

Reimagine Education for All: Equity and Targeted Universalism

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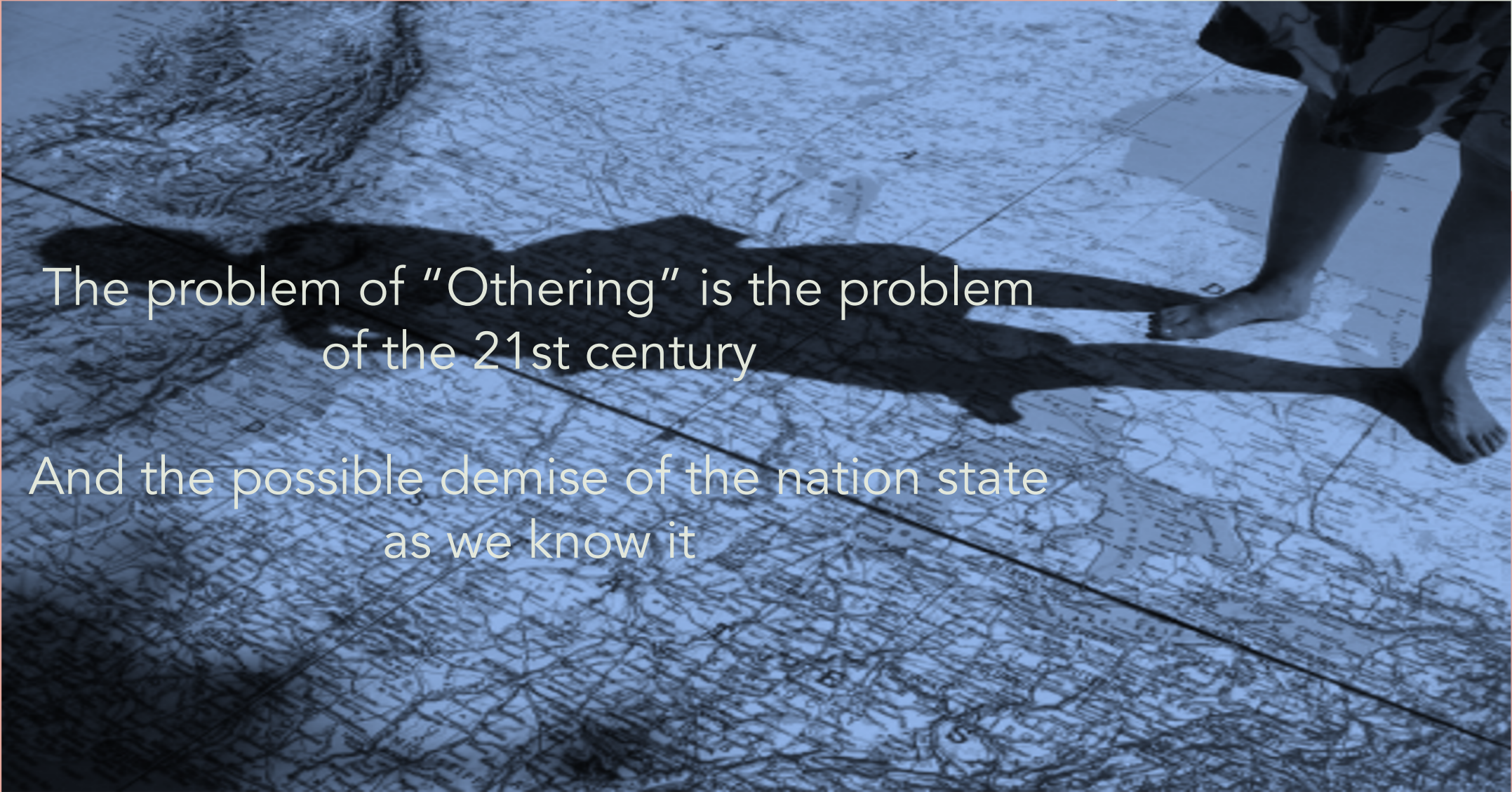
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PRESENTER

john a. powell, Director
Othering & Belonging Institute

AUTHORIAL SUPPORT

Othering & Belonging
Institute

A photograph with a blue tint showing a person's legs and feet standing on a map. A long, dark shadow of the person is cast onto the map, stretching from the right towards the left. The map shows various geographical features like rivers and roads. The person is wearing a patterned skirt or dress.

The problem of "Othering" is the problem
of the 21st century

And the possible demise of the nation state
as we know it

Definitions

Equality – Equality is equal treatment, even if outcomes are unequal.

Equity – Interventions allow different, but fair treatment.

Inclusion – Allowing members of excluded groups to participate in institutions or organizations.

Equitable Inclusion – Allowing members of excluded groups to participate in a fair and equitable manner in institutions.

Belonging - Belonging or being fully human means more than having access. Belonging entails being respected at a basic level that includes the right to both co-create and make demands upon society.

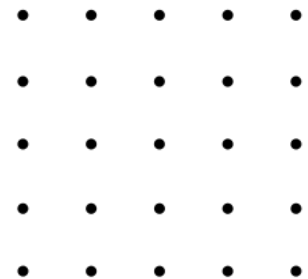
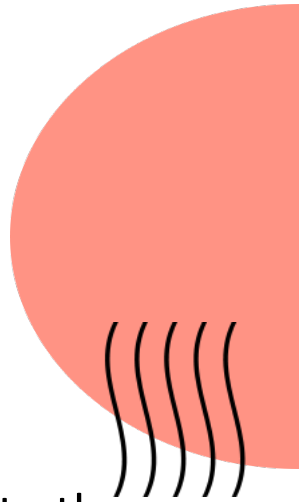
TARGETED UNIVERSALISM

EQUITY

- Focuses on marginalized groups
- Goal is to close disparities between marginalized groups and favored group
- Strategies target marginalized group to move them to the favored norm
- Focus on supporting individuals and fail to transform systems
- Often practiced as scarcity of resources and creates “Breaking” – anger, resentment and complaints of preferential treatment can fracture

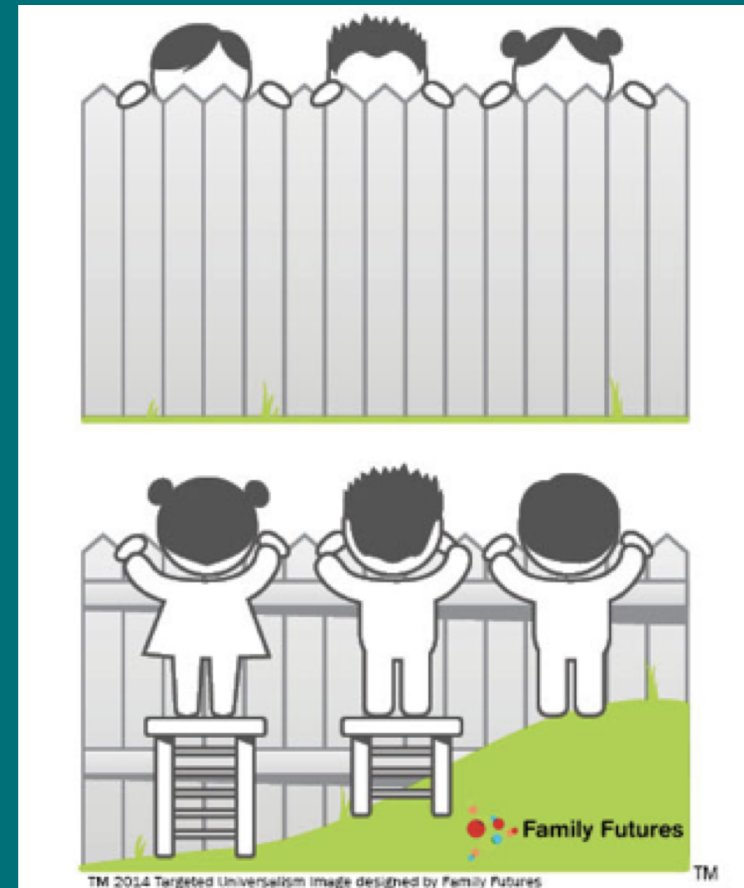
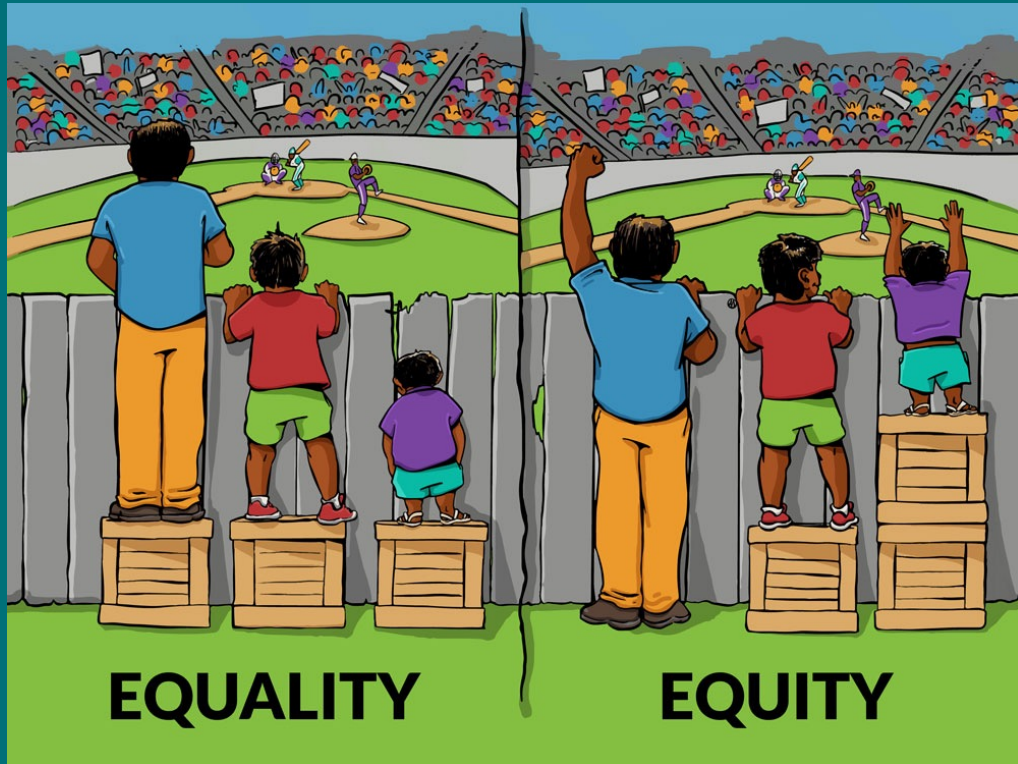
EQUITY 2.0

- Universal goal
- Targeted strategies to move everyone to the universal goal, while acknowledging that people are situated differently
- Considers how structures impact achieving universal goal
- Focus on structures
- Facilitates “Bridging” and Belonging



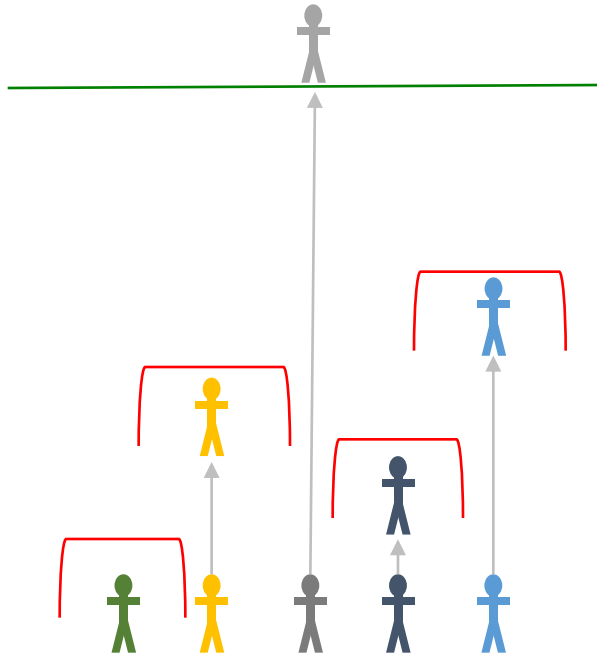
The background of the slide is a close-up photograph of numerous glossy, red spheres arranged in a grid-like pattern, receding into the distance. The spheres are highly reflective, showing bright highlights. In the middle of the arrangement, one sphere is a vibrant blue, making it stand out significantly from the rest of the red ones.

The opposite of Othering is *not* saming but belonging.

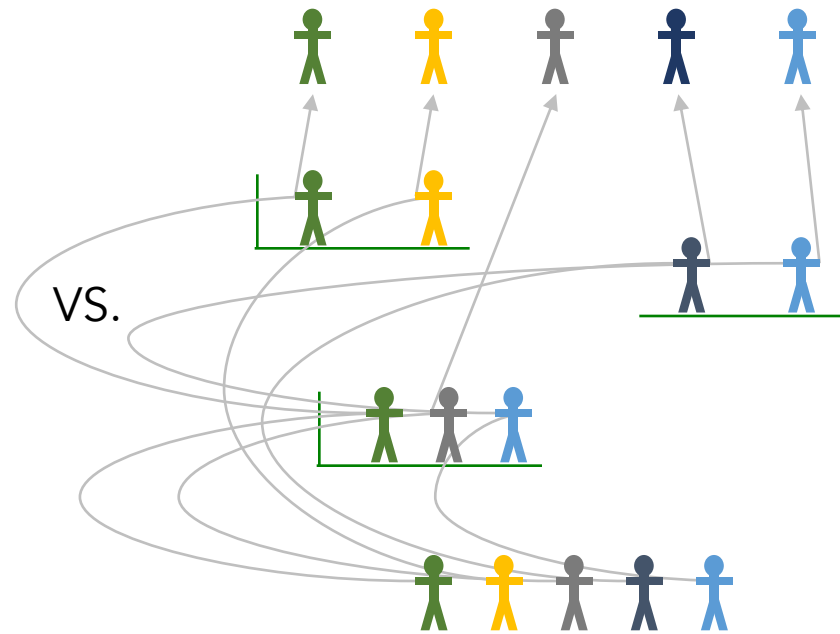


Targeted Universalism

Structural inequity produces consistently different outcomes for different communities



Targeted universalism responds with universal goals and targeted solutions



Targeted universalism in practice.

This strategic framework...

- ❖ Starts with identifying the universal goals for all, yet the current position of whites should not be normalized in the system whereby becoming the universal goal for all. So, set a universal benchmark/goal that is not dependent on the dominant group.

- ❖ Identify specific obstacles in particular geographies that limit certain populations from reaching those goals.

- ❖ Create targeted strategies for each group that are designed to affirmatively promote inclusion/belonging AND remove barriers to inclusion/belonging.

Targeted Universalism Operationalizes Belonging

- Each group's differences must be taken into account
- T/U is designed through careful consideration of positionality and situatedness
- It is inclusive of all regardless of differences, it expands the 'we'
- T/U is a policy and communications strategy
- It avoids breaking and scarcity

Head Start

- Started as a targeted program
- Changed ultimately to look towards outcomes rather than inputs

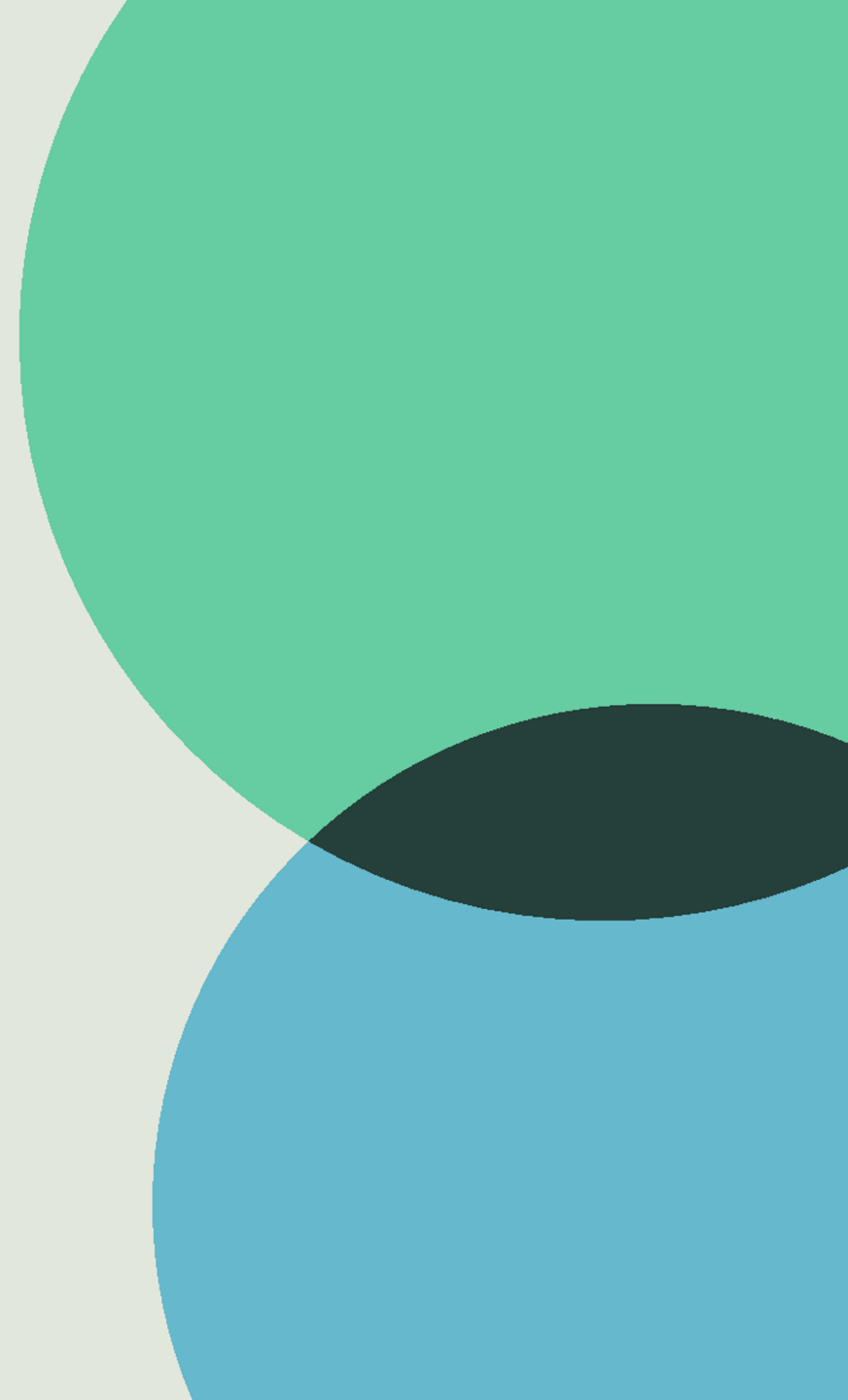


Heart of Belonging:
co-creating & being
seen



Lack of Co Creation and Belonging

- Funding allocation for school system
- Should not be surprised that even something relatively neutral(pandemic) goes through a unequal system it exacerbates inequities





Belonging or being fully human means more than having access. Belonging entails being respected at a basic level that includes the right to both co-create and make demands upon society.

Belonging

Cultivating Belonging Inside the Classroom

1. Shine a light on each student.
2. Foster student identity building
3. Always leave one desk empty.
4. Make sure that each child feels chosen.
5. Weave social and emotional practices throughout the day.



Dunlea, Michael. "Every Student Matters: Cultivating Belonging in the Classroom." Edutopia, George Lucas Educational Foundation, 4 Sept. 2019
www.edutopia.org/article/every-student-matters-cultivating-belonging-classroom.

Narratives of Othering and Belonging



Breaking: When a group turns inwards and explicitly pushes away from other groups who are seen as dangerous or a threat



Bonding: Connecting to people like you in some important way



Bridging: Ties to people who are unlike you in some important way; stories, structure contact

Breaking and Bridging

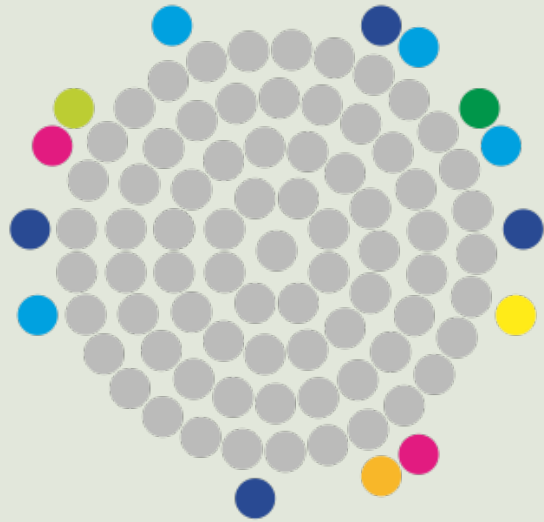
.There are **short bridges** and **long bridges**.

.Some bridges require more effort to build and maintain. Others are a short distance.

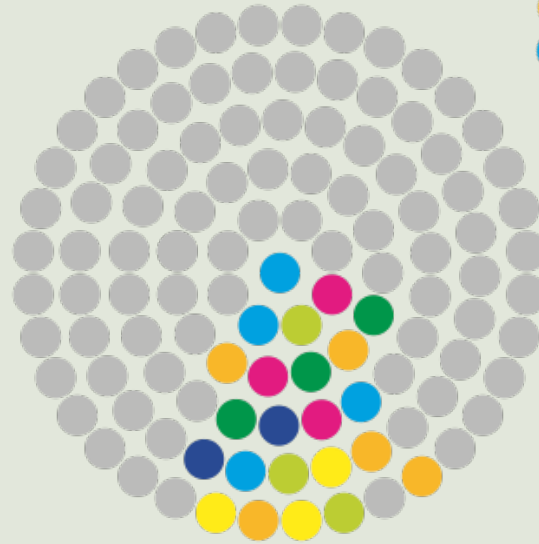


.As bell hooks reminds us, bridges are walked on.

Belonging includes the power to cocreate structures and systems.



Exclusion



Inclusion



Belonging

Bridge — Listen, engage, organize,
empathy

Belongingness Intervention



Vanessa Brewer

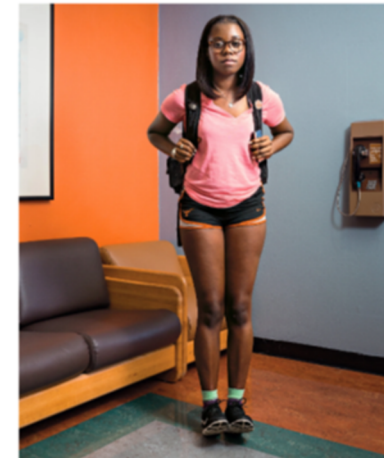
- UT-Austin Intervention - Targeted messages seemed to help individuals overcome doubts about belonging and their academic potential.
- Effects of the Intervention
 - Tripled the percentage of African-American students who earned G.P.A.s in the top quarter of their class, and it cut in half the black-white achievement gap in G.P.A.
 - Significantly decreased the number of health visits by African-American students.

The importance of belonging: how belonging affects performance.

Many studies show that belonging and group identity impacts performance. **There is a direct correlation between students belonging and doubts about their ability to perform well in academic settings.** This doubt creates an incentive to drop out of school, thus continually perpetuating the cycle of “othering” in the nation’s collegiate system.



Who Gets to Graduate?



Vanessa Brewer Bill McCullough for The New York Times

Indices of Othering

Lack of effective voice

Lack of representation

Lack of recognition

Lack of power



People can experience strong othering in one or some of these areas and low or no othering in others. When someone experiences othering on all of these indices, then the othering is more likely durable. High durability also exists when othering happens between the interpersonal, structural, and cultural.

Deep Belonging

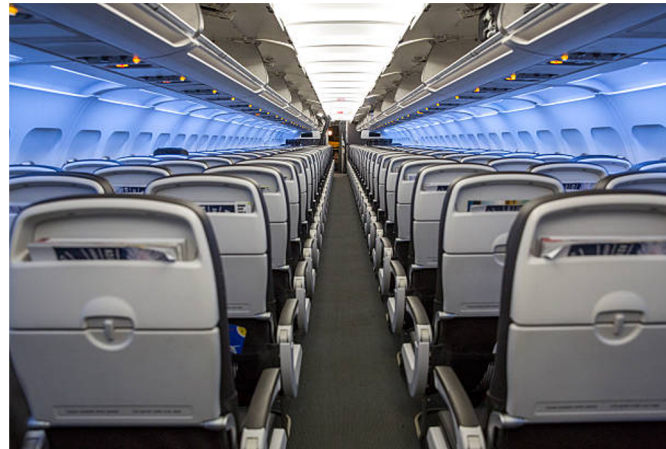
Belonging connotes something fundamental about how groups are structurally positioned within society as well as how they are perceived and regarded. There's an *affective* component.



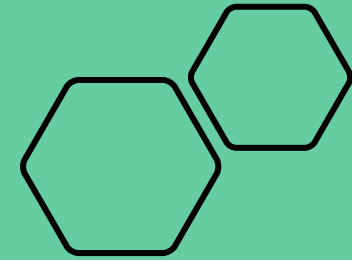
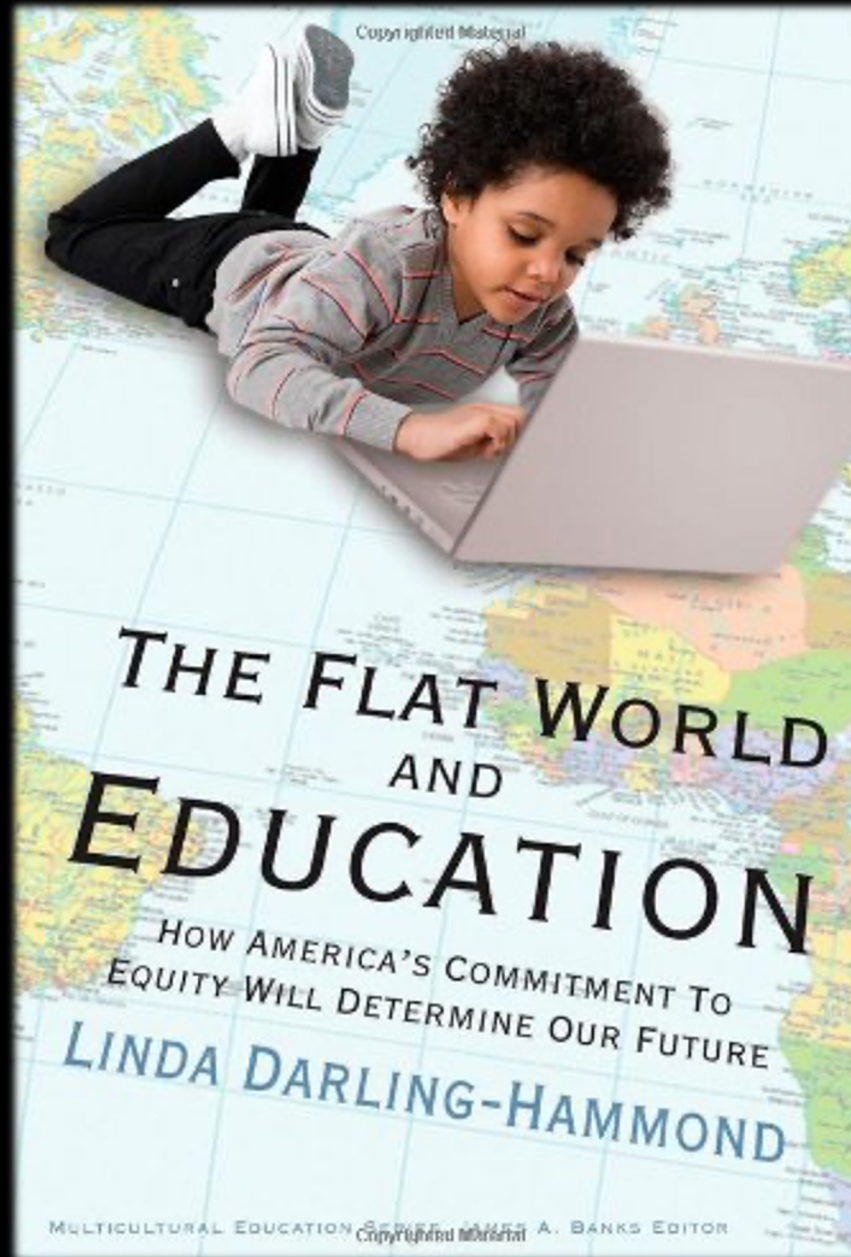
Belonging is more than joining a club – it is about co-creating and co-owning structures to belong.

Structures and symbols matter?

Think about how the design of certain structures are biased. Think about the design of airplanes. How might they be biased?



While most flight attendants and many passengers are female, the luggage bins are designed for tall people with plenty of upper body strength.



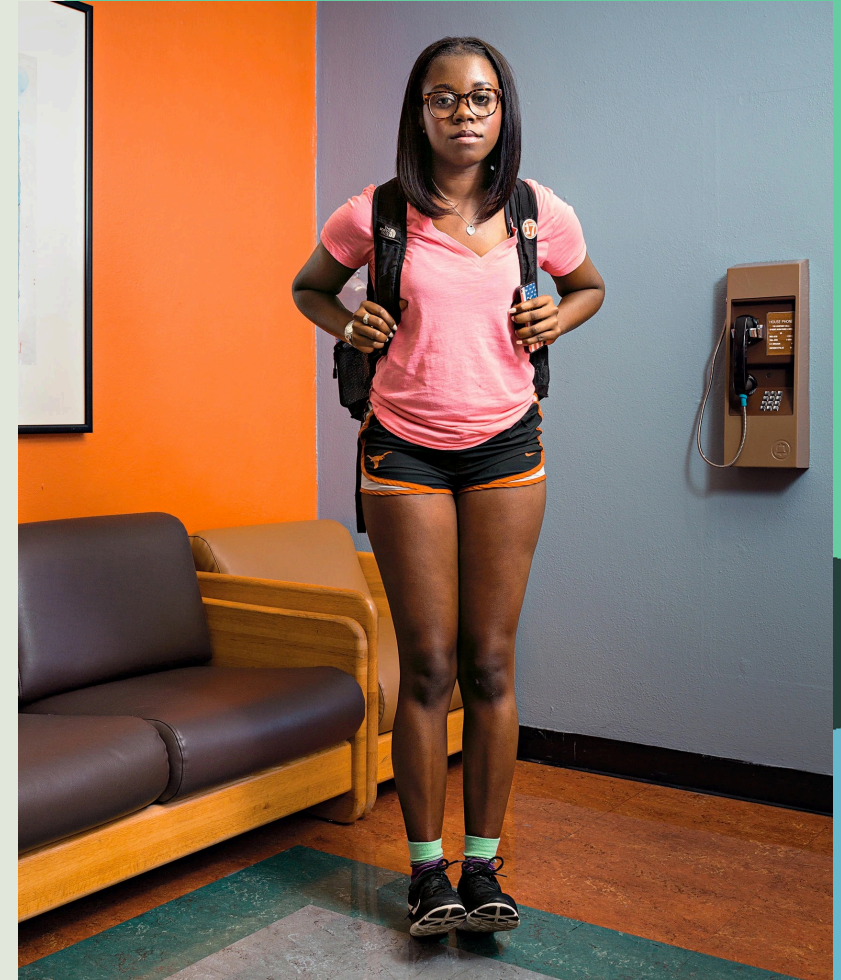


Belonging in Education

Belonging in Education

Vanessa B. at the University of Texas at Austin

- Low-income family
- First generation college student
- Top 7% percent of her high school class
- Failed her first college exam in statistics
- Mother tried to comfort her: “maybe you just weren’t meant to be there.”



Belonging in Education

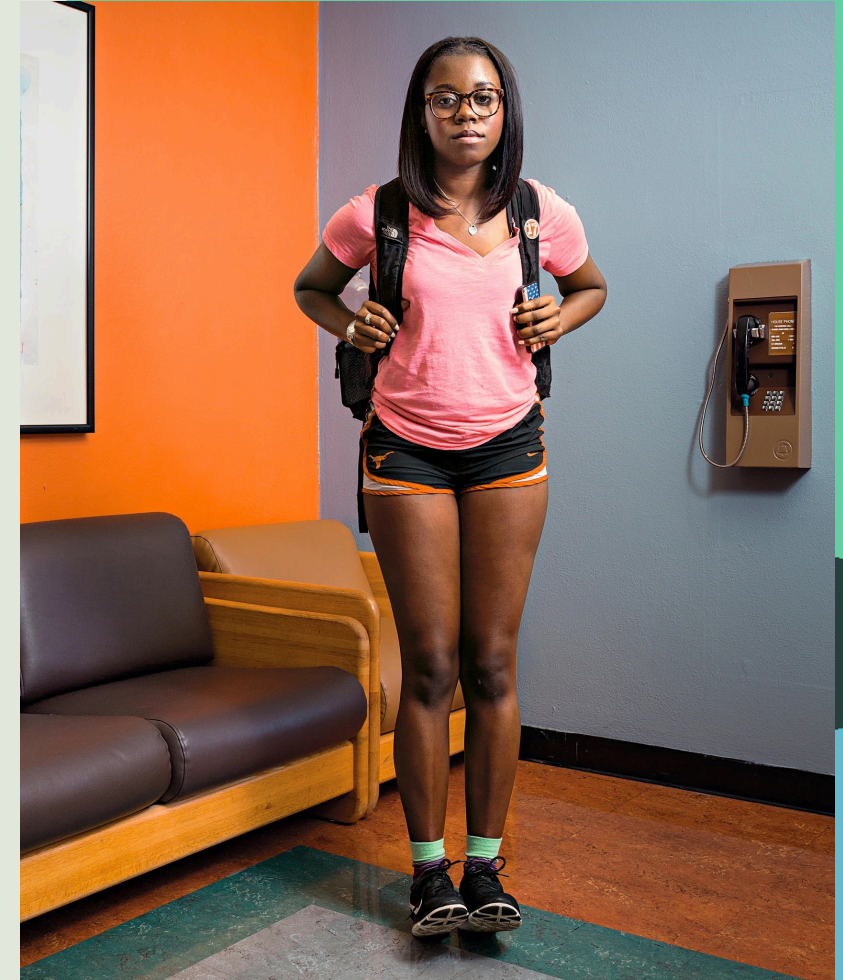
Who Gets to Graduate?

Five months later, Vanessa's parents dropped her off at her dorm in Austin. She was nervous, a little intimidated by the size of the place, but **she was also confident that she was finally where she was meant to be**. People had warned her that U.T. was hard. "But I thought: Oh, I got this far," Vanessa told me. **"I'm smart. I'll be fine."**

When she failed her first exam in statistics "...I just started questioning everything: Am I supposed to be here? Am I good enough?"

UT Austin has put in place programs that promote:

- Growth Mindset
- Sense of belonging



Belonging in Education

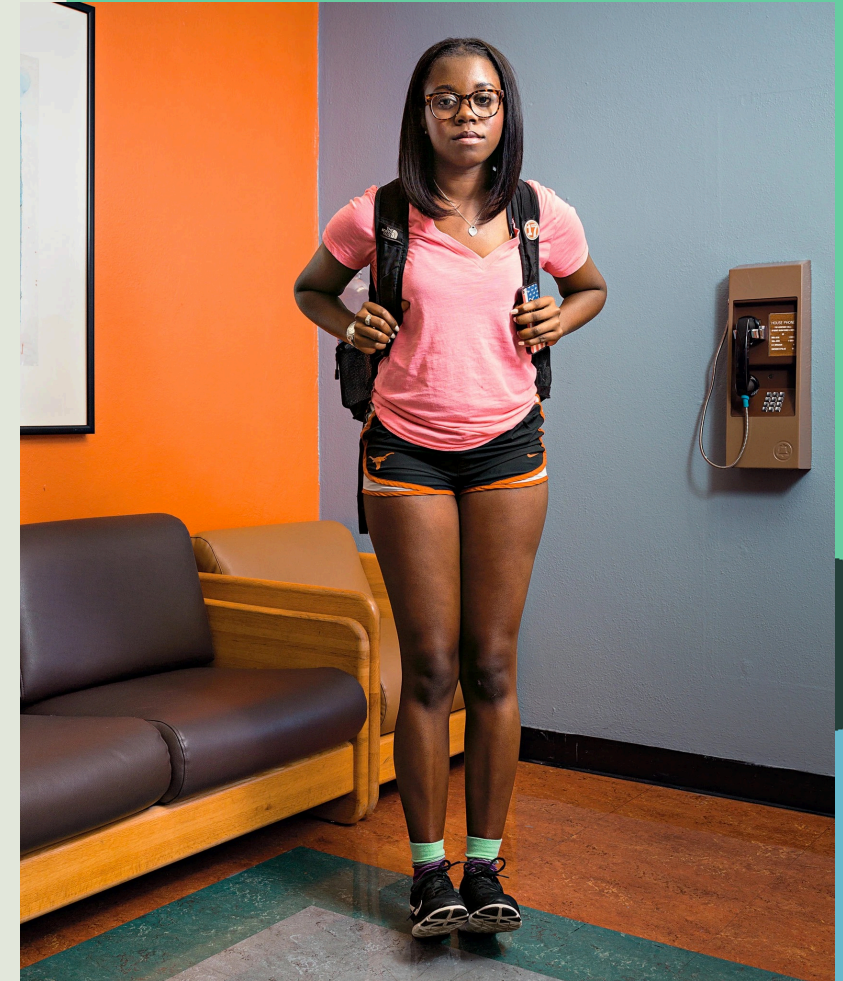
Who Gets to Graduate?

More than 40 percent of American students who start at four-year colleges haven't earned a degree after six years.

About a **quarter of college freshmen born into the bottom half** of the income distribution will manage to collect a bachelor's degree by age 24, while almost **90 percent of freshmen born into families in the top income quartile** will go on to finish their degree.

The school's administrators are addressing head-on the problems faced by students like Vanessa. **If you want to help low-income students succeed, it's not enough to deal with their academic and financial obstacles. You also need to address their doubts and misconceptions and fears.**

Texas Interdisciplinary Plan



3 TU Examples in Schools

Child well-being and Education Applications

- **Duval County and Jacksonville, FL**

- Worked with Jacksonville Children's Commission
- Mapping and analysis for child-well being

- **Montclair School District, NJ**

- Student Assignment Policy

- **Diversity Data Kids Project (<http://diversitydatakids.org/child-opportunity-index>)**

- Child Opportunity Index
- Mapping children well-being in 100 metro areas



Stop Holding Us Back

Example — 2014 New York Times

Article: [Stop Holding Us Back](https://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2014/06/07/stop-holding-us-back/)

Project:
Detailed in NYTimes in
2014
Article titled *Stop Holding
Us Back*

[https://opinionator.blogs.
nytimes.com/2014/06/07/
stop-holding-us-back/](https://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2014/06/07/stop-holding-us-back/)

While America's 80 percent graduation rate is at an all-time high, one-third of the nation's black and Latino young men will not graduate. How can we tackle this problem?

Focus on the 660 schools concentrated in 15 states that largely focus on teaching poor kids of color through programs like *Diplomas Now*

On a national scale...

1. High-poverty schools need to be redesigned with the special problems of their students in mind with a focus on freshman year
2. Early warning systems need to be instituted so that educators can step in at the first sign a student is in trouble
3. Employ additional adults to support students who need daily nurturing to succeed, especially during key transitional sixth and ninth grades
4. Need the larger community (local businesses and faith-based organizations) to mentor students by showing them how to set goals, apply to college, etc.

Universal Pre-K



Example — Universal Pre-Kindergarten

- **A Historical Focus on Low-income Children**
- Debate over universal Pre-K centered on the cost. This inclined commentators to suggest that a targeted program for low-income children would be a better policy approach.
- This was also based on the argument that these students have the most to gain from preschool and are least likely to have access to early childhood education otherwise.
- However, the experience of popular universal Pre-K program instituted by the De Blasio administration in New York City illustrates the benefits, political and educational of the universal approach.



Universal Pre-Kindergarten

- Beyond increasing the pool of children who would benefit, universal pre-K offers the potential to bring children of different socioeconomic backgrounds together in the same classrooms through which all benefit.
- This is an important feature, because recent research suggests that the socioeconomic and racial diversity of preschool classrooms is a key component of their educational quality.
- **Universal Pre-K in New York City**
- It is the only program that offers public preschool to all families, free of charge, without additional eligibility requirements. The administration has touted two key benefits of universal access: promoting classroom diversity, and easing the economic burden of preschool on all families.





Vision for Baltimore

Eyesight screenings & eyeglasses for all students

Examples of Universal Goals

- All students in a school district should have access to material resources required to learn and achieve proficiency in subject matter.
- All students should have vision care, including free eyeglasses, so that difficulty seeing (for non-blind students) is not an impediment to learning.
 - (“Vision for Baltimore”)

Vision for Baltimore was a program launched by the Health Department based on a recognition that more than 15,000 primary and secondary school children needed glasses but did not have them.



ASD Nest

Replacing “Hush” with Help

Schools replace 'hush' with help

Only 36 percent of students in the r20s with autism attend any type of postsecondary school (ref. AJ Drexel Autism Institute @ Drexel University)

See other research on employment in autism community

See research on race and autism, special ed more generally

See research on disability in education linked with encounters with police

Schools replace 'hush' with help

"Autistic children in New York City public schools benefit from a successful program of integrated classrooms, specially trained teachers and smaller class sizes."

Traditional approaches include paraprofessionals—teaching assistants sometimes assigned to shadow students in class. Teacher Dorothy Siegel sais, "[t]he para is not someone who's there to help a child understand how to interpret the environment so he doesn't get upset. The para is there to keep him out of trouble, so they'll allow him to continue in that classroom."

The program is called ASD Nest, now in 54 elementary, middle and high schools in NYC.

Schools replace 'hush' with help

2017, 17,015 students in NYC public schools were classified as having autism as a disability, up from 13,685 in 2014-2015

On affordability for the ASD Nest program, the budget for paraprofessionals is redirected to employ teachers. "The whole goal of the Nest program is to replace people who hush children with teachers who understand children."

Classrooms typically have 2 certified teachers, four students with autism and 8-20 general education students.

Some parents ask for their general education children to be placed in a Nest class because of the smaller class size and the extra teacher, or because the program emphasizes teaching children to be kind and respectful to one another.

Schools replace 'hush' with help

Practices that benefit all students in Nest classes

- fewer posters, signage, and decoration on classroom walls

- lighting in the rooms varies according to student preferences

- teacher voice volume is moderated to student preferences

- students may have bike pedals under desks or make use of naptime corners to decompress and destress

- students on the spectrum are pulled out for social development intervention programming led by a speech therapist

Schools replace 'hush' with help

Targeted practices in Nest classes

class learning exercises focused on establishing relationships with peers and navigating social interactions across different types of individuals
novel strategies for students to navigate distress or irritants associated with school environment

smaller classrooms, higher teacher-student ratio

Focus on students being kind and respectful to one another

Focus on modeling appropriate social interaction

Stories and Narratives

Who's in our stories? Who is represented? Who is left out?



How do we expand our circles to include everyone in our stories and narratives?

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- T/U is a policy and communications strategy
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*In these troubling times
and beyond, we must
invest in others*



Q&A

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS SESSION

