

# The Contemporary Challenge of Adventist Whiteness

BY GREGORY L. HOENES

## Diversity Worth Celebrating

The 2021 Pacific Union Conference (PUC) constituency session was historic.<sup>1</sup> For the first time in the union’s history, gender diversity was realized as Elder Sandra Roberts, DMin, the first woman conference president in denominational history, was voted in as an executive officer. The women now newly represented make up a majority of Pacific Union Conference Adventist membership and attendance, suggesting an even broader interest in representational and embodied diversity.

Likewise, ethnic diversity is not just a reflection of constituent demographics in the Pacific Union, it is a much-touted *value*. This has been demonstrated through the years in the selection of officers and coordinators (Asian Pacific, African American,<sup>2</sup> and Hispanic) with ethnicity in mind. The extant coordinator positions—Asian Pacific, African American, and Hispanic ministries—were voted into vice-presidencies. No new positions of specialization were formed.

Discussion on the floor of the constituency session about the motion to recast “coordinators” as “VPs” yielded to an unanticipated conversation about nomenclature and a telling movement away from the use of “African American” in favor of the use of “Black.” The latter change of ethnic linguistic identifier doesn’t deny the African American experience, while still being inclusive of people of African, Afro-Caribbean, or

Afro-Latino identity.<sup>3</sup> The change reflects a nuanced sense of ethnic inclusion, though it’s not clear if the newly adopted language will be adequate in light of the ongoing socio-political significance of skin tone. “Colorism” wasn’t reflected in the discourse, neither in the Bylaws pre-session, nor in the session itself.<sup>4</sup> The complexity of nomenclature for identities that encompass two or more ethnicities didn’t arise either.

Whatever the challenges of inclusion might be within Black identities and whatever the future of the use of the use of “Black” as an identifier might be, one appreciates that there’s been some serious reflection within the Adventist community on what these identifying terms mean. There’s been movement on how to organize the conference in response to the specific identifiable ethnic needs represented within. It was marvelous to behold. Unfortunately, such reflection and movement aren’t obvious with White American identity or nomenclature within the Church.<sup>5</sup>

## The Challenge of “Whiteness” as Nomenclature

The first challenge is in identifying nomenclature to use in light of the strains of racism particularly virulent and endemic in White America, both historic and present-day. Whiteness is not just a racialized construct, it’s a cultural one: an American identity that represents a contextualized melding of European peoples with all attending virtues and values represented in each European linguistic/cultural group, which is also deeply

hegemonic, militaristic, violent, imperialistic, colonizing, extractive, exploitive, and capitalistic. Whiteness encompasses White Supremacy culture.

The use of “Anglo” is rejected for its connections to the nineteenth-century project of racial construction. Staff writer Adam Serwer of *The Atlantic* notes, “‘Anglo-Saxon’ is what you say when ‘Whites Only’ is too inclusive.”<sup>6</sup> That’s pretty damning. Reginald Horsman provides an outstanding background and history on this truth. He writes: “The term ‘Anglo-Saxon’ has a long history of misuse. Bluntly, there was never a specific Anglo-Saxon people in England. . . . When in the nineteenth century the English began writing ‘Anglo-Saxon’ in a racial sense, they . . . used it to describe English speaking peoples throughout the British Isles and the world.”<sup>7</sup> In short, Anglo-Saxons never existed.

The identifier “Caucasian” isn’t actually much better. Even the Census Bureau seems to have lately abandoned the term. It, too, was a product of the new racial scientism of the very late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The term was coined by John Friedrich Blumenbach in 1795, based on notions of biological race.<sup>8</sup> The identifier has geographical connections, yes, but it’s primarily tied to hierarchies of racial beauty exemplified in the exotification of the White female slave that came out of what is now Georgia and Chechnya, serving the harems of Turkey and the Ottoman and Russian empires.<sup>9</sup> It’s a classification based upon Germanic ideals of beauty, separating “white people into better and lesser breeds.”<sup>10</sup>

The use of “White” is objectionable to some who prefer “American of European descent,” a term less tainted. True, “Whiteness” as a construct misses the distinctions in varied European languages, religions, institutions, politics, values, foods, and aesthetics. I’m not suggesting the remnants of these are altogether gone in White American culture. To borrow from Indigenous wisdom, the cultural “cup” from which I drink my life is broken.<sup>11</sup> Even so, it’s not without virtues and graces.

While alternative nomenclature is more affirming of European virtues, it importantly lacks recognition of the ways in which White Americans are a melded blend of dominantly European ancestry and cultures in a specific historic and social context that “Whiteness” more faithfully names. As White culture

is tantamount to White Supremacy Culture (WSM), White Americans (and Adventists) face a real challenge in terms of identifiers. For purposes here, “White American” will have to suffice. Problematic as it is, it’s the least objectionable, most honest, and demonstrably representative term available.

### **Southern California Conference: Whiteness in Diversity**

The Southern California Conference of Seventh-day Adventists (SCC) also values diversity. It recognizes the same ethnic divisions that the Pacific Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists (PUC) does, through a mixed system of regional governance incorporating cultural and linguistic groups, while designating geographical boundaries for two of the five regions.

The African American Region has abandoned ethnicity-specific titling and is known as the “Greater Los Angeles Region” or GLAR.<sup>12</sup> The primary language is English. The focus is on culture, particularly related to the African American experience and worship culture. The pastorate is all Black and primarily African American. Few White persons or representatives of other ethnic minorities attend worship regularly.

The Asian-Pacific Region, also territorially ubiquitous, focuses on both languages and cultures. The most complex of SCC’s regions, languages spoken include Tagalog, Cebuano, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin, Indonesian, and more. Ethnicity is important as it is related to linguistic and cultural needs within homogeneous subgroups. For example, few non-Koreans speak Korean and choose to worship in Korean-language/culture contexts. Korean pastors are inevitably selected to pastor Korean churches. There’s not much internal diversity within these subgroups.

The Hispanic Region linguistically works primarily with Spanish-language churches, although there are Brazilian (hence Portuguese-speaking) groups. Second- and third-generation Hispanic ministries also use English. Culturally diverse (Dominican culture is quite different from Mexican, etc.), pastors in this region speak Spanish and English (often as a second language) and are overwhelmingly Latino. This region too is territorially ubiquitous.

In 1996, when this system of governance was

adopted in SCC, the remaining two regions were ethnically designated “Anglo/Other Regions,” divided between east and west, though they now primarily operate as multi-ethnic, territorial fields. What was the “East Anglo/Other Region” is now the “Los Angeles Metropolitan Region” (LAM). I serve as director of the west territory, the “West Anglo/Other Region,” now known simply as the “West Region” (WR). Both originally “Anglo/Other” regions are presently the most diverse in the ethnic and gender makeup of our pastoral teams, church staffing, and membership, while primarily using the English language and American-culture-based modes of communication, organization, and worship.

The West Region (SCC) has rejected and abandoned the “Anglo/Other” designation it was born with for myriad reasons, despite its marker as a missional objective.<sup>13</sup> “Anglo” isn’t representative, and “Other” connotes an outgroup, “otherized” in ways that never allow for full inclusion. We continue to struggle to find appropriate nomenclature and a mission that includes White people for a now very diverse territory and membership.

### **The Challenge of the Mission to “Whiteness”**

Imagine planting or declaring an extant church for “Whites only.” Absurd, right? We would all recoil at the inappropriateness and insensitivity of such a racist project! A present-day White church that actively discriminated against non-White persons, or allowed for ethnic membership/participation only on a quota basis, would be immediately repudiated and universally condemned in church and society. The SCC region system referenced above works well in representation for ethnic persons and groups. It doesn’t work for White constituents. This is because, in practice, no region/conference can operate in today’s diverse political and social climates with an explicit mission to White persons.

To complicate things, Adventism in the Pacific Union has tacitly fostered a minority culture of reverse “take over” tactics over the last forty years or so. Pastor Manual Avitia, a twenty-three-year veteran of the West Region’s Oxnard All Nations Church, remembers a time when he served under Hispanic coordinators who actively encouraged Hispanic members to transfer to weak “White” churches to ultimately facilitate takeover

by Hispanic ministries. Such has been the story in multiple conferences. When these venue transfers happen, as White people leave a neighborhood and/or age out, no money changes hands. Those White members who leave one neighborhood simply have to start over by reinvesting in another locale.

A very current SCC example: though Pasadena Church sits in a now multi-ethnic city, what had been a historically White church was turned over to the Asian-Pacific Region, despite the fact that city demographics show the resident White population at 51% as of 2019, and Asian at just 17.2 %. It’s now a Filipino church with a Black pastor, unlikely to culturally draw White or other ethnic worshippers. Certainly, the demographics and the makeup of neighborhoods change and shift, necessitating a rethinking of the ministry and target market of a particular building, or location. The problem is, it’s not clear where White Adventist worshippers go when displaced, or there’s not a church close by that they feel comfortable in.

This, then, is the dilemma: White Americans, though class conscious, as well as politically and socio-economically divided, do have remnants of shared culture and a common language.<sup>14</sup> Unlike their ethnic Filipino, Tongan, Latinx, and particularly Black American counterparts, there’s no moral or cultural space for ethnic or cultural exclusivity. This deserved and historically based handicap makes the idea of “White” ministries initially sound ridiculous, a furthering of privilege. It’s one of the more obvious reasons a new position for the “Vice-President for White Ministries” hasn’t been established anywhere.

Such is the unintended consequence of ethnic-White national numerical superiority; histories of colonial domination; military and economic complicity with empire; ongoing exploitation of indigenous peoples and lands both foreign and domestic; and more than a century of setting agendas and dictating denominational structure, culture, doctrinal frames, and naming the terms of belonging. It’s ultimately the price of endemic racism, displays of which are the unwitting end of cultural vitality and viability.

Even so, White people have disappeared and are disappearing from Southern California Conference at a remarkable rate. The demographics of the Pacific Union

and its territories tell a story of White population decline, an emergent minority status. White people are now the second-largest demographic in Los Angeles County.<sup>15</sup> With the recent exodus of Californians to the Northwest, Arizona, and Texas, particularly since COVID-19, this is increasingly so. The Pacific Union Conference website features pie charts that graphically demonstrate PUC diversity as reflected in census data for each major metropolitan area.<sup>16</sup> As of 2014, Bakersfield, Fresno, Los Angeles, and Stockton/Lodi were all classified as dominantly Hispanic. Thousand Oaks was divided between “Caucasians” and Hispanics, and Honolulu and San Jose were dominantly classified as Asian.<sup>17</sup>

Adventists are *diverse*. In 2015, The Pew Research Center recognized Seventh-day Adventists as the *most* racially diverse religious group in the United States.<sup>18</sup> While the number of represented linguistic, culture, and gender groups may or may not have increased in the last seven years, the percentage of “minority” (non-White) persons definitely has.

A cursory look at the student body of almost any SCC school illustrates the reality, though the underlying story is very complex. Reasons why White children are a minority include 1) movement out of SCC territory and California in general; 2) lack of affordability for poor/middle-class Whites in the absence of scholarships;<sup>19</sup> 3) a middle-class preference for classical academies and other Christian schools that have momentum/critical mass evidenced in waiting lists, strong academics, and sports programs; 4) wealthy White Adventists with their sights on the Ivy League who prefer the elite preparatory schools, and often don’t want to send their children into environments in which they would be a small minority of the student body; 5) trends in homeschooling; and 6) changing views around Sabbath-keeping practices that make quality local public schools highly desirable for their advanced academic options and especially sports programs.

As for churches, all West Region churches are more ethnically diverse than the cities they are situated in or around.<sup>20</sup> That’s worth celebrating! We’re the envy of many dominantly White denominations. Even so, the powers of homophily are strong. While White people seem to value diversity, the net effect is still not equality or integration.<sup>21</sup> Emily Walton asserts that

many White people living in multiethnic neighborhoods are “ambivalent,” interacting “minimally with their nonwhite neighbors, and are often, in fact, uncomfortable with cultural differences. They don’t recognize the role they must play in social change.”<sup>22</sup> Walton observes that “diversity is passive and connotes living alongside, but not with, one another. Integration requires active engagement.”<sup>23</sup> She’s talking about communities, but multiethnic churches fit this dilemma too. Seemingly unimportant acts of hospitality, or even the programming funded and supported in a Board meeting, send important messages about how ethnicity is defined, and power is distributed, in the context of church.

### **The Challenge of Adventism as an American Sect**

Key to understanding present challenges is the fact that Adventism is a uniquely *American* sect. Its founders were of European descent. When questions arose as to Ellen White’s ethnicity, the White Estate did her genealogy twice, and declared her to be “Anglo-Saxon.”<sup>24</sup>

Adventists were also more anxious than most sects or new denominations to enact Israel-like identities. LaRondelle wrote on the subject for *Ministry* in 1981. In answer to the question “Is the church spiritual Israel?” he wrote,

the church of Christ now occupies the place of unbelieving Israel (the lopped-off branches) and is therefore endowed with Israel’s covenant blessings and responsibilities. On the other hand, because God’s original redemptive intentions with Israel are irrevocable, the church is called to arouse natural Israel to envy God’s mercy to the Gentiles.<sup>25</sup>

This softer shading of supersessionism becomes more concrete in the adoption of the Seventh-day Sabbath and the partial acceptance of kosher dietary laws that do set Adventism apart. There are a growing number of scholars who see replacement theology as the root of what would become virulent anti-Semitism, though there’s not universal agreement on this.

Just as importantly, Adventism is completely embedded and complicit in the larger American project. Adventist manifest destiny as the “chosen remnant”

mirrored American manifest destiny as “light bearers to the world.” Westward movement involved war with Mexico and the eradication of indigenous peoples. Adventists were complicit in the American annexation of both continental territories and places as far off as Hawaii and the Philippines. The Church grew with the empire, an empire created to produce wealth, and to expand economic opportunity.<sup>26</sup>

### **The Challenge of Adventist Foreign Missions in a White Racist Frame**

It’s not a surprise, then, that the Adventist mission project conflated the gospel of Jesus Christ with Western culture.<sup>27</sup> Products of culture included the veneration of written text, foods, modes of dress, technologies, medicines, economics, morals and mores, and the spread of the English language. Adventism added layers: ideals about clean living, Sabbath-keeping, modesty in dress and adornment, and more. To become an Adventist was not only a spiritual shift, but a religious change impacting every aspect of living.

Many Americans came to believe in two views of the indigenous person: “noble savage,” as mythologized by Rousseau, and ignoble “savage,” meaning evil or fiendish warrior. Neither were ultimately deemed fit for citizenship or equipped to contribute to a western economy and democracy. Cultural erasure and domestication or decimation were the chosen paths to fulfilling American destiny. Seen from the critical lenses of our times, this explicitly articulated point of view stands as a deep cultural current, shaping implicit assumptions regarding the savage or heathen encountered in mission. In Christ, all would be made new. The light of democracy and capitalism and the light of Christ were conflated as a singular project. In some respects, people were colonized as Adventists, another layer added to Western, and specifically American, expansionism.

Adventist missions succeeded globally starting in Europe in 1874, Australia in 1885, Africa and South America in 1895, and China and the Philippines in 1905. In places like South America and China, this was made possible in part because of existing colonial structures, or resource-extraction points. An interesting story involves Huldreich Graf, the first GC-sent pastor to Brazil

(1895). He was reported to have befriended Henry Ford when they were children. After Ford Motor Company launched, and a rubber plant was established in the Brazilian Amazon, the story goes that Henry sought to locate Huldreich there, though they never did reunite.<sup>28</sup> The fact is that many German immigrants were already settling in Brazil, and the early Adventist work there in both education and ministry was German.<sup>29</sup> European influences were long established.

Michael Scofield’s fascinating study of Adventist missions revealed that British colonists were the ones who granted land to Adventists for the East China Union mission compound in Shanghai.<sup>30</sup> Large, multi-story, Western-style houses were occupied by missionaries of European ancestry. Locals were used as servants. It was many years before ideals of contextualization began to take root and a sort of nativism brought impetus to change out White (often American) administrative leadership for local indigenous leadership. Adventists weren’t early adopters of contextualism.

The power differential is crucial. White missionaries didn’t go out into a world of peoples perceived as equals. The artifacts of a rapidly developing and industrializing culture, as well as advancements in western medicine, were key components to successful penetration of dark territories.<sup>31</sup> Racist America formed a uniquely American denomination, whose story is not divergent from, but rather parallel to, the American story. The mission movement was to faith what the explorations for natural resources were for industry. While the intention for mission was eternal reward, the subaltern status so often assigned to converted indigenous peoples (whether encountered and described as primitive, exotic, savage, or as cannibal; or written off as “quaint but loveable” in patronizing saccharin condescension; or in the segregation that went with mission-compound life and operations) emphasized differences in power relationships that matter.

### **The Challenge of Adventist Whiteness in Postcolonial Context**

For more than a century, through the success of the mission movement, Adventists could experience the joyful anticipation of a second coming based upon a soon-to-be fulfilled “Gospel Commission.” General



Conference sessions were exciting, filled with “natives” in the “costumes” of their homelands. The Western gaze on the exotic was a spectacle, a prize. But as the diversity of immigrants greatly increased when the National Origins Formula was done away with, as Johnson signed the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, so too did the diversity of Adventist churches. Now, rather than an occasional spectacle, those who had been converted as Adventists presented a reflection of Western American culture, an image of Adventist polity and belief that’s close to the original, but not quite right.

Postcolonial theorist Homi Bhabha used the word “mimicry” to describe the phenomenon whereby the adoption of the colonizer’s religious and cultural frames by the colonized presents an image that is close to the colonizer’s, but never exact. The net result is “ambivalence,” a kind of knowing, having been successful in producing in others mimetic representations, and the simultaneous destabilization of the authority of the colonizer over the other. In other words, the presence of the previously missionized subaltern “other” now in Western dress, speaking English, sharing aspects of western culture and Adventist religion, can be disruptive, exposing the shallowness of some standards or beliefs. Additionally, “mimicry” may entail expertise such that the colonized can successfully work the system by which he/she was colonized. Such a person reminds the colonizer both of what they were, and the distance from what was in what presently is constitutive, particularly of faith and practice. What was once forced upon the “other” now presents a kind of imposed religious reversion.

While there was a time when Adventists boasted a universal worship culture and theology (a form of colonizing), the contemporary cultural White American Adventist doesn’t necessarily share the worship styles, textual orientation, religious language, nor likely the same standards, once universally accepted and imposed but now largely outmoded. The rise of non-White persons to the majority in the world field and in urban centers in the United States creates a dissonance that sits just beneath the surface.

### **Whiteness and America’s (Hence Adventism’s) “Culture War”**

America precariously stands divided in myriad and

complex ways: socially, economically, educationally, politically, religiously, and primarily epistemologically. The now rapidly escalating American “culture war” pits the expansion of enlightenment through education (the products of which are both liberalization and secularization) against the deep practices and values of a religious and moral culture that defines middle America. As Zack Stanton noted in a recent article in *Politico*,

What happened in the post-World War II period was a massive expansion of higher education and the knowledge-based economy. And with that came a larger cultural shift: What used to be the province of intellectuals now became the province of anyone who had access to higher education, and higher education became one of the gates through which the move to middle class or upper middle class life was made.<sup>32</sup>

While this speaks of the democratization of knowledge, it also suggests that broadening access to education has shifted culture and increased affluence. The Adventism created by economic opportunity and advancement through education (particularly within medicine and the “Adventist ghettos” created around institutions of higher learning and health care) predate the post-war expansion referenced above but peaked during this same period. Adventist culture shifted along with American culture.

Adventist post-war religious progressivism looked like a movement away from sectarian/cultic identities to mainstream evangelicalism. As has been widely argued, the year of the publication of *Questions on Doctrine* (1957) was a watershed moment for Adventism. To follow the logic of the culture war, “liberalization” (such as it was in the Adventist Church) was represented in opening to religious influences outside scripture and Ellen G. White, and challenges to traditional standards, which arose from emergent consumerism, urbanization, and adoption of epistemologies beyond authority.

One doesn’t have to be *White* to be caught up in this war—Adventism is rife with White culture, playing itself out religiously/theologically in the Adventist context, though historically speaking, “Progressive” and “Historic”

Adventists are rooted in the same social phenomena. Even so, the culture war plays itself out in our churches again and again, with destructive and devastating consequences, particularly for our young people.

The national schism impacts churches, for the way in which the national debate currently happens is mirrored in the church. Hermeneutics are the witting (if silent) culprit. For new generations of would-be critically engaged Adventists, the burden of being progressive within the Adventist Church is profound and can be overwhelming. For example, the fundamentalist need only cite Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13 to resolve the complex question of homosexuality and the Church. Such persons know how the Lord feels and what God thinks on the subject. It's right there in plain English in The Word. Just ask!

A Progressive or "liberal," on the other hand, must move through myriad texts and hermeneutical maneuverings, as well as historical, cultural, literary, linguistic, and ethical analyses, in order to biblically and religiously justify basic inclusivity and acceptance, something secularism and humanism hold as foundational *without* mental gymnastics and religious contortionism. The reward is not commensurate with the work! It's easier to fall into literalism and false certainty, or to walk away. Both of these are what so many young people have done, White young people among them.

The cyclical resurgence of perfectionism (such as seen in Last Generation theology), and the ongoing presence of church standards that are neither biblical nor relevant, create a culture of either legalism or hypocrisy. This is, in part, the culture war at play. Immigration/ethnicity plays a role here.

The ethnic convert will likely have been taught these standards and has no frame of reference for adjudicating variance from these standards, particularly when observing generational White Adventists who have rebelled, or perhaps thoughtfully reframed these standards. The lack of synchronicity between cultures creates tensions that make corporate life a challenge. The tendency when seeking not to offend (Romans 14:21) is to acquiesce to the most "conservative" or restrictive behaviors. Freedom is contextualized by this responsibility but has the unintended effect of making ideological progress nearly impossible.

## **The Challenge of White Representation in Light of Decline**

In terms of representation, the historic reality of a White majority carries forward as a presumption in many geographies where it's not a present reality. The assumption of White executive leadership, as well as White demographic and economic dominance, has led to the foregone conclusion that White Adventists need no specific representation, targeted resources, or specialized ministries.<sup>33</sup> There's representation at "the top." This raises interesting questions, particularly in light of the documentable decline in church attendance and membership of White people across the Pacific Union, particularly in urban and inner-city areas;<sup>34</sup> the disproportionate effect of immigration on these areas; and so-called "White flight."<sup>35</sup>

The future of American Adventism is the present reality of English Adventism. There's still a thriving Adventist presence in England. Many of those who attend are British citizens. Even so, you won't find the Anglo-English there. The Church is now formed out of the historic remnants of the British empire, the colonies.

Presently, in 2021, Whites make up about 26% of the population in Los Angeles County. In 2030, just eight years from now, demographic trends suggest there will still be White people in Los Angeles County, as much as 25% of the total county population. While the West Region has approximately 5,800 members as of this writing, an optimistic estimate of White attendance any given week is only 10% of that, or as many as 580, though probably less. I forecast that in Adventist churches in Los Angeles County in 2030, less than 5% of membership (or at least *attending* membership) will be White. We've explored only some of the reasons this might be. The question is, does it or will it matter? As Love L. Sechrest, Johnny Ramirez-Johnson, and Amos Yong's book title asks, "Can White People Be Saved?"<sup>37</sup>

It's not clear what "White" ministries might look like. Perhaps the primary need is a deep processing of embedded and endemic racism through anti-racist materials and workshops, and participation in anti-racist conferences and social justice efforts, as well as small-group ministries. There's a need to awaken White Adventists to the key role they must play in changing society, particularly in relation to a true embrace of

community in diversity. The secondary need is to identify felt needs and ways to speak to White people that build trust and a readiness to embrace a gospel that's genuinely good news. Outrageous as it may seem, the day may already be upon us when we need a Vice-President for Specialized Ministries for White persons, particularly in urban areas.

## Endnotes

1. Monday, August 16, 2021, Tucson, AZ.
2. I've chosen not to use the hyphen here, though it has been used historically by many Adventist entities in North America. The Associated Press (AP) Stylebook avoids hyphens altogether in identifying Americans ethnically by area, continent, or country of origin.
3. See "The Washington Post Announces Writing Style Changes for Racial and Ethnic Identifiers," *WashPost PR Blog*, July 29, 2020, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/pr/2020/07/29/washington-post-announces-writing-style-changes-racial-ethnic-identifiers/>. The specific term "Afro-Latino" was used as a sub-identifier, specific to those who may wish to make this distinction.
4. See Ellis P. Monk, Jr., "The Unceasing Significance of Colorism: Skin Tone Stratification in the United States," *Dadalus, the Journal of the American Academy of Arts & Science* 150, no. 2 (Spring 2021): 76–90.
5. *WashPost PR Blog*, "Writing Style Changes" says that capitalization is correct when "white" is used to identify a people group.
6. Adam Serwer, "'Anglo-Saxon' Is What You Say When 'Whites Only' Is Too Inclusive," *The Atlantic*, April 20, 2021, <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2021/04/anglo-saxon-what-you-say-when-whites-only-too-inclusive/618646/>.
7. Reginald Horsman, *Race and Manifest Destiny: The Origins of American Racial Anglo-Saxonism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981), 4.
8. Nell Irvin Painter, "Why White People Are Called 'Caucasian?'" in *Collective Degradation: Slavery and the Construction of Race* (Fifth Annual Gilder Lehrman Center International Conference, Yale University, New Haven, CT, 2003), 2, <https://glc.yale.edu/sites/default/files/files/events/race/Painter.pdf>.
9. Painter, "Why White People Are Called 'Caucasian?'" 4–7.
10. Painter, "Why White People Are Called 'Caucasian?'" 9.
11. See Theodora Kroeber's famous 1961 book *Ishi in Two Worlds*, written about the last known surviving member of the Yahi people of Northern California after the massacre of the Native Americans in California. Ishi voices an existential problem, observing that his "cup" is broken. He wonders from what, now, will he drink his life?
12. SCC nomenclature hasn't yet officially caught up with the Pacific Union's use of "Black" in the place of African American.
13. Regrettably, both "Anglo" and "Other" were used though their dubious validities had been noted in academic circles long before the adoption of the regional structure.
14. "White collar" vs. "blue collar," and of course the stratifications along the lines of "lower class," "upper middle-class," and "lower upper-class," etc.
15. See <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/los-angeles-county-ca#demographics>.
16. The chart on the Pacific Union's website is based upon the American Community Survey (ACS) 2014 Census.
17. See <https://adventistfaith.com/about-the-pacific-union/>.
18. Michael Lipka, "The Most and Least Racially Diverse U.S. Religious Groups," Pew Research Center, July 27, 2015, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/07/27/the-most-and-least-racially-diverse-u-s-religious-groups/>.
19. Pacific Union Conference and NAD reversions provide funds back to conferences for scholarships for would-be Black and Hispanic students. These reversion monies are not available to the WR, or White families in general. It's hoped that funding for scholarships for White students will be budgeted for 2022. As it stands, occasional union three-way matching fund requests are generously granted, amounting to a couple thousand dollars for WR families annually.
20. This likely holds for Los Angeles Metro Region (LAM) churches, though a survey would need to be conducted to verify the universality of this claim for the two regions.
21. Andy Olin, "America Is More Diverse Than Ever, But Diversity Doesn't Equal Equality," Rice/Kinder Institute for Urban Research, November 23, 2020, <https://kinder.rice.edu/urbanedge/2020/11/23/america-racial-inequality-diversity-does-not-equal-equality>.

22. Emily Walton, "Dear White People: Moving to a Diverse Neighborhood Isn't Enough," National Public Radio, WBUR in Boston, *Cognoscenti* (blog), June 7, 2019, <https://www.wbur.org/cognoscenti/2019/06/07/boston-inclusion-diverse-neighborhood-emily-walton>.

23. Walton, "Dear White People."

24. See The Ellen G. White Estate, "The Genealogy of Ellen G. White: An Update," Ellen G. White Estate, April 2003, <https://whiteestate.org/legacy/issues-genealogy-html/>.

25. Hans K. LaRondelle, "Is the Church Spiritual Israel?" *Ministry*, September 1981: 19.

26. As Timothy Golden pointed out at the Isaac Backus American Freedoms Lecture at La Sierra University, February 13, 2018, Adventism opposed slavery, only to quit activism and fall into line with the North and South when it came to the era of Jim Crow.

27. This is not unique to Adventists but has been a common issue across missional denominations.

28. Renato Gross and Ivan Gross, "Pieces of Memory: Pioneers of Adventist Education in Brazil," *The Journal of Adventist Education* 80, no. 4 (December 2018): 9.

29. Gross and Gross, "Pieces of Memory," 9–14. This article mentions the Grafts, Steins, Westphals, Stauffers, Ehlers, Hoylers, and Webers: all German surnames.

30. Michael Scofield, "Understanding the 'Golden Age' of Foreign Missionary Activity," (Lecture, Association of Adventist Forums, Glendale City Church, Glendale, CA, January 24, 2020), PowerPoint Slide 94.

31. I've used this term intentionally, as it is the language of conquest, and the language of the times.

32. Zack Stanton, "How the 'Culture War' Could Break Democracy," *Politico*, May 20, 2021, <https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2021/05/20/culture-war-politics-2021-democracy-analysis-489900>.

33. Pacific Union's constituency confirmed a dominantly White team as part of an exchange for gender diversity.

34. And likely elsewhere too. The demographics of small rural churches in the Central Valley has been shifting for decades.

35. William Voegeli, "The Truth About White Flight," *City Journal*, 2020, <https://www.city-journal.org/truth-about-white-flight-from-cities>. Voegeli, a Senior Fellow of The Claremont Institute, complexifies "white flight" in ways that are insightful, balanced, and helpful. It isn't all about racism.

36. See <http://www.laalmanac.com/population/po39.php>.

37. For a far more eloquent and comprehensive treatment of these questions from a non-White point of view, see Love L. Sechrest, Johnny Ramirez-Johnson, and Amos Yong, eds., *Can "White" People Be Saved? Triangulating Race, Theology, and Mission, Missiological Engagements* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2018).



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