

This letter was posted to the International Reclaiming #WAF Facebook group on August 23, 2019, and distributed at the International Dandelion Gathering of Reclaiming in September 2019. The assembled members of BIRCH, an administrative body of the Reclaiming community—including several organizers of Mysteries of Samhain—resolved to distribute this document widely at the request of the signatories and a group of Black, Indigenous, People of Color, and Mixed Race witches who presented it at the gathering. Three of the signatories are past or present attendees of Mysteries of Samhain.

BIPOC and Mixed Race Reclaiming Convergence

Statement to Reclaiming on Anti-racist Practices

This is a broad statement and invitation for dialogue, inquiry and growth to the broader Reclaiming community as we approach the 2019 International Dandelion Gathering. It has been developed in active dialogue with Black, Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC) and Mixed Race witches—priestesses, activists, teachers and organizers—who are actively involved in this tradition of witchcraft.

We acknowledge that the Reclaiming community has long been a spiritual home to People of Colour, and many have found their chosen family here. And yet many PoC Witches have also left this tradition because of systemic challenges that remain within it. The gift of a living tradition is that it is constantly changing and growing. It is within this spirit of constant change and growth that we invite a deep dive

into growth and transformation for white-identified people in this community.

We define whiteness as a category of imperialist and capitalist race-hierarchy wielded to divide, dominate, and destroy. We understand that the category of whiteness has shifted through the generations and that it originally referred to pale-skinned British people specifically, especially those British people who were party to the invasion and colonisation of sovereign territories and Aboriginal countries, such as Turtle Island (North America) and Australia. Whiteness then expanded to divide poor pale-skinned people of European descent from both the enslaved people of African descent, and the dispossessed First Nations people. We use whiteness to refer to all those people who are now treated as white, in this continuing colonialism of cultures and spirits, and who therefore grow up with whiteness as default.

The following principles represent a magical boundary, an intention, and a clear line in the sand. These principles are offered in an act of self care, self love, and protection. These principles set guidelines of engagement for conversations about anti-racism and decolonization within this tradition and community.

1. Reclaiming is an ethnically diverse tradition. Using “we” and “our” to refer only to white people in this tradition is an act of erasure

of BIPOC and mixed race individuals. We invite deeper sensitivity to the many “we’s” and ”our’s” used in Reclaiming and also specificity of language (“We as white people in Reclaiming need to address white supremacy and racism and its impact on...”)

2. Whiteness has been the assumed default, the baseline and the standard in this tradition for far too long. It is never acceptable to assume that a fellow witch identifies as white unless they tell you they do. Assuming whiteness is an act of erasure.
3. White fragility is a slippery slope and enacts itself constantly. It does so in big and also subtle ways. It can look like demanding clarification and further information. It can involve the questioning of POC and mixed race witches, projecting upon us, and demanding our emotional labor. This must stop immediately.
4. Do not speak about or for us. We wish to amplify and centralize the power and visibility of People of Colour and have the capacity and will to do so.
5. There are no saviors in this work. We abolish the white savior mentality AND we disrupt the idea that we are here to absolve you or teach you about white supremacy.
6. Being visible, loud and proud as People of Colour is a way we disrupt white supremacy.

7. Liberation is the goal. Though we might enrich your teaching teams, rituals, consensus meetings and projects we are NOT here for your diversity.
8. A culture of inclusion is DIFFERENT from diversity. When you create seats at the table and then expect us to act, talk, worship and relate to story as white people then diversity becomes harm. We demand an end to this. Our rage, joy, devotion, collaboration, magic and resistance are offerings to you individually and to our Reclaiming tradition as a whole. Do not expect them to look or behave through the lens of whiteness.
9. Whether in the Americas, Australia, or many other areas Reclaiming Tradition is practiced, it is often on the colonized lands of Indigenous peoples. This means not simply acknowledging Indigenous peoples in rituals or classes, but requires a radical reconsideration of what it means to practice the Craft on lands that remain occupied by settler nation-states.

Signed by members of Decolonizing Actions in Reclaiming Communities (DARC)

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