



Western

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The Production of Racial Knowledge in Canadian Immigration Policies: The Case of Brandon Huntley

In 2009, Canada's Immigration and Refugee Board decided that Brandon Huntley, a white South African, had a "well-founded fear of persecution on the ground of his race" (Humphreys). The IRB went on to state that the South African government had shown an "indifference or inability or unwillingness...to protect white South Africans from persecution by African South Africans" (Humphreys). In agreement with these claims, the IRB granted Brandon Huntley protection in Canada, a decision that was recently overturned resulting from a second appraisal by the IRB. This paper embeds Brandon Huntley's telling of events in structures of racial dominance. My analysis is located in critical race theory and in its use of storytelling to illuminate how racial dominance is organized in everyday practices. Rather than being anecdotal, storytelling informed by critical race theory attends to the counter-narratives of marginalized groups as a pedagogical tool for social change (Razack). This paper offers a counter-narrative to the story told by Huntley by addressing the following three questions: how is whiteness re-invented as oppressed" in Huntley's version of events to tell a story of victimization? How is such re-invention an act of privilege? And what are the tensions between struggles for African liberation, and white feelings of victimization? These questions will be discussed at the site of immigration and through a broader look at relevant 'progressive policies' that have drawn backlash from dominant groups.

References:

Humphreys, A. (12 October 2011) 'Refugee in 'Racist' Case Fights Back. *National Post*.
<http://news.nationalpost.com/2011/10/12/refugee-in-%E2%80%98racist%E2%80%99-case-fights-back/>

Razack, S. (1998). *Looking White People in the Eye: Gender, Race and Culture in Courtrooms and Classrooms*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.



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***Please join us beforehand for refreshments at
3:30pm in SSC 5230, All Welcome!
For More Info email: Merassis@uwo.ca***