



Center for the Healing of Racism

Internalize Oneness

DECEMBER 2023



P.O. Box 27327 Houston, Texas 77227-7327
Phone: (713) 520-8226
Email: cfhr1@juno.com
Website: info@centerhealingracism.org

Poems and Art of the Center

Innocence Solution

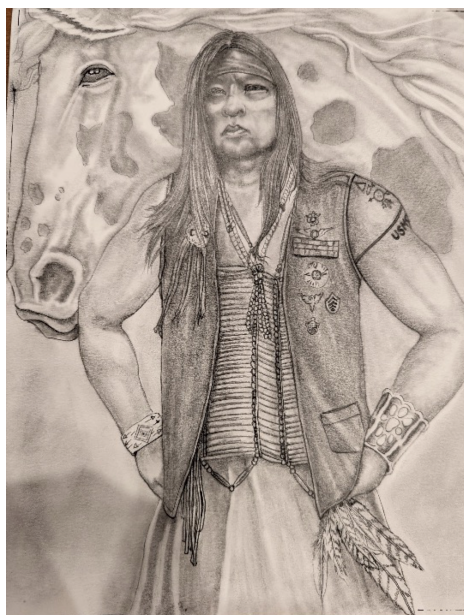
By Harold Rud

If I was six years old
I know what I would do
I'd stop the playground fighting
I'd share my cookies too.
I wouldn't lie or steal
I'd respect both big and small
I'd tell the truth about what I know
And listen to them all.
I'd remember there is one rule
The sun comes up the same
I'd dance and sing fa la
Knowing living is not a game.
Why lie, shoot, steal and fight
Working the money earning lever
Bearing witness to what is false
Knowing, I will not live forever.
To just sing music all day long
Words strangers to my ears
The melody tells what I need to know
It's the rhythm of the years.
And when I look out into space
Then back to earth I sail
Knowing that little blue dot is home
And justice will prevail.

Human Belonging

By Mo Cortez who participated
in Dialogue: Racism in 2022

Human speech has a harmony & melody
Our voice carries a multitude of frequencies
What we hear are oh's & oh's
Words flow through the medulla oblongata
The message is we crave for a sense of
belonging



"21st Century Navajo Warrior"

— By Marcus Ramirez, a
Mescalero Apache in Houston

Justice 2.0 - Justice and interconnectedness —Quotation

"If you have come to help me
you are wasting your time.
But if you recognize that your
liberation and mine are bound
up together, we can walk
together." — Lilla Watson

"Justice grows out of
recognition of ourselves in
each other and that my liberty
depends on you being free
too." — Barack Obama

Justice 2.0 - Justice and interconnectedness —Quotations

"Fearlessness may be a gift but perhaps
more precious is the courage acquired
through endeavour, courage that comes
from cultivating the habit of refusing to
let fear dictate one's actions, courage
that could be described as 'grace under
pressure'—grace which is renewed
repeatedly in the face of harsh,
unremitting pressure."
— Aung San Suu Kyi

"It is not our differences that divide us.
It is our inability to recognize, accept,
and celebrate those differences."
— Audre Lorde

"Injustice anywhere is a threat to
justice everywhere. ... Whatever
affects one directly, affects all
indirectly." — Martin Luther King Jr.

"If you have come to help me you are
wasting your time. But if you
recognize that your liberation and mine
are bound up together, we can walk
together." — Lilla Watson

- *How can interconnectedness be cultivated with those whose values and beliefs around racial justice differ from yours?*
- *What type of effect would it have on your life and in the greater community?*

<http://racedreality.com/2023/07/18/justice-2-0-justice-and-interconnectedness/>

Newsletter Team:

Editor

Robert C. Newberry

Copy editors

Tricia McFarlin - Rod Evans

Jackie Newberry

Production

Newberry Communications

Printing and Circulation Volunteer Staff

Contributors:

Members of the Center
for the Healing of Racism

Executive Director:

Cherry Steinwender

Visit the Center for the Healing of
Racism **FACEBOOK** page for
updates on events, pertinent articles
and resources.

<https://www.centerhealingracism.org/>

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Message from the Executive Director

As we near the end of 2023, I want to reflect on the Center's challenges and successes. In spite of some very daunting challenges, the Center has continued to work diligently to fulfill the three guiding principles expressed in our mission statement: **Educating, Healing and Empowering**. Fulfilling that task has not always been easy.

Legislation, such as **Texas House Bill 3979**, passed in 2021, has presented major difficulties for our work in public schools. The bill has changed public school curricula in Texas by prohibiting teachers from including what some perceive as "controversial topics" that focus on the United States' history of racism and its subjugation of people of color.

I have included below some of the chief components of the legislation to facilitate understanding of how the bill impacts the Center's work with students and teachers in public institutions. Ordinarily, these educators could turn to the Center for resources, programs and personnel to help them learn about and respond to issues related to race and racism.

Texas House Bill 3979 has three sections. Section 1 amends subsections (h-1), (h-2), and (h-3) of Section 28.002 of the Texas Education Code (TEC).[4]* (*NOTE: *The numbers in brackets [] refer to page numbers in the original document.*)

The bill introduces into public school curricula founding documents such as the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States, *The Federalist Papers*, and Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*. But the bill also discourages teachers and administrators from discussing "controversial issues of public policy or social affairs." [5]

Secondly, **Texas House Bill 3979** states that if teachers do choose to



Cherry Steinwender

discuss hot-button topics, they must be entirely impartial in doing so. The ordinance waives the requirement for teachers to undergo any training pertaining to racism and sex stereotyping in the classroom.[6]

Most notably, this bill declares that teachers should avoid teaching the following concepts: (1) one race or sex is inherently superior to the other; (2) an individual is inherently racist, sexist or oppressive because of their own race or sex; (3) an individual should be treated unfairly because of their race or sex; (4) members of certain groups should not disrespect individuals on the basis of race, sex, or religion; (5) an individual's morality is based on their race or sex; (6) an individual bears responsibility for actions committed in the past by people of the same race or sex; (7) an individual should be ashamed or guilty because of their race or sex; (8) meritocracy is racist or sexist.[6]

It is important to note that the Center's workshops and programs for students do not include—and never have—items 1-8 as delineated in **Texas House Bill 3979**.

2023 Workshops

In addition to the workshops shown

in the flyers in the previous edition of this publication, the Center participated in the following:

- The Center provided a booth for Jobs4Gators Employer Registration at the University of Houston-Downtown.

- It participated in the Graduate College of Social Work Open House at University of Houston-Main Campus.

- As part of the "Human Library" at Lone Star College-North Harris County, Cherry Steinwender was featured as a "living book" titled *After the Loving* (with reference to the Supreme Court's 1968 decision on interracial marriage).

- The Center hosted its workshop, "Did They Just Say That?!" for the Social Justice Committee of Westbury United Methodist Church.

- **Rosita Waden** and **Christine Harrison** facilitated a two-day Dialogue: Racism workshop.

Thank You for the Recognition

My role as executive director for the Center continues to garner personal recognition for me but I am well aware that the Center's staff and resources have made it possible for me to be singled out. I received the following awards and certificates in 2023:

- State of Texas: Certificate of Recognition for "your contributions to your community."

- 18th Congressional District: Certificate of Congressional Recognition for "your commitment to uplifting and celebrating your community reflects the spirit of excellence and pride of the United States of America. Indeed, your efforts are most deserving of the respect, admiration and commendation of the United States Congress."

- Carolyn Evans-Shabazz, City Council Member District D: Certificate

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Grateful to see American Indian genocide exhibit

I am grateful to the Center and the American Indian Genocide Museum for the exhibit and dialogue on November 9, 2023.

The exhibit is deeply impactful, demonstrating the intentional nature of the extermination of Native Americans by using quotes from several U.S. presidents and others in positions of power.

The curators, Cheryl and Steve Melendez, were available all day, providing rich times of community connection with folks who came to see the exhibit.

The event and the dialogue brought together people who are currently connecting with their indigenous identity, elders who hadn't seen each other in a long time, native youth who were hearing these personal stories for the first time and people of other backgrounds wanting to learn and connect.

This is why I keep coming back to the Center.

—Laura Gallier

Vision Statement

Our vision is to build One America in the 21st century by connecting people through education and dialogue in a diverse world.

Core Beliefs

The human race is essentially one and racism is a learned behavior that can be unlearned.

Message From the Executive Director

Continued from Page 2

of Appreciation in recognition of “your many years of Life, Love and Leadership.”

· Rodney Ellis, Commissioner of Precinct One: “To Cherry Steinwender in celebration and honorable recognition of your active work with the Sugar Valley, Bluebridge and Reedwoods Neighborhood Civic Clubs.

· State of Texas House of Representatives: Certificate of Recognition “in heartfelt recognition of your dedication and tireless work to uplift the Greater Sugar Valley, Bluebridge and Reedwoods communities. Your steadfast commitment to promoting neighborhood unity and advancing progress serves as an invaluable inspiration to others.”

· Houston Community College, Certificate of Recognition “on the occasion of being honored at the Greater Sugar Valley, Reedwoods, Bluebridge Civic Club’s 2023 Fall Gala for years of dedicated service.”

· City of Houston: Certificate of Appreciation to “recognize and celebrate her immense contributions in the Greater Houston area and express their deepest gratitude for her relentless pursuit of a better world, and commend her dedication, resilience and unwavering spirit.”

· Mayor Sylvester Turner, representing the city of Houston, “commends and appreciates Cherry Steinwender, a woman who cultivates greatness, in recognition of your service through the Center for the Healing of Racism ...

for your dedication to helping the people in our community through your non-profit organization.”

I WOULD LIKE to end my message with excerpts from **Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg’s** 2009 speech, “The Value of Diversity,” delivered to graduates at Paris-based Sciences Po. In that speech, **Justice Ginsberg** observed that:

“... equal justice under law only has meaning if it applies to every single (individual). As you leave here and proceed along life’s paths, try to leave tracks. Use the education you have received to help repair tears in your communities. Take part in efforts to move those communities, your nation, and our world closer to the conditions needed to ensure the health and well-being of your generation and generations following your own.

Earlier in the speech, she reminded her audience that:

“We will all profit from a more diverse, inclusive society, understanding, accommodating, even celebrating our differences, while pulling together for the common good.”

As 2023 ends, on behalf of the Center with love and appreciation, I wish you JOY, LOVE, HOPE, MERRIMENT, and HAPPINESS during the holidays and throughout the coming year!

Mission Statement

Our Mission is to facilitate the healing of racism through education and dialogue in a safe and supportive environment, in order to empower individuals and transform communities.

The Center for the Healing of Racism — Healing Arts Circles

By Helen Spaw, MPS

In the Healing Art Circles, sponsored by The Center for the Healing of Racism, we are given the safe space and format to express our feelings about current events and racial suffering through our art.

Participants express themselves through spoken word, poems and visual art using a variety of mediums, such as drawing, music or dance. No art experience is necessary, and participants can use any supplies that are available,

including just pen and paper. Creating and witnessing this creative expression in this supportive community is powerful and healing.

We began the Healing Art Circles in person in 2019 at the Center. In 2020, we moved them online and found we could reach participants internationally. We currently hold these Circles online on the second Thursday of each month from 10 - 11:30 a.m. (CST). Around 30 people register per Circle, and approximately 10 participants join each Circle.

We have returning and new

participants in each Circle. To date, we have welcomed about 200 new participants into the program. Anyone interested in trying the Circle are invited to register online at centerhealingracism.org.

I believe the Circles are transformative and healing, which is also the feedback I have received from other participants. Through programs and events such as the Healing Art Circles, we are given the opportunity to process, heal and return to the world with peace to share.

Feedback to the Center

Cherry, I just wanted to let you know that although it has been a lot of years, you made an impact on me and my career. I was just in my first clinical position at City House and had the opportunity to meet you. However, thankful I am that I met you. You made such an impact on me during your training with the staff and in our interactions. Thank you. Thank you for making the world a better place day by day. I wish you were closer because I would have you

come talk to the girls I am working with here at Roots Renewal Ranch. You would make a difference in their lives! Are you still doing speaking/presentations?

—Libby Dorn

The Graduate College of Social Work would like to thank you for joining our open house last Friday! Our students had a great time meeting you, learning about your resources, and

getting giveaways and handouts. This year, we had our largest incoming class ever and I'm glad that so many of them are more aware about our campus and the communities that surround us. We hope to see you at future events!

—Kennedy Henderson,
MSW ([she/her](#))

*Academic Advisor III & Student
Engagement Coordinator
Graduate College of Social Work*



Being Luminary

Reimagining DEI for a New Era of Ethical Leadership - 2023 Virtual Summit

Hosted in Denmark — CEO Angie Browne <hello@beingluminary.co.uk

A 30-minute interview with Center CEO Cherry Steinwender was shown at the Summit. The summit was for ambitious, thoughtful leaders and CEOs who want to put theory into practice and build ethical organizations where everyone belongs and feels safe.

The Search for the Beloved Community

Remembering David Atwood

Dave Atwood was a long-time supporter of the Center for the Healing of Racism. Due to his work and commitment to social justice, he was awarded the Center's 1997 Annual Juneteenth Ally Award.

Atwood served as a "living book" in the Human Library program hosted by the Center. As a living book, he told of his life-long search for the "Beloved Community" as described by the King Center in Atlanta, Ga.

The King Center describes the Beloved Community as "a global vision in which all people can share in the wealth of the earth. In the Beloved Community, poverty, hunger and homelessness will not be tolerated. Racism and all forms of discrimination, bigotry and prejudice will be replaced by an all-inclusive spirit of sisterhood and brotherhood. International disputes will be resolved by peaceful conflict resolution and reconciliation between adversaries. Instead of power, love and trust will triumph over fear and hatred.



Peggy and Dave Atwood worked tirelessly for social justice

Peace with justice will prevail over war and military conflict."

Atwood's search brought him to Houston's 4th Ward, to Texas Death Row and to involvement in campaigns for economic justice with a group of Houston janitors. He offered sage advice for anyone wanting to join him in search of the Beloved Community.

Getting people to think more deeply

about the death penalty was the goal of Atwood's 2008 book, *Detour to Death Row*, in which he recounted his interactions with inmates, their circumstances, and the relationships he developed with them, their families, and the families of their victims. Atwood met people in some very high places, but he never forgot those who assisted his efforts.

Remembering Laurence "Larry" Payne

"I am very committed to servant leadership. We are put on this earth for one reason – to serve our fellow human beings to help them succeed."

- The words of Laurence Payne

Larry Payne, a leader in so many ways in the Houston community, died the morning of November 26 after a long illness. He was a uniter who worked tirelessly for racial and social justice and bringing faith, justice, educational, and human rights communities together.

For a number of years, he hosted a program on KPFT Pacifica radio,

educating audiences about the inequities in our society. Larry had a very close relationship with the Center for the Healing of Racism from its inception. He interviewed Cherry about the Center's work on his programs. On a number of occasions, he served as emcee at the Center's Annual Ally Award luncheon, including the last one in June of this year. He often praised the work of the Center. He was kind and generous and received the admiration of all who knew him and worked with him. He received numerous awards for recognition of his work and service to the community. Yet he was humble and continued, throughout his

illness, to do the work to which he was so very dedicated. After his passing, there was a city-wide outpouring of love and grief for the loss of Larry.

He was honored by many individuals and organizations for his selflessness and generosity, his commitment to justice, his work helping create opportunities for Black youth to prosper, and for his passion to educate people to the needs in the community. He did the work from the time of his youth, living his strong faith, and his recognition of the oneness of humanity.

Center partners with 3Practice Circles

By Christine Harrison

In pursuit of continuing our mission to educate and empower individuals to make the world better for all people, The Center for the Healing of Racism tried something new this fall.

We entered into a partnership with 3Practice Circles (www.3practices.com), an organization that developed a tool that helps people gain clarity and understanding about their differences. Together, we offered a 13-week pilot series of one-hour conversations centered around various aspects of individual and systemic racism in the U.S. The series was offered twice daily via Zoom on Tuesdays from September through December.

Approximately 35 people participated each week in the series that's designed to be experienced in either a single visit or one session that could be repeat again and again throughout the semester. More than 50 percent of participants attended more than one Circle session and about 25 percent participated in 70 percent of the weeks.

Participants included people from California, Georgia, North Carolina, Illinois, Washington,



WE WORK HARD AND PLAY HARDER

Four of the Center board members got together after the final board meeting of 2023. From left, Kelly Johnson, Elizabeth Miller, Center CEO Cherry Steinwender, Anna Coffey, and Sonya Sneed.

Maryland, Michigan, Texas and Florida, as well as Mexico, Spain and Canada.

Based on feedback from participants and organizers, the Center will determine if the offering will be repeated in the future and developed into a continuing education program. Initial feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, but there were also some growing pains that will

guide the future delivery of this program. If you participated, please send any additional feedback to cfhr1@juno.com.

The Center hopes to develop a team of Circle facilitators (referred to as referees) in this dialogue technique. Contact the Center if you are interested in serving in this capacity.

Cherry Steinwender: Remembering Larry Payne

I first met Larry Payne in the early 1990s as a guest on his radio show at KPFT 90.1. This was the first of many interviews which him to become involved in several programs hosted by the Center. He was so in love with the Center and wanted to let the world know about the work of the Center For Healing

Racism.

On June 19, 2022, at our annual Juneteenth Ally Award luncheon, Larry walked into the room after I had not seen him all year, knowing he was battling Cancer. I walked up to him and said how happy I was that he was there. He said, "as long as I am alive I will be with you at this celebration."

Near the end of the event, Larry looked at me and said these words, "Cherry you know next year is our 30th year of celebrating Juneteenth so we have to go big!" He said he would handle getting a larger space for this to happen and he did. My friend served as emcee at our 30th and that was the last time I saw him. Rest in Peace dear brother!