sup>125</sup> "Conference Report: Theology, Faith, And Action Consultation on Racial Justice." *The World*. May/Jun 1998. 32-36.
- <sup>126</sup> Thandeka. *What's Wrong With Anti-Racism: Why Anti-Racism Will Fail*. UUA General Assembly Workshop. June 1999.
- <sup>127</sup> "Jubilee Working Group Response to Thandeka's 'What's Wrong With Anti-Racism: Why Anti-Racism Will Fail.'" *UUA Faith in Action Newsletter*. Fall/Winter 1999. 14.
- <sup>128</sup> Ibid. 15.
- <sup>129</sup> Professional Development. *Unitarian Universalist Association Online*. 2006.  
<[www.uua.org/programs/ministry/development/](http://www.uua.org/programs/ministry/development/)>.
- <sup>130</sup> Many Paths, One Journey. *Unitarian Universalist Association Online*.  
<[www.uua.org/programs/justice/antiracism/consultancy.html](http://www.uua.org/programs/justice/antiracism/consultancy.html)>.
- <sup>131</sup> The Beyond Categorical Thinking (BCT) program works with Unitarian Universalist congregations to promote inclusive thinking and help prevent unfair discrimination in the ministerial search process. During the Beyond Categorical Thinking visit, the congregation will learn more about its institutional culture, examine ways it can be more inclusive in its consideration of ministerial candidates, and surface subtle and often unintentional, unconscious

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biases members hold that may result in a decision to not select the minister who would be the best fit for their ministerial needs. Unitarian Universalists ministers who identify as people of color; as Latina/Latino/Hispanic; as bisexual, gay, lesbian, and/or transgender; or as a person with a disability often have a more difficult time in the ministerial search process because of unconscious congregational biases. Even in congregations that have called a minister, interim minister, or intern from one of the aforementioned identity groups, new biases have arisen because the congregation mistakenly assumed that the presence of these ministers means that they have adequately addressed diversity issues and need no further work. <[www.uua.org/programs/idbm/bct/](http://www.uua.org/programs/idbm/bct/)>.

<sup>132</sup> These stages refer to the Crossroads Ministry *Continuum on Becoming an Anti-Racist Multicultural Institution*. Adapted from original concept by Baily Jackson and Rita Hardiman; further developed by Andrea Avazian and Ronice Branding. There are six stages in the continuum, describing institutional conditions from monocultural, to multicultural, to anti-racist, to anti-racist multicultural.

<sup>133</sup> Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association. *European-American Anti-Racist Transformation Focus Group*. UUMA News, Winter 2006. 8.

<sup>134</sup> Bowens-Wheatley, Marjorie, and Palmer, Nancy Jones. *Soul Work*. Boston, MA: Skinner House Books, 2002. 199.

<sup>135</sup> Lewis Latimer (1848-1928) was a founder of the Unitarian Church in Flushing, Queens, New York. Born in Chelsea, Massachusetts, the son of escaped slaves, Latimer was a well-known inventor who worked closely with Alexander Graham Bell and Thomas Edison.

<sup>136</sup> Sinkford, William. Personal Interview. December, 19, 2005; and McCall, Chester. Personal Interview. May 14, 2006.

<sup>137</sup> McCall, Chester. Personal Interview. May 14, 2006.

<sup>138</sup> Morrison-Reed, Mark. *Black Pioneers in a White Denomination*. Boston: Skinner House Books, 1980. 165.

<sup>139</sup> Poinsett, Norma. "The following is an excerpt from remarks Norma Poinsett made March 3, 1999." *First Unitarian Church, Chicago, IL*. <[www.firstuchicago.org/norma\\_on\\_uu.html](http://www.firstuchicago.org/norma_on_uu.html)>. Norma was a Trustee at Large for the Unitarian Universalist Association and has been attending First Unitarian Church, Chicago, IL, since 1958.

<sup>140</sup> Unitarian Universalist Association Commission on Appraisal. *The Quality of Religious Life in Unitarian Universalist Congregations*. Boston, MA : UUA, 1989. 8.

<sup>141</sup> "In Los Angeles: A Racial Growth Unit." *The World* 15 November 1981. 1.

<sup>142</sup> "Los Angeles Opens Liberal Religion to Asian Americans." *UU World* 15 September 1982. 3.

<sup>143</sup> Adams, Elizabeth Ellis. "Minorities Give Rich Diversity to an Open Denomination." *The World* 15 April 1981. 7.

<sup>144</sup> "UUA's First Black Woman Minister Shares Her Views." *The World* 15 August 1982. 1, 3.

<sup>145</sup> "Racially Diverse Groups Meet." *The World* Jan/Feb 1991. 22.

<sup>146</sup> Coalition of African-American Unitarian Universalist Organizations. *Coalition Member Mission Statements*. Document. N.d.

<sup>147</sup> "Ethnic New Start", was the language used by the UUA in the 1980s and 1990s to denote congregational startup or extension efforts (building on existing congregations), with an emphasis on ministering and welcoming People of Color as new members.

<sup>148</sup> Bentley, Michelle. Personal Interview. February 2, 2006.

<sup>149</sup> Morrison-Reed. "History of African-American Experience in Unitarian Universalism." Forthcoming. 6.

<sup>150</sup> See Appendix C: Meadville/Lombard Theological School Multicultural Ministry Program Components.

<sup>151</sup> Bentley, Michelle. *The White Face of Theological Education: A Case Study of Movement to Anti-Racist, Multicultural Theological Education*. D.Min. Professional Paper. Chicago Theological Seminary. May 1998. 13-14.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid. 14.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid. 16.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid. 20-21.

<sup>155</sup> Unitarian Universalist Religious Professionals of Color. *Gathering of Religious Professionals of Color*. Grant to the Unitarian Universalist Funding Panel. 1997.

<sup>156</sup> Unity Church-Unitarian. *Institutional Audit of Unity Church-Unitarian*. St Paul, MN: Unity Church-Unitarian, 2005. 45. And, Stites, Tom. "Antiracism Timeline." *The World* Mar/Apr 2000.

<sup>157</sup> Bentley, Michelle. Personal Interview. February 2, 2006.



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<sup>158</sup> Channing, William Ellery. *Self Culture*. Electronic Version, American Unitarian Conference website. <[www.americanunitarian.org/selfculture.htm](http://www.americanunitarian.org/selfculture.htm)>.

<sup>159</sup> Unitarian Universalist Association Journey Towards Wholeness Transformation Committee. *Report and Recommendations to the 2001 General Assembly*. Boston, MA: UUA, 2001.

<sup>160</sup> Unitarian Universalist Association Commission on Appraisal. *Interdependence : Renewing Congregational Polity*. Boston, MA : UUA, 1997. 139. Survey entitled *Common Vision*, "designed to reach deep into the soul of our Unitarian Universalist movement in search of feelings and attitudes toward gay and lesbian people, and in search of the fears, dreams, needs, and hopes of UUs regarding the full inclusion of gay and lesbian people in Unitarian Universalism."

<sup>161</sup> Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association. *European-American Anti-Racist Transformation Focus Group*. UUMA News, Winter 2006. 8. For more information contact Rev. Heather Janules [hjanules@cedarlane.org](mailto:hjanules@cedarlane.org).

<sup>162</sup> Morrison-Reed, Mark. *Black Pioneers in a White Denomination*. Boston: Skinner House Books, 1980. 203-205.