



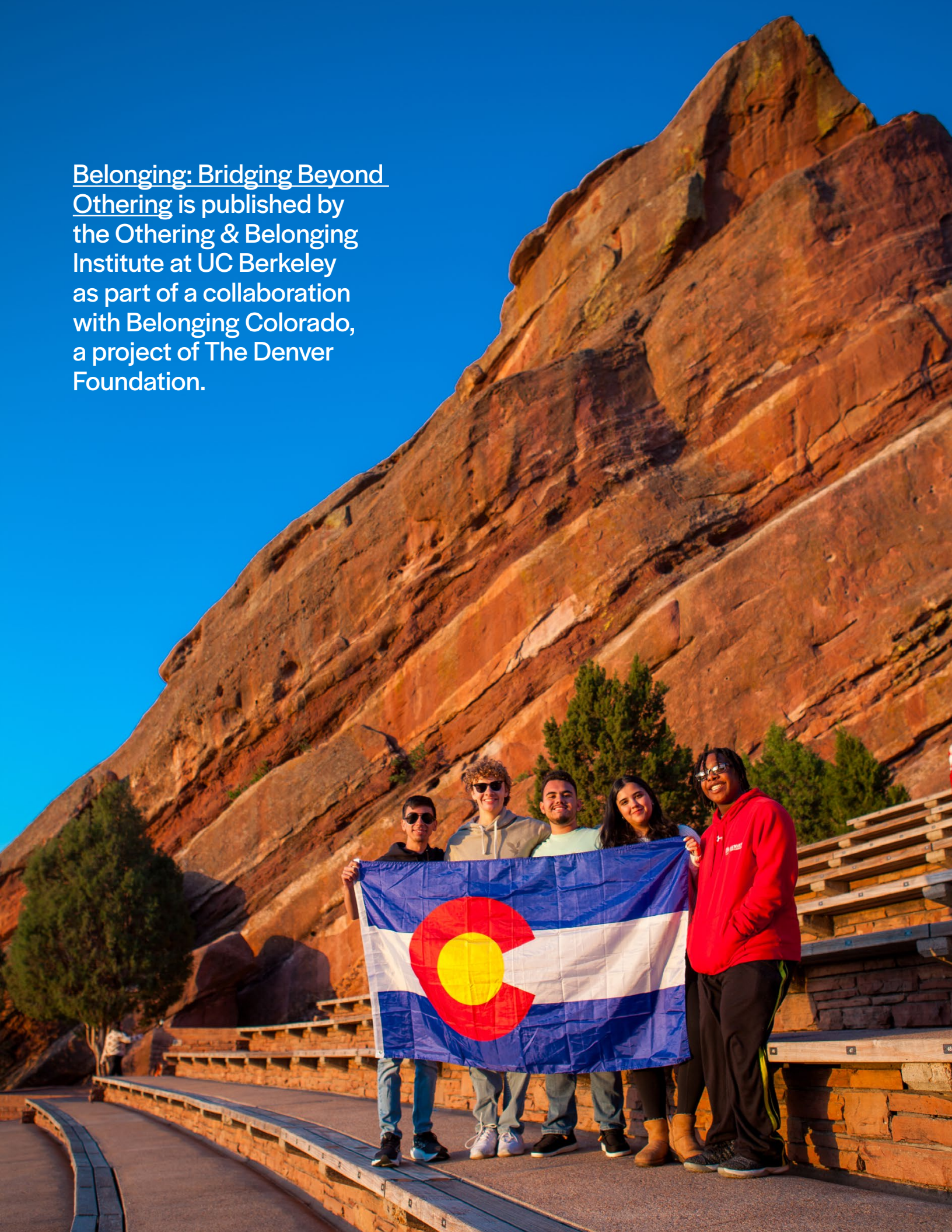
# **belonging**

## **bridging beyond othering**

by john a. powell

[belonging.berkeley.edu](http://belonging.berkeley.edu)

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The **Othering & Belonging Institute (OBI)** brings together researchers, organizers, stakeholders, communicators, and policymakers to identify and eliminate the barriers to an inclusive, just, and sustainable society in order to create transformative change. Find out more at [belonging.berkeley.edu](http://belonging.berkeley.edu).



**Belonging Colorado** is a special fund of The Denver Foundation that provides training and technical assistance through the Greater Good Science Center to those who want to build their skills and learn more about how to incorporate bridge building into their communities and professional lives. The fund is investing in community efforts to advance innovative local programs and approaches to building connections across lines of difference. Find out more at [denverfoundation.org/belonging-colorado](http://denverfoundation.org/belonging-colorado).



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## Introduction

**MOST OF US ARE FAMILIAR** with the basic idea of belonging even if we have different words for it, such as my people, at home, at ease, being fully seen and valued, plus many others. All of us have, at one point or another, longed to belong and hopefully all of us have had moments (however fleeting) where that longing was met by the actual feeling of belonging. Similarly, we can imagine how individual outcomes around wellbeing and resilience (both physical and mental) are improved with belongingness and harmed in its absence.

Research confirms our fundamental intuitions around the effect of belongingness on each individual person's day-to-day functioning. In schools, for instance, brief and fairly unobtrusive interventions—activities that affirmed students' identities and rightful place in the classroom—could reverberate long after in terms of both psychological and academic outcomes.

We believe the **core components** of belonging are:

- Inclusion
- Connection
- Recognition
- Agency / Co-Creation

Belonging also happens at various levels beyond the individual (e.g., with family, among friends, in our neighborhood, inside places of worship or other communal spaces, in our city or town, and sometimes in our state or country), where it has observable benefits: **when belonging is present, groups are more effective and more resilient.**<sup>1</sup> Belonging is important because we cannot thrive without it.

As social animals, belonging is one of our persistent needs, and a persistent feature of our social systems; psychologists Kelly-Ann Allen and Margaret Kern identified no less than ten prominent theories of human motivation and behavior where belongingness was a key element.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, much research has indicated that

loneliness and social isolation increase the likelihood of premature death and a shortened life expectancy.<sup>3</sup> Our own direct experience provides more evidence of the inextricable ties that bind us to other people. As infants, our dependence on other people is clear; our interdependence with other members of society as we age through life is an unavoidable fact if we consider the infrastructure (broadly defined) of our everyday circumstances.

The sense of belonging extends to places as well. I grew up in Detroit when it was a thriving and vibrant city. I did not realize how important the city was for my wellbeing until I returned after it had become

hollowed out. I felt a deep sadness for the loss of a home I could not go back to, a sentiment I'm sure many will find relatable. Within some indigenous populations, for whom the land forms a more conscious aspect of their belonging, the loss of home is even more profound and traumatic. Belonging at its root is important because we quite literally cannot live without it; like air, we may not be aware how important it is until it is absent.

**But what does it mean to truly belong?** And what would it look like to foster a belonging that was less contingent and less fleeting for ourselves? Despite its importance or maybe because of it, there is no precise or single definition of belonging any more

than there is a single definition of love—yet, it is still helpful to consider some of the most salient aspects of belonging.

Without trying to come up with the definitive meaning, my colleagues and I at the Othering & Belonging Institute (OBI) believe having a broad outline can be helpful; we invite you to add your own ideas about belonging to this effort. The following definition outlines some key aspects of belonging that we have identified as being consistently beneficial across settings. It is a multifaceted concept alongside its obverse, othering, as will be discussed below. After exploring some definitions (not *the* definitions) of belonging and othering, we will then discuss recent demographic and political shifts in the state before introducing bridging as a means to promote belonging and face those aforementioned shifts head-on. The paper closes with some suggestions for next steps that you as a Coloradian might take.

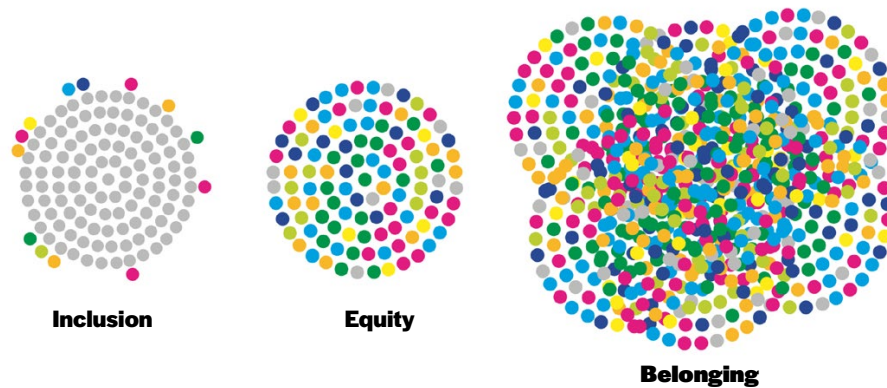
We have given this some thought but we appreciate that you must decide what you will and will not do. Indeed, one of the core tenets of belonging (in our view) is a process where the people involved decide how to participate and co-create the world they seek to inhabit. Now, let's more deeply explore what a concept of belonging looks like.

Oftentimes, belonging feels ineffable in a sort of “you-know-it-when-you-see-it” sort of way, but at OBI we try to advance a conception of belonging that is both robust and somewhat unusual. We suggest that it is not only important to embrace the concept and aspiration of belonging but also a certain type of belonging: ***belonging without othering***.<sup>4</sup>

The notion of belonging is quite old and shows up in many ancient philosophical traditions and spiritual practices. But while many of these teachings invite a greater sense of belonging, they often are just as explicit in creating a categorical *other*. In unpacking what belonging *without* othering

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Moving from inclusion into static structures  
towards a co-created structure through belonging



means, let's first delve into what (on the basis of our various partnerships and our own research) we believe are the core components of belonging: inclusion, connection, recognition, and agency (or co-creation).<sup>5</sup> We'll circle back to *othering* in the following section.

Inclusion does not simply mean **removing barriers** to access; the inclusion we advocate for requires a **comprehensive reimagining** of a space so that everyone can fully participate.

**Inclusion** represents the extent to which any given group or individual is even able to exist within a given social context; conversely, conscious and habituated or institutionalized practices of exclusion decrease the possibility of inclusion. Inclusion, however, does not simply mean removing barriers to access; the inclusion we advocate for here requires a comprehensive reimagining of a space so that everyone can fully participate. If a social club that restricted its membership on the basis of race or gender suddenly removed those restrictions, it wouldn't automatically guarantee full access. When women were finally allowed to attend Ivy League institutions, it meant being exposed to often sexist treatment from faculty and their male counterparts; it also meant exclusion from, for instance, the fraternities that buttressed the social networks that provided inroads to opportunities after graduation. Consider one more example that may seem trivial, public restrooms. All of us need to use them at one point or another, so the lack of wheelchair-accessible restrooms in the US prior to passage of the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act, and the overall paucity of gender-neutral restrooms, have meant that physically disabled and trans people have been less able to share in and use public space than others. Similarly, the relative sizes and layouts of men's and women's restrooms have resulted in women spending

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much more time waiting in line.<sup>6</sup> There is an important difference between inclusion where one is invited, but only as a guest, and inclusion where one is a partner that co-creates the very environment or structure that one inhabits.

**Connection** is the more subjective facet of belonging, the sense that one is tied to someone or something (e.g., a place, and institution) beyond oneself. As a verb, belonging is fundamentally transitive. No one simply belongs, but we belong **among** certain people, **to** a certain place, et cetera. An individual cannot feel belonging **to** a group (or a place, etc) without also perceiving themselves as being tied to that group.

Recognition occurs when the members of a given collectivity not only feel included or connected but also feel seen and appreciated for who they are without being forced to efface or attenuate their identity to attempt to fit in.

**Assimilation**, whether compulsory or not, runs counter to the ideal of recognition. One example of incorporation without recognition is the US Department of Defense's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy (DADT), in effect from 1994 until 2011. While DADT ostensibly allowed gay, lesbian, and bisexual Americans to join the military, it effectively marginalized them by compelling non-heterosexual servicemembers to hide who they were from their comrades in arms.

**Agency** refers to the ability to meaningfully affect what happens, either alone or in concert in a given social setting. Unless people are afforded the opportunity to share in the governance (broadly defined) of their communities, then they cannot truly experience belonging.

What should be clear is that these different aspects of belonging are ultimately inextricable from each other. It's easy to focus on the connective aspect because it seems to be mostly a matter of feelings, and some might then reason that belonging is a matter of being kinder to the more marginalized members of our community. Kindness, while welcome, is insufficient. If, for instance, one wanted to create an environment where people with disabilities felt belonging, it is hard to imagine how they would feel a real sense of connection without inclusion, which requires that intentionally inclusive design decisions happen. Even architecture can tacitly convey messages about *who belongs* (or is only being included on a perfunctory basis): as designer and disability rights activist Aimi Hamraie laments, "Designers make staircases a building's main event and then hide the elevator in the back." Thus, an ostensibly "public" artwork like Thomas

Heatherwick's *Vessel* in New York (not so) subtly conveyed who was meant to enjoy it.<sup>7</sup> Apart from minimal compliance with the Americans with Disability Act, Heatherwick (and the designers of far too many seemingly ordinary spaces) didn't recognize disabled people as a constituency that might require explicit consideration. And even with that recognition, not enough decision makers take the next step of affording disabled people the agency to actively lend their perspective to designing effective inclusion practices. Taken together, belonging is a multifaceted concept, and one that requires systematic changes at the institutional level to be made manifest. It is one thing to be othered by individuals, and another to be othered by design or institutions.

Above, I discussed belonging in the context of fundamental human drives and our fundamental interdependence, a biologically and culturally imbued need to belong. Another way of seeing belonging is as one solution (and I would argue, the most resilient and sustainable solution) to the problem of *othering*.

## Othering and Overlapping Identities

**ONE CAN EASILY ENVISION** a host of problems and collective dilemmas that confront us in the present day—e.g., income inequality, poverty and constricted opportunity, environmental degradation, clashes over bodily autonomy, crime and incarceration—and just as easily envision that each is a distinct malady requiring its own ingenious solutions (solutions about which there is much disagreement). We might instead posit that:

The problem of the twenty-first century is the problem of “othering.” In a world beset by seemingly intractable and overwhelming challenges, virtually every global, national, and regional conflict is wrapped within or organized around one or more dimensions of groupbased difference. Othering undergirds territorial disputes, sectarian violence, military conflict, the spread of disease, hunger and food insecurity, and even climate change.<sup>8</sup>

Othering is the creation of an outgroup upon the basis of particular categories relating to identity —while also invoking a hierarchy whereby the ingroup is seen as fundamentally different from and superior to the outgroup; resources (both material and symbolic) are systematically withheld from anyone who is not within the ingroup's circle. In sum, when people are categorized into groups and suffer institutionalized discrimination on the basis of membership in that group, we can call it othering. And while othering is usually associated with hierarchy and status, there can be and often is othering that is more horizontal and even othering of those we consider



dominant or elite. In these situations it is likely more difficult to hoard resources from the other.<sup>9</sup>

The boundary between ingroup and outgroup doesn't simply occur by accident or because of "natural" differences. To maintain the justification for the hierarchy, the supposed inferiority of outgroups must be rigorously reinforced to preserve the illusion of superiority and police the group boundary.

An important aspect of the *othering* process is **power**—the power to create and enforce categorizations and the power to control access to resources—such that othering is more than simple prejudice.<sup>10</sup> Othering is often a misguided response to institutional crisis and instability or rapid and unexpected social change. Oftentimes, demagogues exploit this instability by forcefully advocating for highlighting particular differences *and* for treating

others as inferior on the basis of those differences to consolidate or further their own social, political, and economic interests. These interests artificially exclude and degrade entire segments of society and reinforce the status of the demagogue and their supporters. In some instances, a misguided pursuit of belonging within a group leads to othering all those outside of it.

Across human societies, there are many different ways in which othering can occur, including racism, ethnocentrism, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, misogyny, ableism, xenophobia, homophobia, and transphobia. Different varieties of othering rarely occur in isolation, especially in a large and complex society like ours. And again, the often-vertical character of othering doesn't exclude the possibility that the othered can themselves contribute to

the marginalization of groups beyond their boundaries; moreover, it does not rule out the possibility of being othered in multiple ways. For instance, people can be marginalized on the basis of gender, race, and immigration status simultaneously.

Each of us possesses a set of overlapping identities that are themselves constantly changing— from race and gender to region and religion, from socioeconomic status and age to sexual orientation and national origin. Moreover, which identity is most salient can shift based on context. Instances and systems of othering selectively highlight particular identities, flattening our perceptions of ourselves and each other in the face of multiplicity and ways in which identities can shift over time. Just as we come to recognize and respect the diversity **among** individuals, we should be aware of (and honor) the diverse identities **within** each individual.

While othering is usually associated with **hierarchy and status**, there can be and often is othering that is more **horizontal** and even othering of those we consider dominant or elite.

Where differences along one axis of identity might seem obvious, seeing each other in all our complexity might allow us to see commonalities along another axis—say, a shared identity as Coloradans and thus a shared stake in the present and future of Colorado.

## A Changing Colorado

**AS YOU ARE LIKELY WELL AWARE**, the Centennial State is in a time of transition. Per the 2020 Census, Colorado’s population increased by 14.8 percent from the prior Census to reach 5.78 million. However, 95 percent of that growth was in the already more-populous Front Range. Many of Colorado’s more rural counties, on the other hand, had a net decline in population. Like much of the country, Colorado is also aging; the birth rate has continually slowed—which, officials note, will eventually have inevitable effects on the education system and the economy. Meanwhile, Colorado’s

retirement-age population grew nearly 60 percent between 2010 and 2020. Considering age and space together, only the Front Range had significant growth in its under-18 population during the decade, meaning that as Colorado aged, rural Colorado aged noticeably faster.<sup>11</sup> As late as 2017, nearly one in four rural Coloradans lacked access to broadband internet service, meaning that much of rural Colorado lacked the tools necessary to fully participate in the state’s economic growth. Despite a concerted effort by state officials, there are still counties where the majority still lacks that access, even as the pandemic made internet access that much more indispensable.<sup>12</sup>

In another parallel with the country as a whole, increasing numbers of Coloradans identified as Latinx (and fewer as non-Hispanic whites). In 2019, just over one in five Coloradans was Latinx (22 percent), and since 2000 Colorado’s Latinx community had grown at twice the rate of the state’s overall population. This trend, too, was inflected by age: the median age of Latinx Coloradans (28) was eight years below that of the state as a whole (36). The diversification of the state was not strictly monochromatic, however: as of the 2020 Census, the Asian/Pacific Islander category grew by nearly 45 percent in the state, and the number of (non-Hispanic) multiracial Coloradans increased by nearly 159 percent.<sup>13</sup> Research has highlighted how the changing demographics of the state can be used to stoke fears among U.S.-born whites (especially those who are conservative and conservative-leaning) that they will have a diminished voice in state politics, a narrative which neglects the deep roots of nonwhite Coloradans in the state’s economy and culture both prior to statehood and since.<sup>14</sup>

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*Photo: OBI's John A. Powell speaks to Belonging Colorado audience at Red Rocks Amphitheatre 2024*

To tie this back to the discussion of othering above, there are two distinct processes related to othering. There is the process of being othered by people and systems and the process of feeling othered; much of the friction in our social dynamics today is tied up with one or both. When a group is concerned that they will lose status and social resources, this can engender fear and pushback. For a group that has not had high status, they are more likely to be concerned with lack of recognition and social resources. For a group that has been historically favored there is often the fear of loss of status as well as a deficit of belonging; such a group is more likely to think of belonging in the context of needing to exclude the other. If a group is not focused on loss of status, however, it is more likely to be open to belonging without othering. Developing a robust practice of belonging is part of the way forward as we grapple with the changes, demographic and otherwise, that are likely to engender collective anxiety.

These manifold demographic shifts toward a more racially diverse and urbanized Colorado have accompanied a shift in its politics.<sup>15</sup> Where the state was once a reliable source of electoral votes for George W. Bush (twice), a prominent state senator could credibly claim last year that Colorado was now “a shade of purple, indigo maybe.” Democrats might currently control the legislature and the governorship, but the state has more independent voters than registered Democrats or Republicans. The relative independence of the electorate notwithstanding, the same hyperpartisanship that pervades national politics impacts state politics at present. In response to the self-consciously bipartisan collegiality of the state’s Speaker of the House, some members of her caucus instead balked and completely dis-

counted the possibility of shared governance with the minority party.<sup>16</sup>

Depending on one's disposition and policy preferences (say, bipartisanship as a means to an end versus bipartisanship as an end in itself), maybe these aren't inherently alarming trends and it does not necessarily follow that the center cannot hold. But in working to foster belonging in Colorado, Coloradans can perhaps ensure that things don't fall apart all the same. All of these shifts could lend themselves to rising uncertainty about who belongs; pursuing belonging *with* othering offers a false hope of resolving that uncertainty. Instead, we should see these shifts and seeming divides as opportunities for building bridges.

## Bridging as a Pathway to Belonging

**MANIFESTING BELONGING REQUIRES** not just institutional change and policy innovations, it requires intentional suturing of the wounds opened by *othering*. This practice, called **bridging**, is the careful accumulation of social capital across typically-wide gulfs in society.<sup>17</sup>

Political scientist Robert Putnam gives the civil rights movement as an example of *bridging* social capital, presumably because, at its peak, the movement was powered by a multiracial and multifaith coalition that also spanned class and gender boundaries. Putnam contrasted bridging social capital with *bonding* social capital, which serves to reinforce ties within more well-established and homogeneous groups. As Putnam puts it, “Bonding social capital constitutes a kind of sociological superglue, whereas bridging social capital provides a sociological WD-40.”<sup>18</sup>

However, the consolidated ingroup ties of bonding social capital often strengthen antagonism toward outgroups—in a word, othering. In line with this risk of heightened antagonism is **breaking**, the intentional reinforcement of the boundary between ingroup and outgroup.

There are several different ways of classifying bridges, based on the effort involved and the intended purpose of the bridge (beyond fostering connection). *Short bridges* involve groups that are already fairly close, even if somewhat isolated from each other; *long bridges* are required to connect across stark antagonisms. *Weak bridges* are more tenuous and ephemeral; *sturdy bridges*, by contrast, are built to last, but this requires more work and more intention. For example, if a set of Democratic and Republican lawmakers sought to build a long and sturdy bridge in these hyperpartisan times, they would have to identify a shared goal and invest time and concerted effort in establishing ground rules for managing conflict. Having a shared goal would result in a *transactional bridge* unless the experi-

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ence fundamentally altered the lawmakers' policy platforms and approach to governance, at which point the bridge would be *transformational*.<sup>19</sup>

**Transformational bridging** involves a subtle yet important nuance. While goal-setting is an important aspect of co-creating and collective action in general, what is ultimately core to successful bridging is mutual regard between bridging parties.<sup>20</sup> This mutuality comes from fully recognizing the whole selves of others and acknowledging their full and undimmed humanity.<sup>21</sup>

In practice, this means a lot of listening with the first intent of understanding others' fears and aspirations (as opposed to listening in order to immediately debunk, debate, or altogether dismiss and discard). Thus, neither bridging (as a means) nor belonging (as an end) are 'same-ing.' Attempting to inauthentically "smooth over difference as though it does not matter" both "bypasses needed reparative work caused by the harms of disparate treatment" and effaces the diversity that we ought to value.<sup>22</sup>

Bridging is how we actively create connection and begin to envision a "larger we" more capacious than the narrower ideas of who "we" are that belonging- with-othering offers us.<sup>23</sup> Indeed, research has found that transformational bridging is more likely than attempts at persuasion to produce concrete changes, not just on the issues but for bridging participants as well.

## Advocating for a State-Level Approach

OBI approaches building for belonging through a wide lens of place. We call this work **places of belonging**. Place-based work has a successful history as a mode of change making; thus, we believe in pursuing a local strategy with a global understanding, working to expand the view of what belonging can be in any geographic location or entity. A place of belonging can be a community group, school, government, business entity, city, state, nation, or some kind of transnational entity.

A place of belonging has great power when it is grounded in local knowledge connected to global concerns, but also when that place is embedded in communities of practice working towards belonging (albeit through multiple applications). State-level strategies for places of belonging thus braid together and harness the power of singular places and entities within a larger statewide network.

Pursuing a state-level of strategy does not (and should not) preclude adopting other approaches, but it does offer certain advantages. For the



*Photo: Coloradans gathering with the Colorado state flag  
Photo by Brian Clark with Colorado Health Institute*

United States of America, states are already meaningful political and cultural units for the vast majority of people living in this very particular nation. From our system of government's founding, much political power has been vested in the states apart from the federal government and this continues to have important implications for our society. Moreover, municipal and other local government entities are subject to (and can be taken over by) state governments.

**A place of belonging** has great power when it is grounded in local knowledge connected to global concerns

The state is an also important unit for bridging between heterogeneous groups. Many individual municipalities and counties are relatively homogeneous, so many conflicts can occur at the geographic level, such as the divide between rural and urban Colorado alluded to earlier. Because of this, there needs to be a container that is larger than these smaller municipal units and the state level lends itself well to that. State-level efforts thus balance the benefits of scale with the local groundedness of particular place-based belonging work (and you can probably point to multiple entities both within and beyond state government who already organize resources at a statewide scale).

In fact, initiatives like the one you are in the process of co-creating are underway in other states. For example, in Washington state, there are school systems for belonging, counties for belonging, cities for belonging, health systems for belonging, economic strategies for belonging, park and public space initiatives for belonging, philanthropies for belonging, and much more. All of these efforts make positive improvements in people's lives

through implementing strategies that advance inclusion, connection, recognition, and agency within their site(s) of application. Each venture can be successful on its own individual terms, but we all know that there is power in partnership and knowledge sharing—and that people’s needs span particular locations and sectors.

As Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis famously observed in 1932, “It is one of the happy incidents of the federal system that a single, courageous State may . . . serve as a laboratory” and attempt “novel social and economic experiments without risk to the rest of the country.”<sup>24</sup>

Arguably, the risk is greater if states don’t attempt to tackle this novel and urgent experiment of making places of belonging (without othering). Again, we are not suggesting that the state level is the only one worth addressing, but that for a number of reasons, it can be a very appropriate unit with which to engage in belonging work.

## Some Next Steps

No matter the space, size or span of your belonging work, we want to share a few helpful guideposts that we and many other groups across the nation use to shape their efforts. While the steps below are listed individually, they are not necessarily sequential steps; oftentimes, many of them are happening simultaneously.

- **Identify collaborators.** The work of belonging is a co-created effort, it must include people from many places and with different situatedness. Understanding which groups and institutions are working towards belonging (by this name or another) across the state will surface belonging builders as a community-in-waiting. Being able to look towards others as collaborators can only help any given initiative in a movement towards belonging (from moral support to best practices to material resources). In doing this work, there will likely be a need for a container to house the work and individuals (or clusters of individuals) explicitly tasked with helping bring people and groups together. Lastly, it is essential to also look for who is missing or unseen in your picture of your initiatives, with a continual commitment to greater inclusion.

- **Connect and share information.** Belonging is co-created and is shaped by history, the present, and a collective future. There is power in people coming together, sharing information and having agency in shaping the thing of which they are a part. To that end, identify data sources that will help illuminate what the landscape of belonging looks like within your chosen sphere of influence. For instance—in a practice that combines convening and connecting with data gathering—we have seen listening tours be

successful in shaping an initiative, where community assemblies hear from people what belonging looks like, feels like, and lives like to them.

Belonging has been measured in many ways using more quantitative approaches as well; more recently, Project Over Zero enacted the Belonging Barometer as a way to understand across the nation and within states how belonging is active in changing contexts. This measurement tool has its own limitations, but its benefit is that through conducting it, people can start to see what belonging (or lack thereof) looks like across their state. After collecting data, gather stakeholders together for discussion and a shared assessment. This data (in whatever form or forms it takes) can be used to inform areas of possible focus within a belonging initiative, while communicating back to the broader audience what the initiative at the start will look like with a commitment to continual reassessment.

**Co-create meaning around data and shared vision.** The above points all contribute to a group's ability to make meaning together about what the local landscape looks like for advancing belonging. It can also help to surface what a collective vision or goal could look like, while being cautious not to limit goals to closing disparities but instead focusing on attaining a common good for all, a universal goal. A shared goal across multiple groups builds traction, expectations, and has the power to shift culture. We find it beneficial to organize efforts using a frame of targeted universalism and invite you to consider it alongside other strategies.<sup>25</sup>

We acknowledge that there are countless actions that can be taken as a result of the information we've shared through this paper. In many ways, that is the beauty of belonging work, there are always multiple actions that individuals, groups, and networks can take to work towards its attainment within their

respective orbits.

No matter what actions you choose to take, know that when you are building for belonging, you are building for a greater we. Know that there are groups, cities, states, national networks, and international networks all moving towards belonging within their respective contexts as well. You are working towards the advancement of the many, and you are not alone. ■

## Guideposts to building places of belonging

Identify collaborators.

Connect and share information.

Co-create meaning around data and shared vision.



## Endnotes

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- 8 John A. Powell and Stephen Menéndez, “The Problem of Othering: Towards Inclusiveness and Belonging,” *Othering & Belonging: Expanding the Circle of Human Concern*, no. 1 (Summer 2016): 14.
- 9 For a discussion of different types of othering including horizontal othering, see also Powell and Menéndez, *Belonging Without Othering*.
- 10 While it is important to focus on power, it is also important to understand that power is both situational (context-dependent) and diffuse. This means that no group always has all the power in all situations and no group is powerless at all times in all situations.
- 11 Colorado State Demography Office, “Demographic Summary January 2022” (Denver: Colorado Department of Local Affairs, January 2022), <https://drive.google.com/uc?export=download&id=1Klq9pdHjeGT-Faol2VCabKnLJVB4Ksx0g>.
- 12 “Guide to Economic Mobility in Colorado” (Denver: Bell Policy Center, January 12, 2018), <https://www.bellpolicy.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Guide-to-Economic-Mobility-FINAL.pdf>; “Colorado Broadband Map,” Colorado Broadband Office, January 26, 2024, <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/938d40535cd842dc9aaceacd3c554e4b/page/Dashboard/> “2023 CHAS [Colorado Health Access Survey]: Broadband Access,” Colorado Health Institute, March 4, 2024, <https://www.coloradohealthinstitute.org/research/2023-chas-broadband-access>.
- 13 “15 Facts about Latino Well-Being in CO,” Latino Policy & Politics Institute, February 22, 2023, <https://lati>

## Endnotes continued

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14 Raul S. Casarez, “This Land Is (Not) Your Land: Race and Ascribed Americanness in the Formation of Attitudes about Immigrants,” *The Sociological Quarterly* 63, no. 1 (January 2, 2022): 114–33, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00380253.2020.1804813>

15 Erik Maulbetsch, “Douglas County Republicans Promote Racist ‘Great Replacement’ Conspiracy,” *Colorado Times Recorder*, January 12, 2024, <https://coloradotimesrecorder.com/2024/01/douglas-county-republicans-promote-racist-great-replacement-conspiracy/58990/>

16 William Wei, “Immigration to Colorado Myth and Reality, Part Two,” *History Colorado*, September 21, 2021, <https://www.historycolorado.org/story/2021/09/27/immigration-colorado-myth-and-reality-part-two>. For example, see “2022 Colorado Latino Exit Poll” (*Colorado Latino Policy Agenda*, November 10, 2022), <https://coloradolatinopolicyagenda.org/exit-poll-2022/>. Jesse Bedayn, “Colorado Legislative Session Reinforces Once-Purple State’s Democratic Shift,” *AP News*, May 11, 2023, <https://apnews.com/article/colorado-democratic-shift-battleground-state-republican-3ebce1afa36755e43750388ca2f2b9ed>.

17 For a more detailed discussion of bridging, see Rachel Heydemann and John A. Powell, “On Bridging: Evidence and Guidance from Real-World Cases” (Berkeley, CA: Othering & Belonging Institute, August 2020), [https://belonging.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/on\\_bridging.pdf](https://belonging.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/on_bridging.pdf).

18 Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, 21.

19 Additionally, particular issues could necessitate bridging depending on the groups in question. With the above example, for instance, productive dialogue about pandemic response strategies might require bridging work, whereas deciding whether to provide funding for hurricane or earthquake relief might not (one hopes).

20 Collectively articulating goals is a core step in the practice of targeted universalism, a tool OBI has developed fostering policy compatible suitable for belonging without othering; see John Powell, Stephen Menendian, and Wendy Ake, “Targeted Universalism: Policy & Practice” (Berkeley, CA: Othering & Belonging Institute, May 2019), <https://belonging.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/2022-12/Targeted%20Universalism%20Primer.pdf>.

21 Ultimately, this recognition must happen at both an individual and community level.

22 Heydemann and Powell, “On Bridging,” 5.

23 I indicated above that some people are less likely to embrace belonging without othering if they perceive it as a loss of either status or their own belonging. It is important to have a sense how widespread this position is and develop appropriate interventions.

24 *New State Ice Co. v. Liebmann*, 285 U.S. 262, 311 (1932) (Brandeis, J., dissenting).

25 For a more detailed guide to the practice of targeted universalism, see Powell, Menendian, and Ake, “Targeted Universalism.”

