Othering & Belonging
Institute at UC Berkeley

Targeted Universalism Philanthropy

PRESENTER

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

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

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Othering

is a generalized set of common processes that engender marginality and group-based inequality across any of the full range of human differences
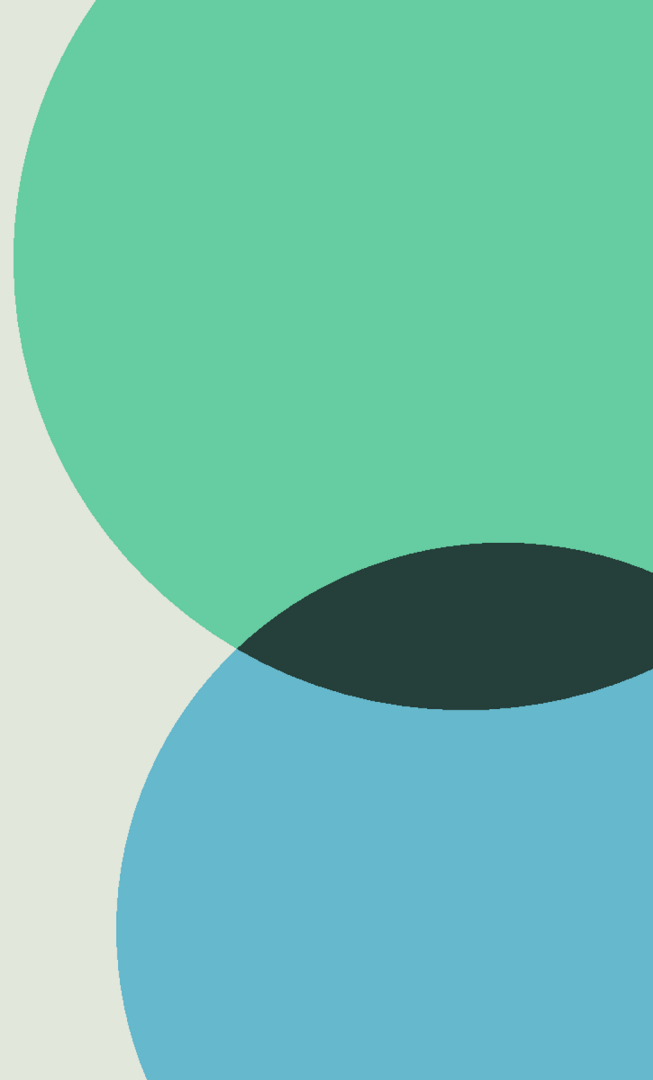
The opposite of Othering is *not* saming, but belonging

A Crack in the Container

When there's a crack in the container, when the context in which we live is broken, everyone feels othered and our solutions need to be more radical and structural.

What is Belonging?

Belonging describes values and practices where no person is left out of our circle of concern. Belonging means more than having just access, being seen or feeling included.

It means that every member has a meaningful voice, that their well-being is considered, and that they have the opportunity to participate in the design of political, social, and cultural structures. Belonging includes the right to both contribute and make demands upon society and political institutions.

Breaking and Bridging Overview

Video: Bridging: Towards a Society Built on Belonging

Breaking

- *Breaking* is a response driven by fear and isolation. A breaking response might look like staying with what we know and who we know, rather than opening up to a new opportunity. A breaking dynamic exists when one group turns against an 'outsider' group; the 'otherness' and threat of the out-group can build psychological or physical walls between the two groups. A breaking dynamic can be driven by policies, leaders, narratives and structures that pin people against each other.

- There are two kinds of breaking: **Hard Breaking** and **Soft Breaking**.

  - *Hard Breaking* examples: building a wall, a travel ban, or outright exclusion.
  - *Soft Breaking* example: siloed movement building, assuming English is the dominant language.

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Bridging

- *Bridging* addresses a breaking dynamic in order to develop a cohesive, more inclusive, durable, and more expansive "we" that can be identified and recognized to bring about belonging and greater social justice.

- To "bridge" involves two or more people or groups coming together across acknowledged lines of difference (such as race and/or power dynamics) in a way that both affirms their distinct identities and creates a new inclusive "we" identity.

- The new "we" that results need not agree on everything, or even very much; but its members should have a shared empathy and lasting stake in one another. Bridging rejects all strict "us versus them" framings, but without erasing what is different and unique in each party

Bridging Continued

- There are *short bridges* and *long bridges*. Some require more effort to build and maintain, others are a short distance.

- Power matters: bridging may look different when there is a power differential.

- Bridging can also help build social capital and build power by bringing folks across different identities together.

- Bridging is a precondition for belonging. Without bridging, it is not possible to build a society in which everyone belongs.
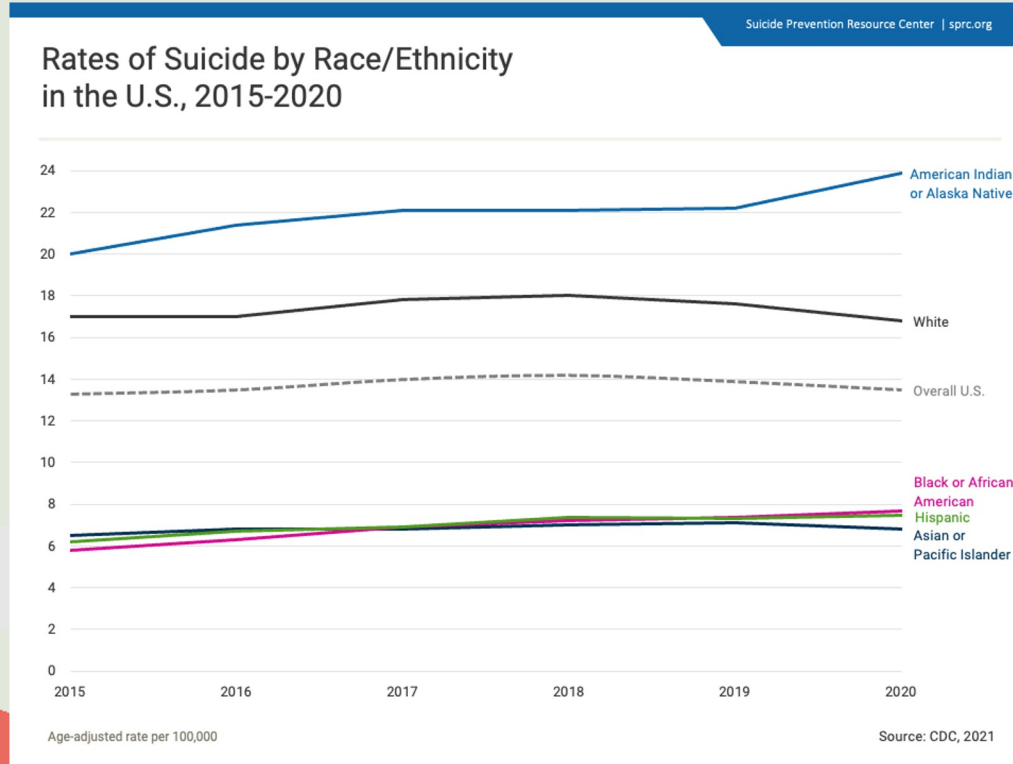
Equity

- Equity typically focuses on intergroup disparities
- There is a backlash against this from those who value equality
- Targeted universalism and belonging do not share the same focus on disparities that equity has

Misconceptions

- This work is a top-down policy solution
- This work can only be implemented in interpersonal solutions
- This work leads to one solution

Equity is not the full story.

Rates of Suicide by Race/Ethnicity in the U.S., 2015-2020

Suicide Prevention Resource Center | sprc.org

- American Indian or Alaska Native
- White
- Overall U.S.
- Black or African American
- Hispanic
- Asian or Pacific Islander

Age-adjusted rate per 100,000

Source: CDC, 2021

Social justice

Social justice is the natural consequence of belonging and including everyone in the circle of concern.

TU Philanthropy: Engaging with Community

TU Philanthropy: Addressing Systemic Barriers via Adequacy

Educational adequacy is an example of how TU can be used in education to increase opportunities for young students of color.

Educational adequacy focuses on inadequacies in the level of educational opportunities offered to youth in classrooms within a state. It focuses on the creation of affirmative solutions to educational problems rather than just funding inequities between school districts.

TU Philanthropy: Addressing Systemic Barriers - Wake County
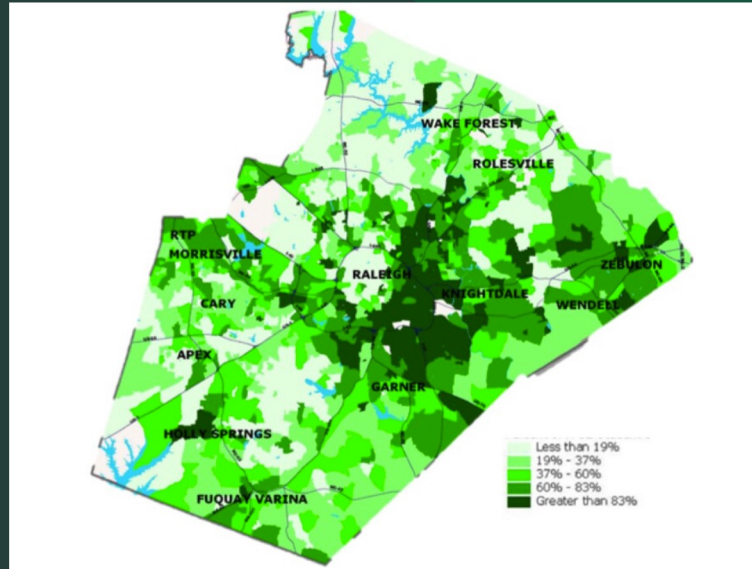
TU Philanthropy: Recognizing Privilege and Power

TU Philanthropy **recognizes that the inequitable distribution of power between funders and the funded.** TU Philanthropy aims to make this power distribution more equitable by building relationships between funders and nonprofits.

Empowering nonprofits is essential because nonprofits are the closest to the communities that they serve and that funders hope to impact. Empowering nonprofits and their clients will help bring community voices to the table.