

Which term is best to use for decolonizing work?

PoC
[People of Color]

BAME
[Black, Asian,
& minority
ethnic]

BIPOC
[Black, Brown,
Indigenous, &
People of Color]

BBIMP
[Black, Brown,
Indigenous, &
melanated
people]

Minorities?
Marginalized?
Racialized?

First, we must understand Colonialism

Colonialism depends on framing anything outside the dominant culture as "Other"

Colonialism erases Non-dominant & indigenous identity so that people & cultures are always disappearing

Sometimes, genocide is overtly violent, sometimes it is covertly gradual through cultural appropriation & forced assimilation

Colonization uses capitalism to make entire cultures into products to sell and populations into cheap or free labor



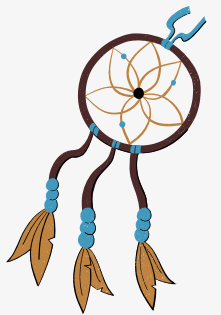
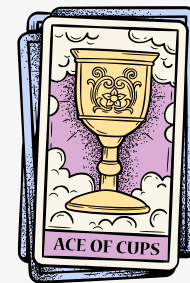
How Colonialism Maintains Power



Arbitrary hierarchies made to further empower the dominant ruling class



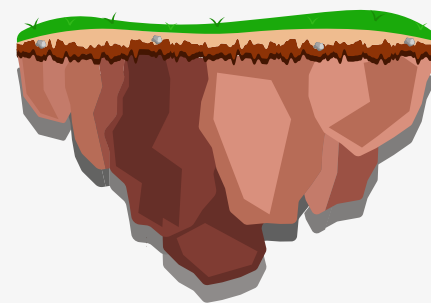
Being in community and practicing native culture is discouraged by portraying it as uncivilized, uneducated, unattractive, or sinful



Culture is erased by commodifying it as products to sell



Identity is defined only in terms of how it differs from the dominant class (Example, how it is not white, Christian, or "professional")



Only a surface-level understanding of non-dominant cultures without the nuanced ways multiple factors and intersections impact individuals

Using broad groupings can perpetuate colonialism

Whiteness
is not a genetic trait.
It is a social construct.
Like gender, it can only
be described in context
of social identity.

By framing
discussions on physical
attributes, we
oversimplify complex,
multi-dimensional
identities to only a
snapshot of lived
experience.

To undo the
harms of colonialism,
we take care to not
mirror it. This means not
erasing or reducing down
complex intersections
to superficial
groups.



Choosing the right language:

Thoughtful

questions to ask yourself:

What specific cultures, ethnicities, & racial groups does this address?

Am I excluding or erasing anyone?

Am I adding to nuance or detracting from it?

Does this benefit every group I'm including?

@NeuroClastic



Am I recreating the

Melting pot

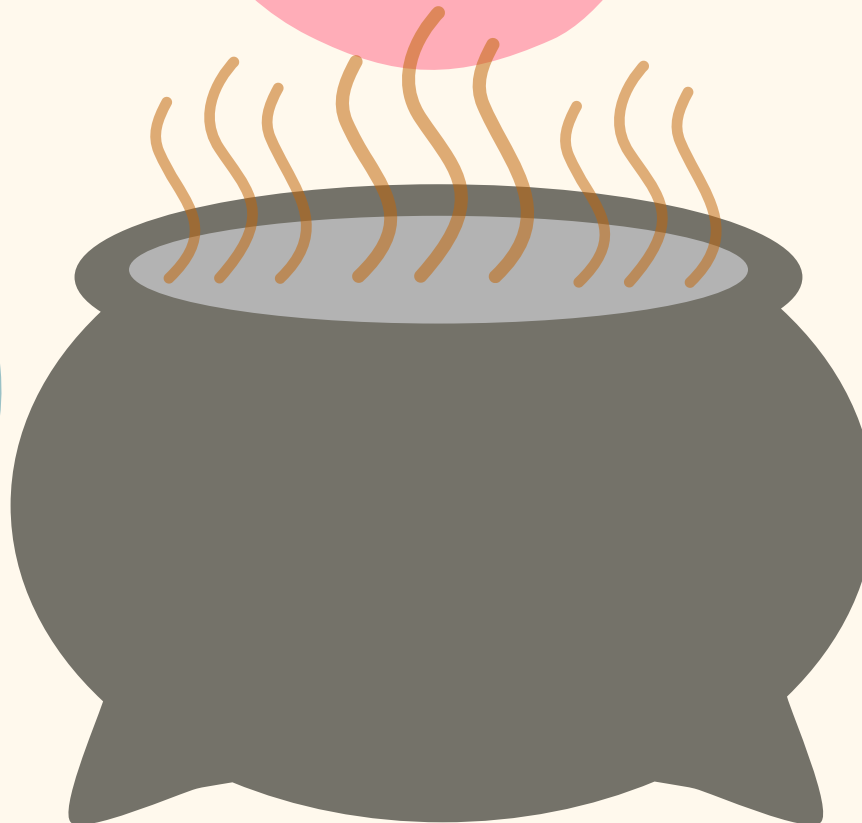
of forced assimilation?

Did I lump
thousands of
cultures together as
if they are all the
same?

Do all included
groups have
similar
experiences?

Do I
have the
authority to
speak from
experience?

Have I
honored the
depth of issues
I am covering?



Am I
reducing most
people in the
world to
"not white"?

Decolonize your Advocacy

Spend time
in community
with people
represented by
your advocacy

Illustrate the
unique ways
specific populations
experience your
context

Go specific:
Help potential
accomplices to
understand the
nuance

Make sure
groups are not
defined only by
the oppression
they experience



The wide net of COLONIALISM



Colonialism depends on dehumanizing and erasing all cultures and identities



And establishing a monoculture or "default" culture as the ruling class



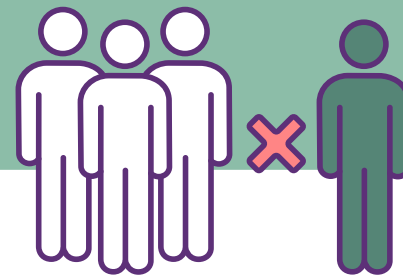
Indigenous and nomadic cultural traditions become products for sale



Hierarchies form in the monoculture, rewarding assimilation



Oppression of non-dominant identities increases the wealth of the dominant class



Systems are built around maintaining the hierarchy of the monoculture

The form of oppression is a reaction specific to how identity relates to the ruling class

Racism is far more complex than colorism.

Value is determined by willingness & ability to maintain the status quo

Reducing colonialism to only colorism does not bring accountability to the complex, layered ways oppression impacts people.

Oppression is a response to non-dominant identity

Everything is oversimplified to "default" or "other"

Colonialism is maintained by false binaries & erasure of identity.



Decolonize your language

by refusing to perpetuate colonialism

Specific language,
Specific impact

Avoid erasure by refusing to oversimplify complex issues regarding oppression.

Restore
Identity & Sovereignty

With intentionality, use language that maintains the identity and authority of people, embraces their autonomy, and defines them outside of their relationship to the dominant class.

Stop Policing

Trying to force others to assimilate to your language is you establishing a dominant place in a hierarchy you imposed.

Bring Depth
of Knowledge

Do not turn social justice into clickbait that is easily digested but does not honor the nuance needed to see beyond "others."

Avoid Virtue
Signaling

If you do not deeply understand an issue or have not experienced it, do not commodify justice by mass producing content. Social capital is still capitalism.

Center Cultures, Not Oppression

Do not erase a culture's identity by defining people by the oppression they experience.

Deeply Know Yourself

Until you deeply know yourself outside of your value as a producer under capitalism, you will only have an identity as "default" or "other." Colonialism thrives on erasure. To decolonize, you must deeply know who you are outside of imposed social hierarchies.