

# The UnLeading Project

A call to reclaim and redefine leadership

**Visit UnLeading at: <https://www.yorku.ca/edu/unleading/>**

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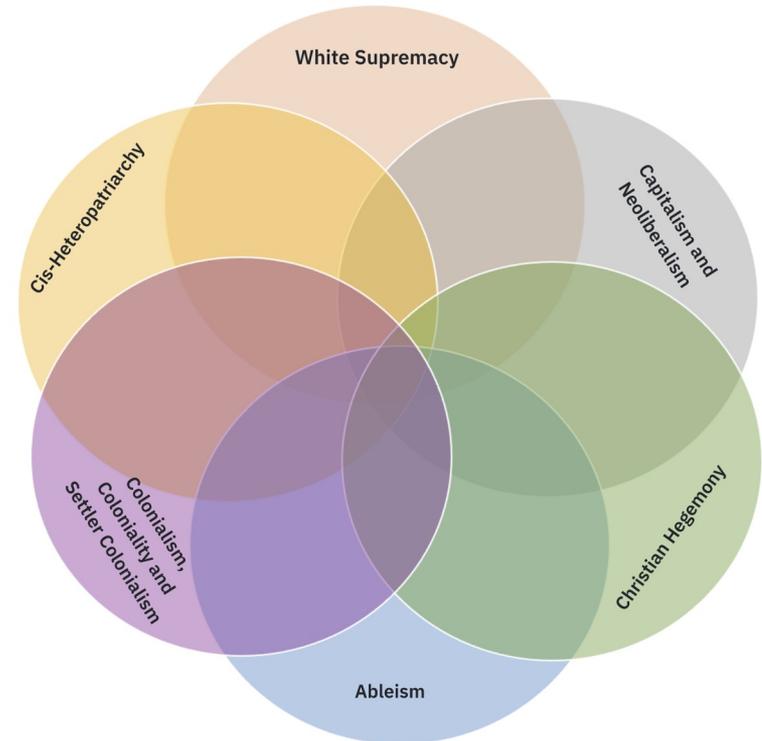
# QUESTIONING...

How might we...

- trouble taken-for-granted assumptions?
- acknowledge and resist traditional leadership discourses that reinforce the status quo?
- center and enact theories and approaches to leadership that have been silenced and marginalized?
- reclaim and imagine future possibilities?

# MAKING STRANGE...

- All systems of oppression are interconnected
- We aim to make strange the constructed logics that allow their persistence
- We aim to expose how dominant ideologies impact leaders





# COLONIALISM

- Molefi Asante (2006) defines colonialism as that which “seeks to impose the will of one people on another and to use the resources of the imposed people for the benefit of the imposer” (p. ix).
- Settling and establishing control over the Indigenous people of an area disconnecting them from the land, their history, their identity and their rights so that others benefit.
- Practice of domination, involving the subjugation of one people to another



# COLONIALITY & COGNITIVE IMPERIALISM

- “Colonizers did not only seize land, but also minds” (Assante. 2006, p. ix)
- Coloniality: Control and management of knowledge by “universals” of Western modernity, Eurocentrism and global capitalism (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018)
- Cognitive imperialism (Battiste, 2011)
- Epistemological nihilation (Wynter, 1989)



# UNDOING COLONIAL MINDSETS

- Objectivity & neutrality
- Knowledge production, the pursuit of knowledge
- “Natural” order
- Progress narratives
- Fragmentation and separation
- Fantasies of innocence, benevolence, purity, self-importance
- Disconnect from mind-body



# ANTI-COLONIAL THEORY

- Coloniality of knowledge production
- Power relations established by dominance and subordination
- Local experience, knowledge systems and voice
- Spirituality and spiritual knowing
- Politics of resistance, accountability and responsibility.
- Seek out and interrogate interlocking systems of power to gain more nuanced understandings of how dominance is reproduced
- Acknowledge the resistance to injustice and survival of Indigenous ways of knowing and being

(Adapted from Dei & Asgharzadeh, 2001; Dei & Simmons, 2012)

# PODCAST TOPICS

## Season 1



Decolonizing &  
Uncolonizing  
Leadership



Community  
Centered  
Leadership



Queering  
Leadership



Culturally Relevant  
and  
Anti-Racist  
Leadership



Critical Spirituality  
in  
Leadership

## Season 2



Leading  
Through  
In/Visibility



Leading  
For  
Climate Justice



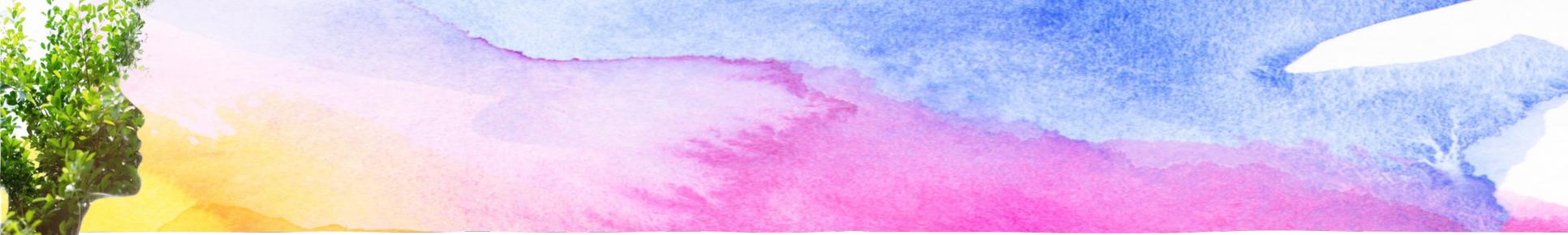
Leading  
Toward  
Disability Justice



Leading  
Through  
Solidarities



Inner Landscapes  
of  
Leadership



“One way or another we are living the stories planted in us early or along the way, or we are also living the stories we planted—knowingly or unknowingly—in ourselves. We live stories that either give our lives meaning or negate it with meaninglessness. If we change the stories we live by, quite possibly we change our lives.”

– Ben Okri, 1997

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