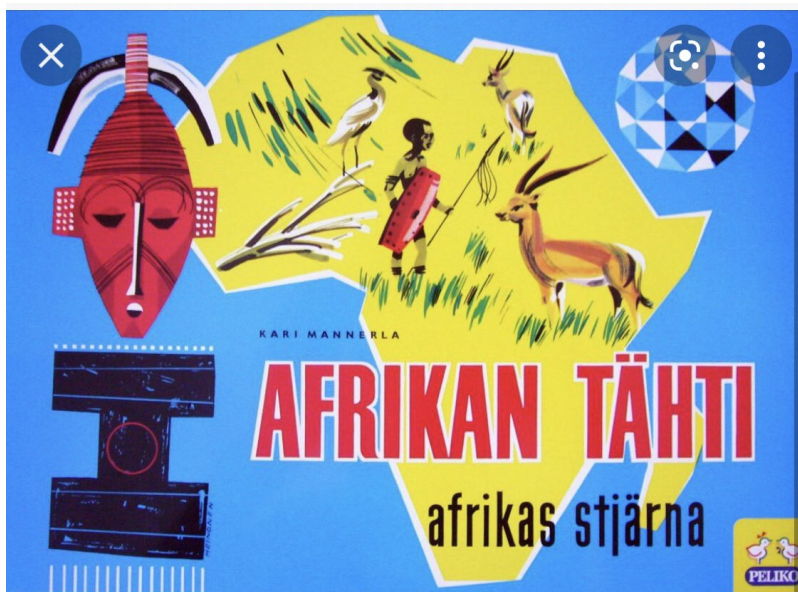




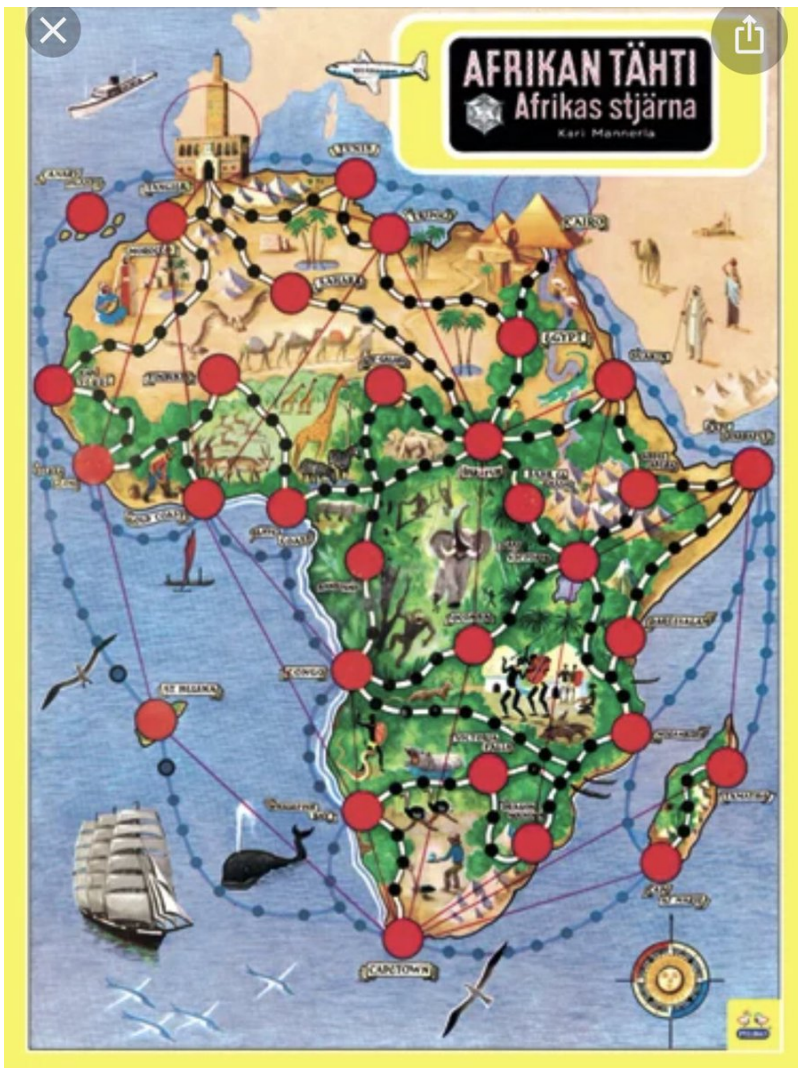
Ndéla Faye @NdelaFaye Wed Mar 16 09:33:37 +0000 2022

Everyday racism in Finland's (world-class?) early childhood education, a thread:

My child came home and told me they play an old board game, the Star of Africa, at daycare. For those who don't know, it's a game from the 50s, and the point is to travel around Africa, mining for gemstones and looking for a big diamond; the Star of Africa <https://t.co/iOCROOw9Gu>



If you get stuck at Slave Coast, you become a slave and have to stay there for 3 rounds. To most people, it's obvious why this game is...problematic & not suitable for daycares or for 4yos — but to a lot of Finns, it's an important part of "cultural heritage", apparently. <https://t.co/6RQNFLLeEh>



When I went to collect my kid from nursery, I asked one of the carers what the deal was with the game. She immediately started to defend the game, calling it “interesting”, “an important part of Finnish cultural heritage”, and “educational”.

I’m really curious to know what kind of education they are drawing from this game, and how this fits into the early years’ curriculum. Apart from games on slavery and colonialism, are they also playing these ‘educational board games’ with 4yos about the Finnish civil war, or WW2?

She then told me it’s very difficult these days because some people get offended by everything. At this point, she referred to a chocolate that, until 2001, had the n-word in its name. She said the n-word, out loud - and in full - in front of me and my child.

She also said that even a liquorice had had to change its logo (see pic) because some people were offended.

<https://t.co/d9gNTfy7RU>



I told her saying the n-word was completely unacceptable. She apologised - and then said: “well what terms are we supposed to use? ‘Dark-skinned’?”

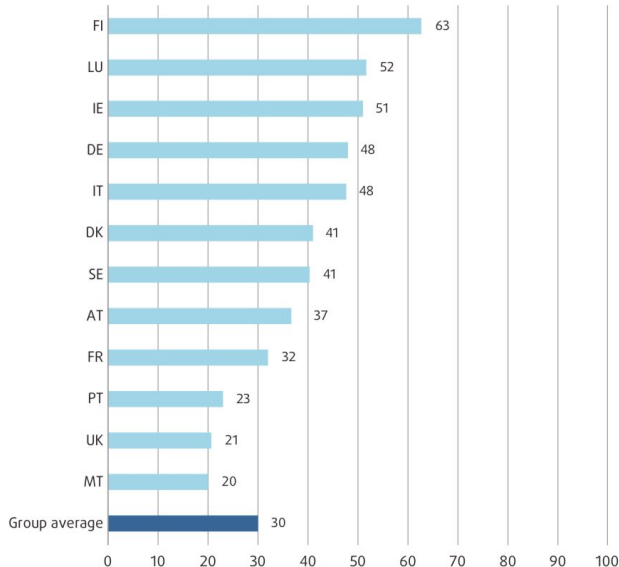


This whole conversation also happened in front of my child. I had hoped to prolong them having to hear the n-word - in any context - for a little longer than this, at least - but it happened and I can't change that now.

But this isn't about what one carer said, or me or my child. It's about what this whole thing says about the level of understanding, and of the antiracism education that the city of Helsinki gives to all nursery teachers and carers, apparently. <https://t.co/XHb5B36Ccs>

It's about the fact that Finland is **#1** when it comes to being racist towards people of African heritage (closely followed by Luxembourg, then Ireland...) <https://t.co/e31MzIK5r7>

Figure 1: Prevalence of perceived racist harassment in 5 years before the survey, by country (%)^{a,b}



Notes: ^a Out of all respondents of African descent (n=5,803); weighted results.

^b Question: “How many times has somebody done this in the past 5 years in [COUNTRY] (or since you have been in [COUNTRY]) [that is, each of the five types of harassment asked about in the survey] because of your ethnic or immigrant background?”

Source: FRA, EU-MIDIS II 2016

It's about the fact that a fifth of under 7-year old children in Finland have experienced racism in daycare.

It's about what is still considered normal and acceptable in Finland. This is about more than ignorance. There is an active resistance to changing outdated and racist ideas and practices.