

# SHOWING UP FOR RACIAL JUSTICE

SURJ HARTFORD



**Racism  
101**

# COMMUNITY GUIDELINES

- Speak Your Truth
- Expect Discomfort
- Stay Engaged
- Accept & Expect Non-closure

*“We need you defecting  
from White supremacy and  
changing the narrative of  
White supremacy by  
breaking White silence.”*

– Alicia Garza

co-founder Black Lives Matter and  
Special Projects Director at the  
National Domestic Worker Alliance

# INTRODUCTION TO SURJ



## **Mission:**

SURJ is a national network of groups and individuals organizing White people for racial justice. Through community organizing, mobilizing, and education, SURJ moves White people to act as part of a multi-racial majority for justice with passion and accountability. We work to connect people across the country while supporting and collaborating with local and national racial justice organizing efforts. SURJ provides a space to build relationships, skills and political analysis to act for change.

## **Vision:**

We envision a society where we struggle together with love, for justice, human dignity and a sustainable world.

# INTRODUCTION TO SURJ (CONT'D)

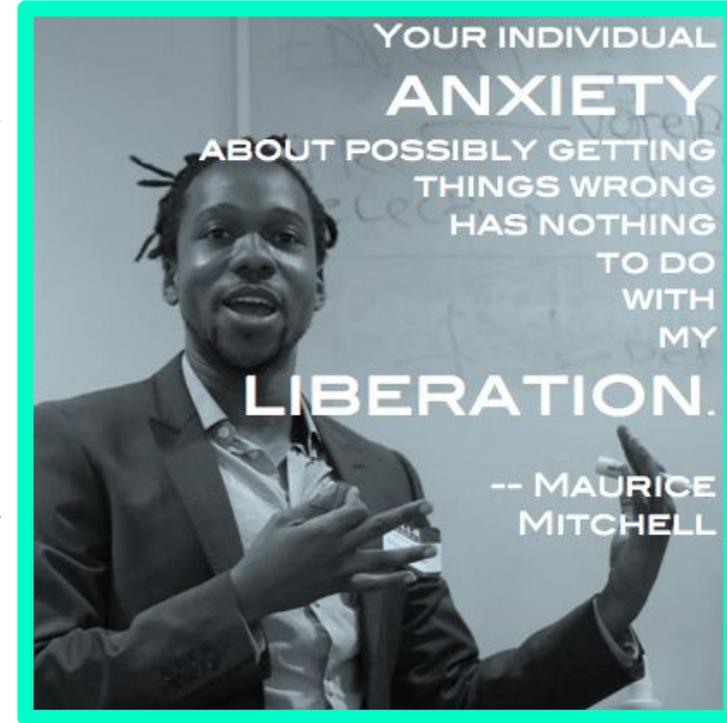
## Core Values:

- Calling People in, Not Calling Out
- Take Risks, Learn, and Keep Going
- Tap into Mutual Interest
- Accountability Through Collective Action
- Enough for Everyone
- Growing is Good

# INTRODUCTION TO SURJ (CONT'D)

## Why We Organize:

Racism is still present throughout all of our contemporary institutions and structures. Racism is devastating to People of Color and is closely intertwined with all systems of oppression. It robs all of us--White people and People of Color--of our humanity. We are showing up to take our responsibility as White people to act collectively and publicly to transform this country by building a powerful multi-racial majority to challenge racism in all its forms.



# WHITE RACIAL IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT (CREDIT TO JANET HELMS & BEVERLEY TATUM)

## Phase 1: Abandonment of Racism



## Phase 2: Defining an Anti-Racist White Identity



# PHASE 1: ABANDONMENT OF RACISM

- 1. Contact** (pre-encounter): Whites internalize the messages of the dominant society. Whites learn that being white is “normal” and being white makes one superior to people in other racial groups. **~Obliviousness to racism~**
- 2. Disintegration** (encounter): Events and/or relationships begin to make white children, adolescents, or adults aware of the reality of racism. Racism becomes visible. This often brings discomfort. **~Struggle with notions of equality~**
- 3. Reintegration:** The pressure to conform to the norms of the society is strong. Acting against racism may have costs. There is a tendency to slip backwards, often blaming the victims of racism for their life circumstances. Whites will also attempt to distance themselves from the white collective saying “But I am an individual.” or “I don’t do those things!” They may choose to identify with some other marginalized group. **~Question meaning of race~**



# PHASE 2: DEFINING AN ANTI-RACIST WHITE IDENTITY

**4. Pseudo-Independence:** Beginning to understand institutional and cultural racism, but not yet sure about what to do about it or how to be an effective ally to people of color in the struggle for racial justice. ***~Acceptance of other races~***

**5. Immersion/Emersion:** Surrounding oneself with positive white anti-racist people and symbols; learning about white anti-racist history and identity. ***~confront racial issues as white-based issues~***

**6. Autonomy:** Separating from the values of white supremacy. Being willing to engage in anti-racism efforts in solidarity with people of color and other white anti-racist allies. ***~reject/harness racial privilege, continuously seek knowledge~***

# RACISM IS WHITE SUPREMACY

## Racism (aka white supremacy):

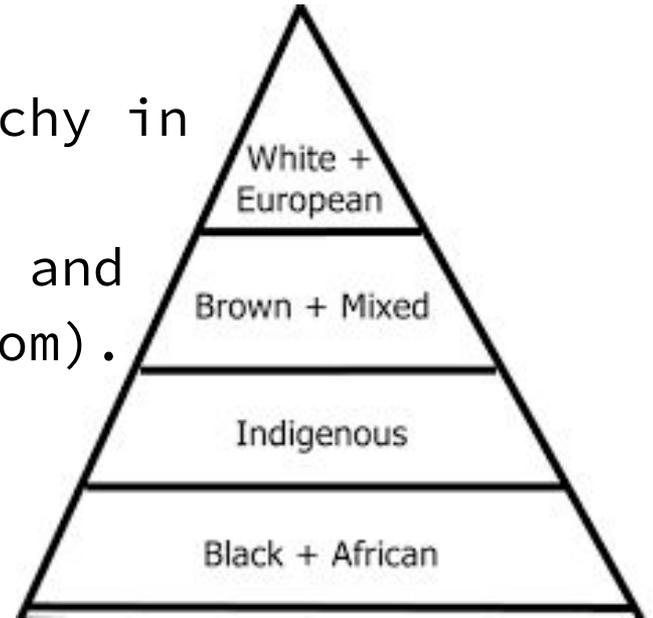
the pervasive, deep-rooted, and longstanding exploitation, control and violence directed at people of color, Native Americans, and immigrants of color, and the benefits and privileges that accrue to white people, particularly to a white male-dominated ruling class.



- Prejudice, ignorance, and stereotypes are the result of **racism**, *not* the cause.
- It is our responsibility to unlearn the lies and misinformation, and to replace them with more truthful and complex understandings of the peoples and cultures around us.

# RACE IS NOT 'REAL'

- **Race is not scientifically or biologically “real”**  
Race was constructed for social and political purposes.
- Race was constructed as a hierarchy in order to reinforce the idea that “white” is superior (at the top) and “Black” is inferior (at the bottom). All other constructed racial categories move up and down depending on what is happening.



# THE 4 I'S OF OPPRESSION



Internal Racism: our internal racist beliefs, including our implicit biases

**INTERNAL**



Interpersonal: acting out our racist beliefs and attitudes on others

**INTERPERSONAL**



Institutional: the racist policies and practices of the institutions and organizations that determine our day to day realities

**INSTITUTIONAL**



Ideological: the racist beliefs and values of our culture, reproduced by the media, schools, and the institutions that determine our day to day realities

**IDEOLOGICAL**

# HISTORY OF RACE & RACISM (IN NORTH AMERICA)

- **<1640's:** Europeans, Native Americans and Africans often worked and lived together in shared circumstances of servitude. They also resisted and rebelled together against the way they were treated.
- **1640:** “white” first appeared in colonial law

*The landowning elite constructed race and racism as a tool of control, persuading poor and working class European immigrants to give up their language and customs, assimilate into whiteness, and ignore their economic and social common ground with peoples brought from Africa into slavery and Indigenous peoples being forced off their land.*

# HISTORY OF RACE & RACISM (CONT'D)

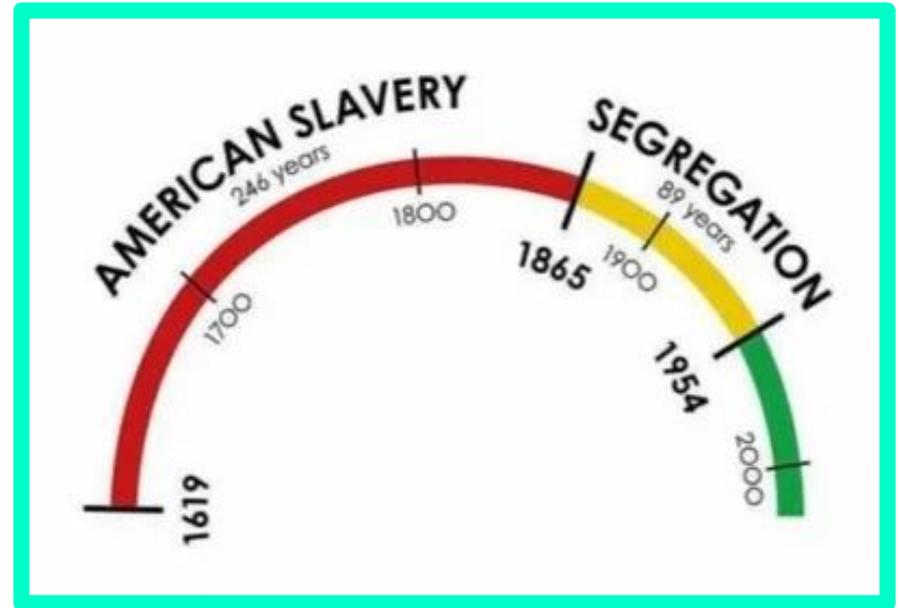
- **1790:** Naturalization Act of 1790; Congress ruled that Citizenship was restricted to “free whites persons”
- **1857:** *Dred Scott v. Sanford*; Supreme Court ruled that Scott was a slave with no rights to sue in federal courts and blacks could not be citizens

The ‘whiteness’ requirement to become a naturalized U.S. citizen was not explicitly removed until 1952.

*“There are two clauses in the Constitution which point directly and specifically to the negro race as a separate class of persons, and show clearly that they were not regarded as a portion of the people or citizens of the Government then formed.” - Chief Justice Roger Taney*

# HISTORY OF RACE & RACISM (CONT'D)

- **1877–1960's:** 90 years of Jim (and Jane) Crow laws
- Chinese Exclusion Act (1882)
- *Plessy v. Ferguson*; (1896)  
“separate but equal”
- Japanese Internment (1942)
- Mexican Bracero Program (1942)

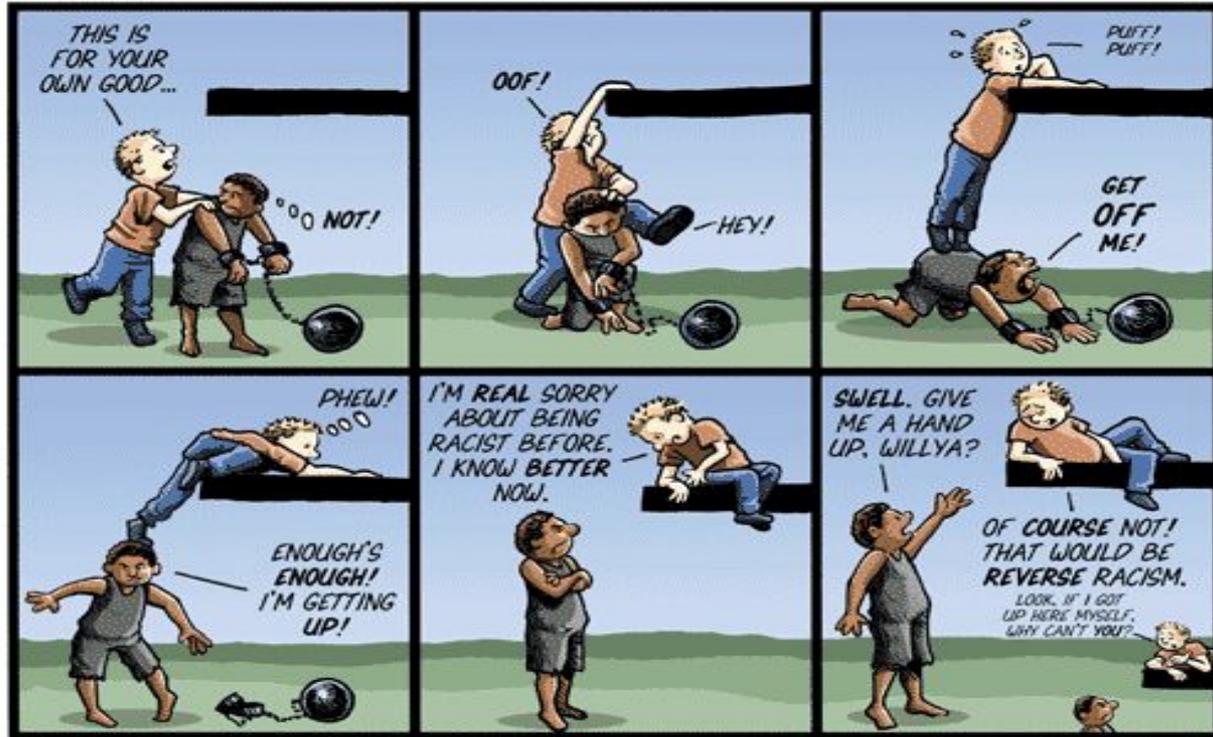


# THE TENUOUS NATURE OF RACE (PROOF THAT IT'S NOT REAL)

- **1922:** *Takao Ozawa v U.S.*: Japanese business man petitions the Supreme Court for naturalization, arguing that his skin is as white, if not whiter than any so-called Caucasian. The Court rules that Ozawa is not “white” as science defines Ozawa as of the Mongolian race.
- **1923:** *U.S. v Bhagat Singh Thind*; Supreme Court recognizes that Indians are “scientifically” classified as Caucasian. BUT, they are not white in popular (white) understanding. Opposite of the logic used in the Ozawa case.

U.S. Supreme Court lawyers attacked Thind’s “meltability” by defining Hinduism as an alien and barbaric system not fit for membership in the “civilization of white men.”

# RACISM AS THE STATUS QUO



*A CONCISE HISTORY OF BLACK-WHITE RELATIONS IN THE U.S.A.*

# SURJ HARTFORD

## Vision Statement:

As we strive to dismantle white supremacy, we mobilize white people to show up to public, political actions for racial justice. We do so as accountable partners in this work, following the lead of local and national activists of color.

# SURJ HARTFORD-ACCOUNTABILITY

SURJ sees accountability to People of Color as a core principle. For SURJ, accountability means that we as individuals and as a group are answerable for our decisions and actions. Accountability is built through collaborative relationships and working together. As White people both benefiting from and pushing against racism and White privilege, we recognize that taking responsibility for our work with other White people and being accountable to People of Color is an ongoing process of learning and acting.

<b>SURJ Hartford is accountable to:</b>	
Moral Monday CT	Black Lives Matter

# SURJ HARTFORD-WORKING GROUPS

- **Education:** raising consciousness; hosting events, panels, seminars, presentations and trainings designed to expand collective understanding about race, racism, and whiteness
- **Direct Action:** working in accountable partnership to organize white people to engage in public, direct action: protest, rally, sit-in, teach-in, door-knocking, etc.
- **Basebuilding:** create a broad coalition of white people committed to multi-racial movements for justice
- **SURJ-Families:** ensuring child friendly anti-racism opportunities

# SURJ HARTFORD

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS!**

Next Meeting: