



# Race and Social Equity for Community Leaders

## DATE

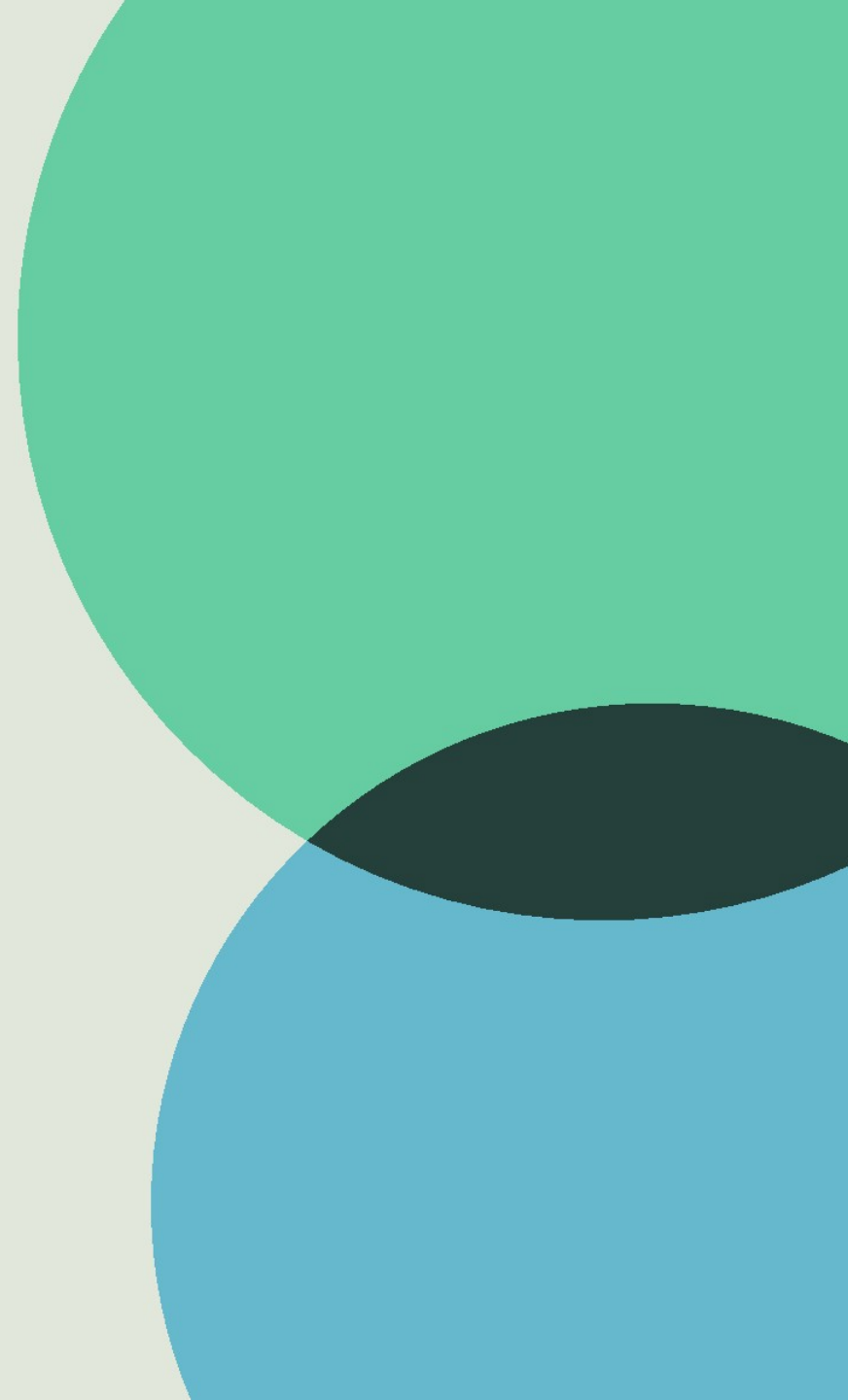
October 15, 2020

## PRESENTER

john a. powell, Director  
Othering & Belonging Institute

## AUTHORIAL SUPPORT

Othering & Belonging  
Institute





**DO WE NEED  
LIBRARIES?**

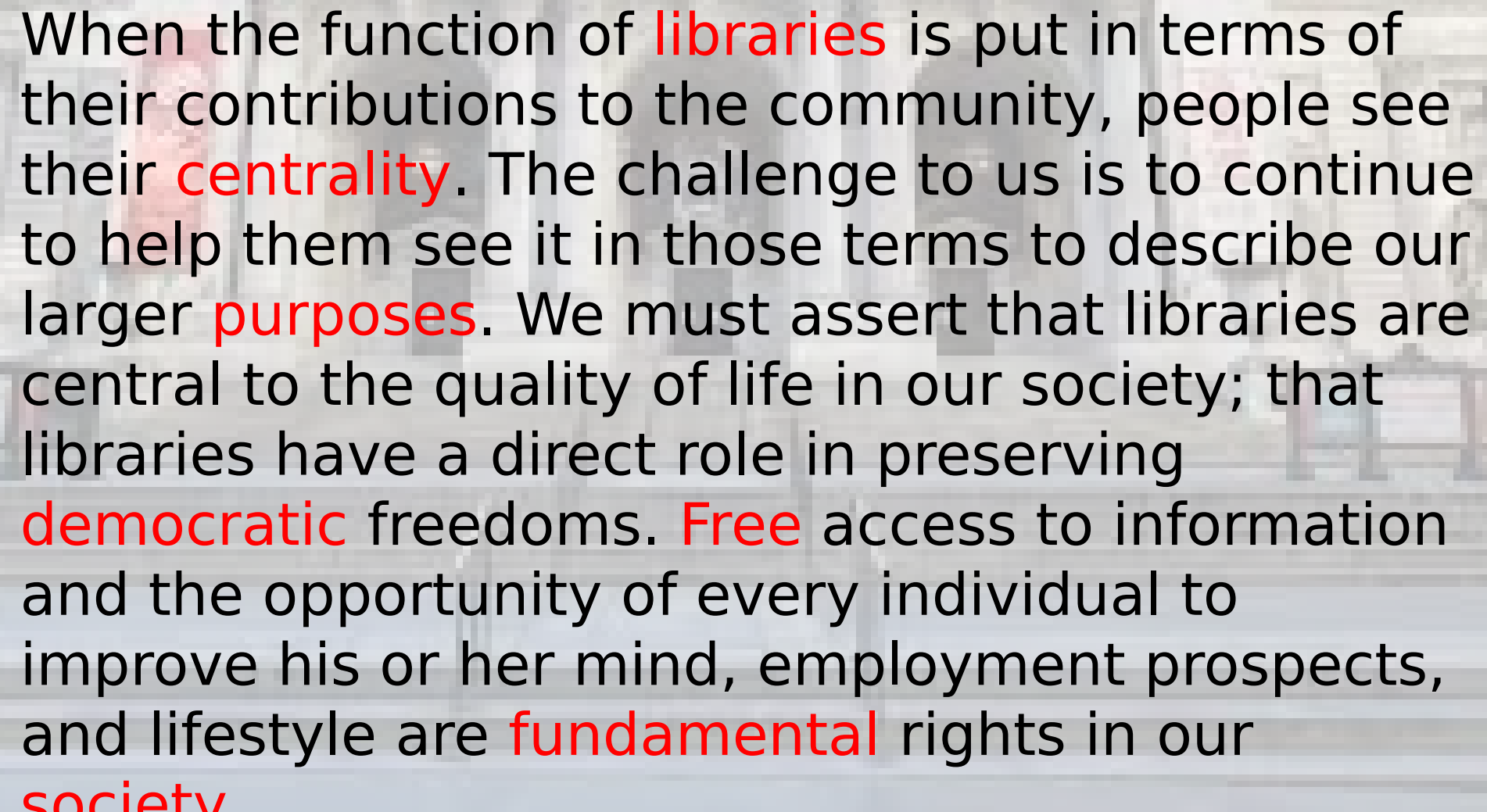


A close-up photograph of a person's hand holding a green book. The book has a white label with a barcode on its spine. The background is a blurred library with rows of books on shelves, bathed in warm, golden light from a window on the right.

Google  
can bring you back  
100,000 answers.

**A librarian  
can bring you back  
the right one.**

– NEIL GAIMAN



When the function of **libraries** is put in terms of their contributions to the community, people see their **centrality**. The challenge to us is to continue to help them see it in those terms to describe our larger **purposes**. We must assert that libraries are central to the quality of life in our society; that libraries have a direct role in preserving **democratic** freedoms. **Free** access to information and the opportunity of every individual to improve his or her mind, employment prospects, and lifestyle are **fundamental** rights in our **society**.



The **only** thing that  
you absolutely have  
to **know** is the  
**location** of the  
**library**.

--Albert Einstein



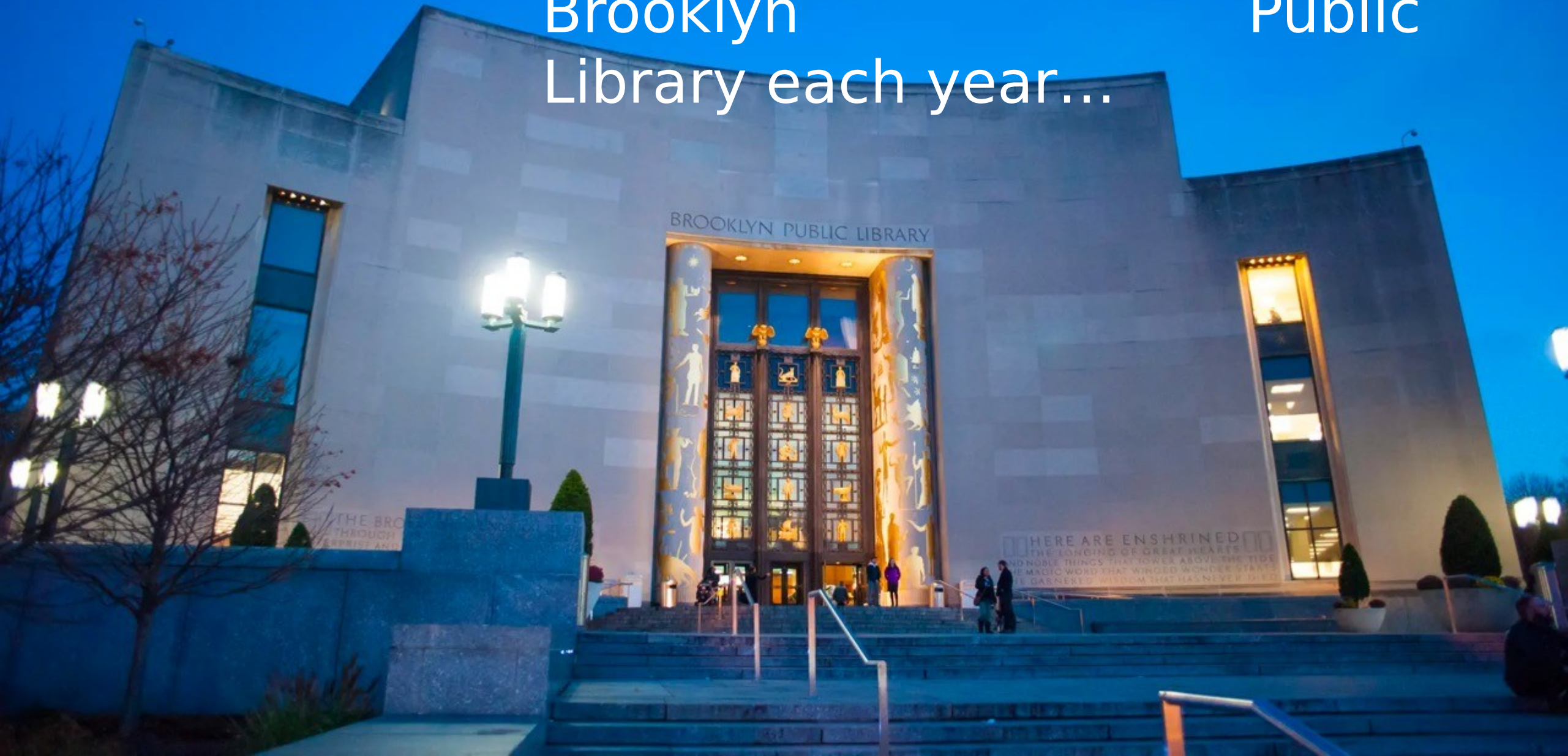


# PALACE FOR THE PEOPLE

Why Libraries are  
more than just  
books...



Over 1 million people visit the  
Brooklyn Public  
Library each year...

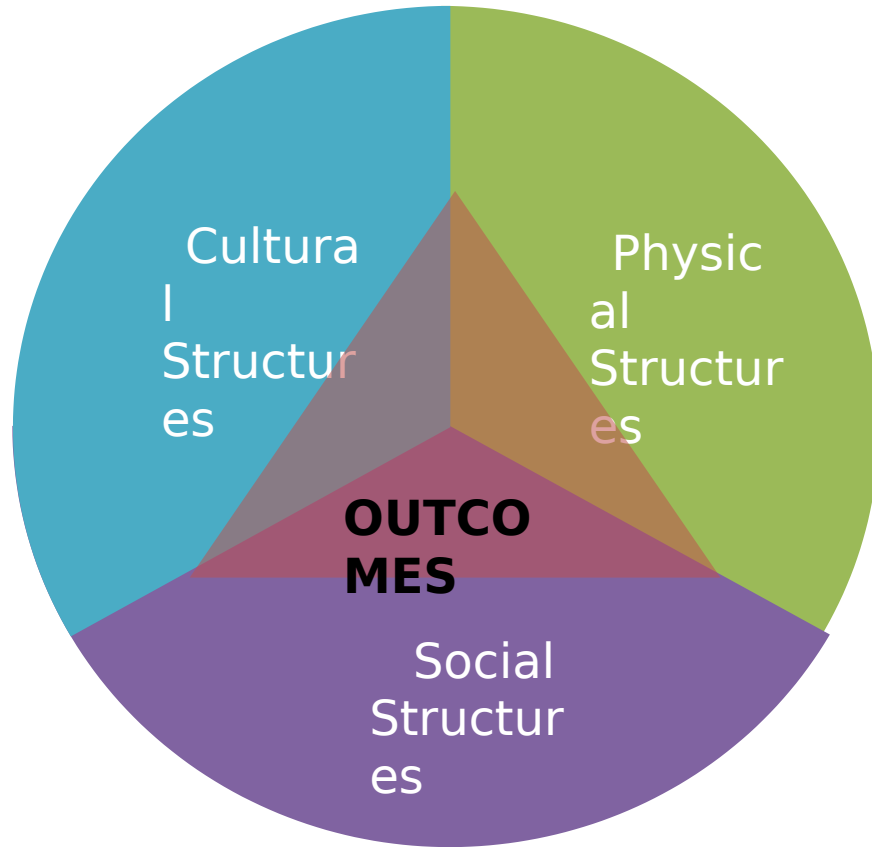






**Keep Calm Even  
Though the  
Library is Closed!**

# Structures & Systems



We are all situated within structures but not evenly.

Structures are not neutral.

Power gives us greater access to structures and more ability to shape structures.

These structures interact in ways that produce different outcomes

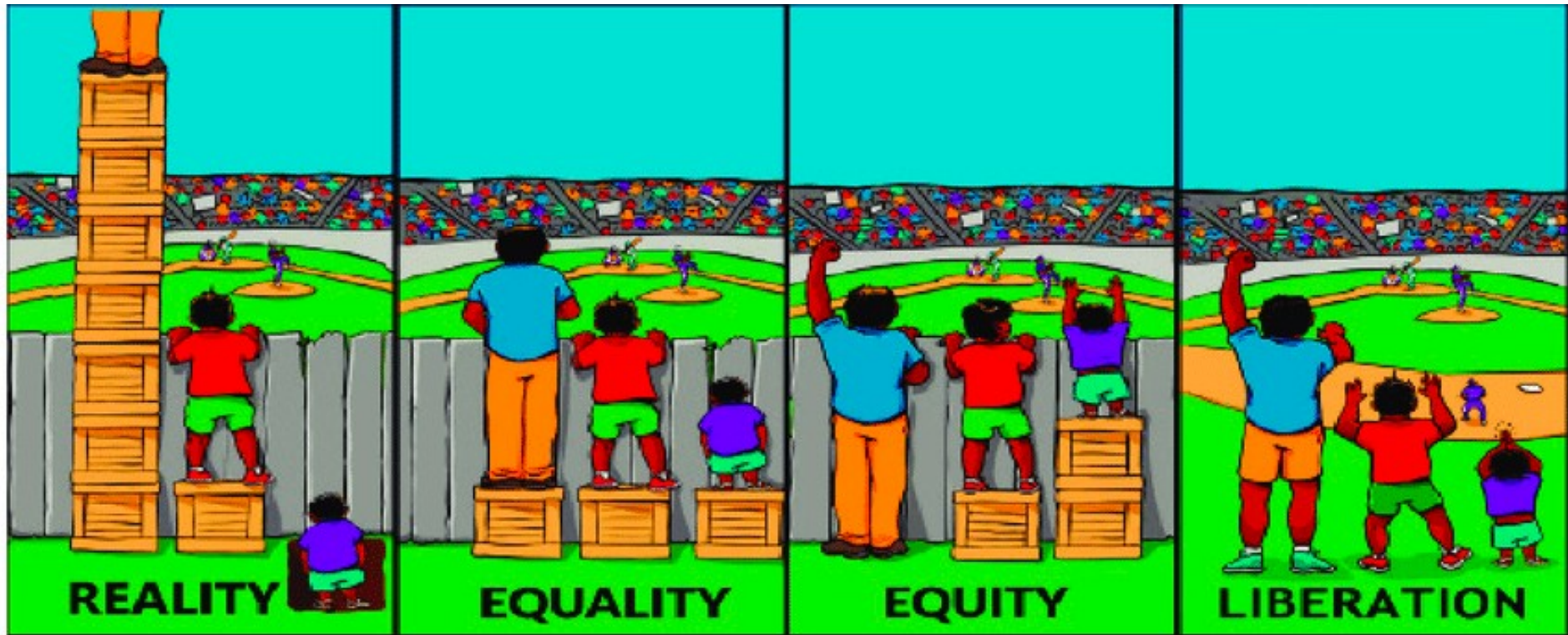


# Opportunity Structures



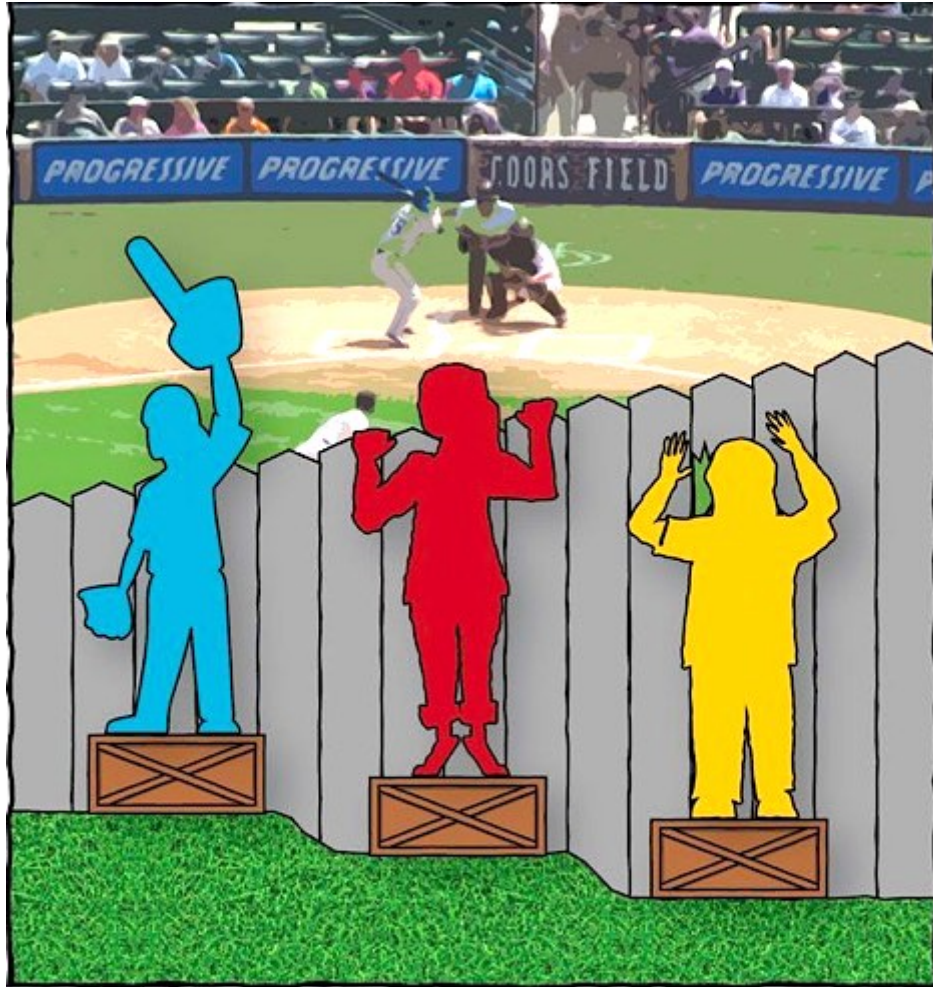
- **Opportunity structures** are the webs of influence beyond our individual control that enhance and constrain our ability to succeed and excel
- Life changes are shaped by opportunity structures, and those structures are just as important, if not more so, than the choices that individuals make

# What do you notice?

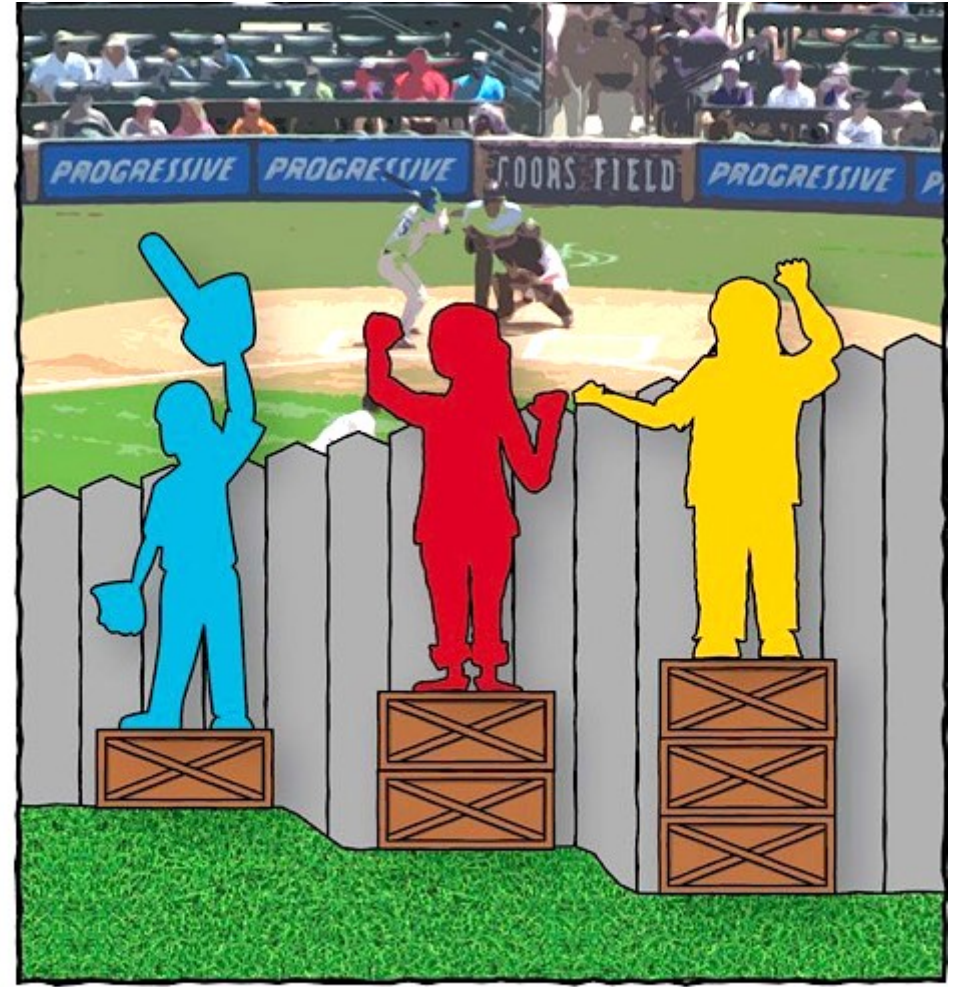




# What do you notice?



**EQUALITY**



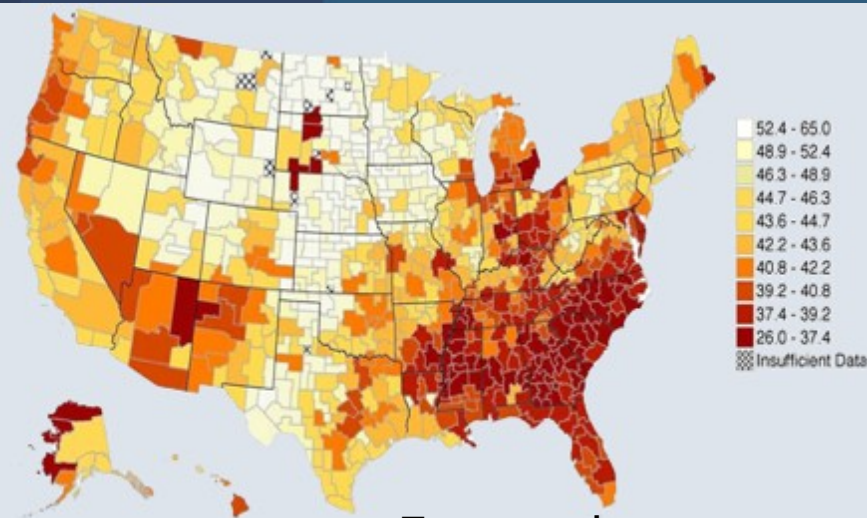
**EQUITY**

We **live** in systems.  
Systems **live** in us.





## Political Breaking



Economic  
Segregation



Urban

Rural



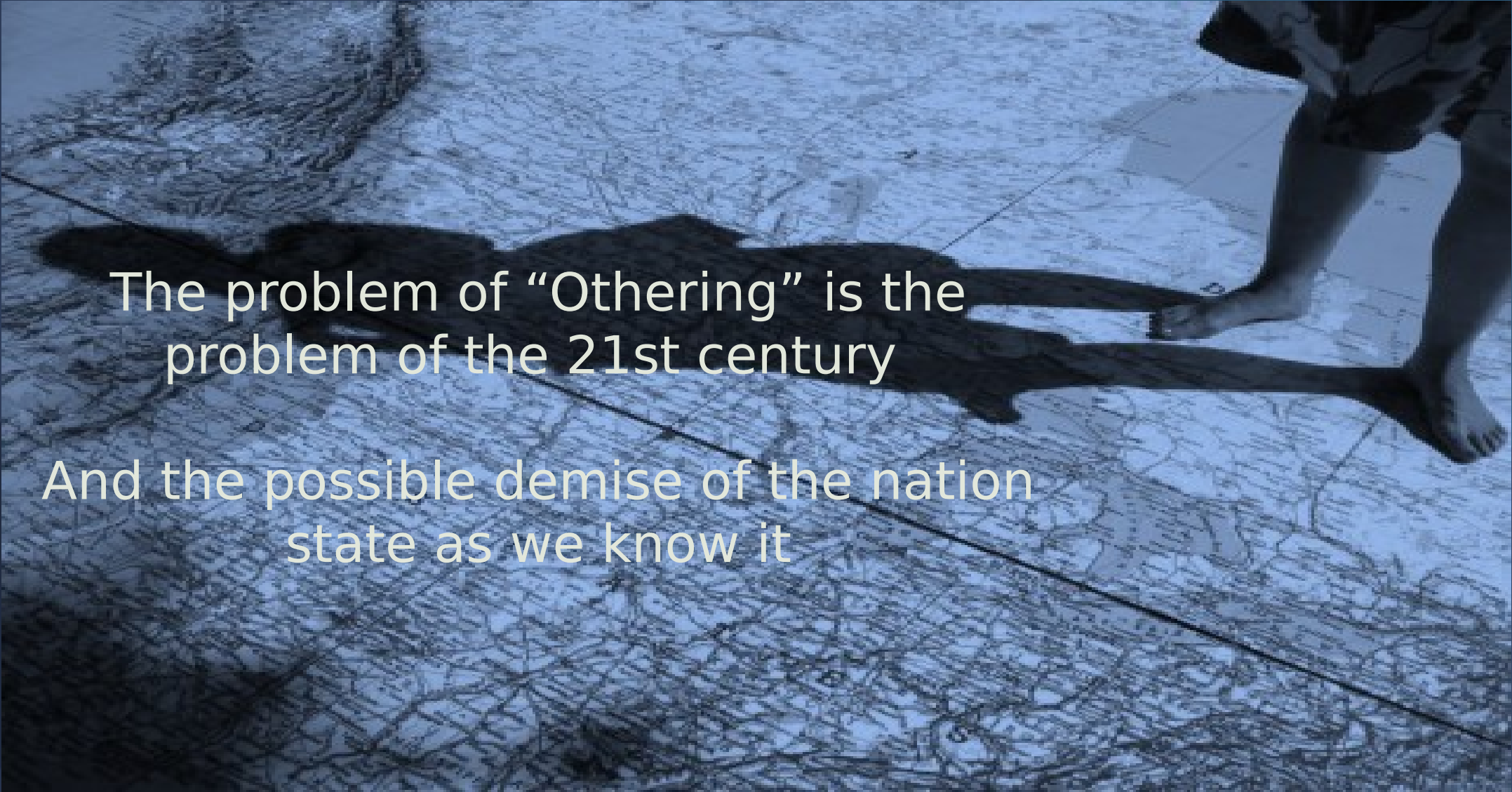
Racial Segregation







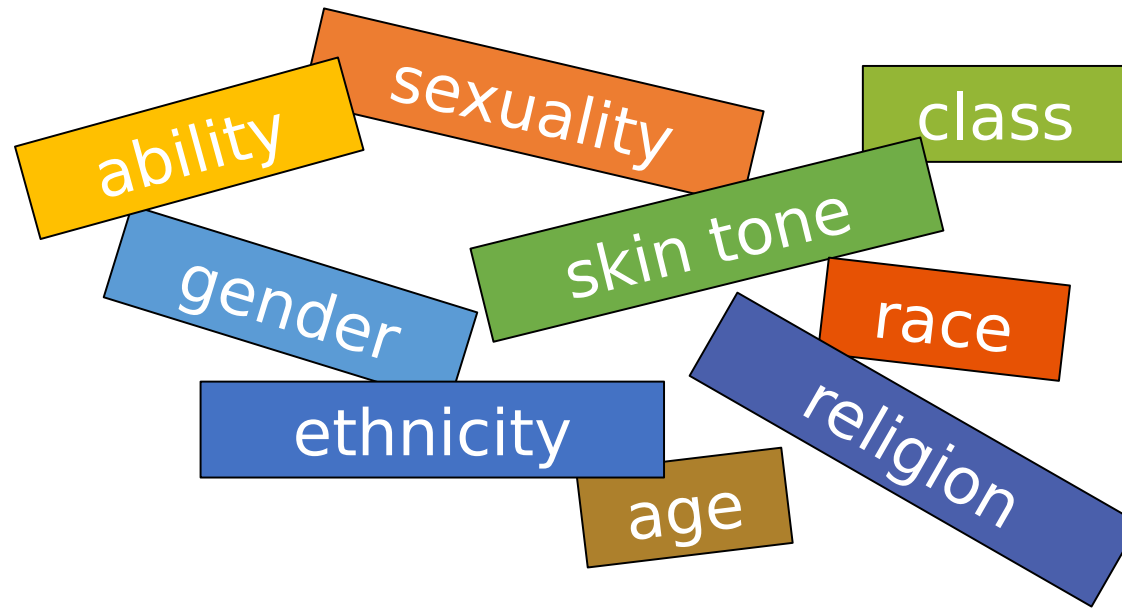
**WE  
CAN'T  
BREATHE**

A photograph of a person's legs and feet standing on a large map of the United States. The person is wearing a patterned skirt and sandals. Their shadow is cast onto the map, appearing as a dark silhouette of a person. The map shows state boundaries and major cities. The overall image has a blue tint.

The problem of “Othering” is the  
problem of the 21st century

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





**Othering** is a generalized set of common processes that engender marginality and group-based inequality across any of the full range of human differences

# Indices of Othering

**Lack of effective voice**

**Lack of representation**

**Lack of recognition**

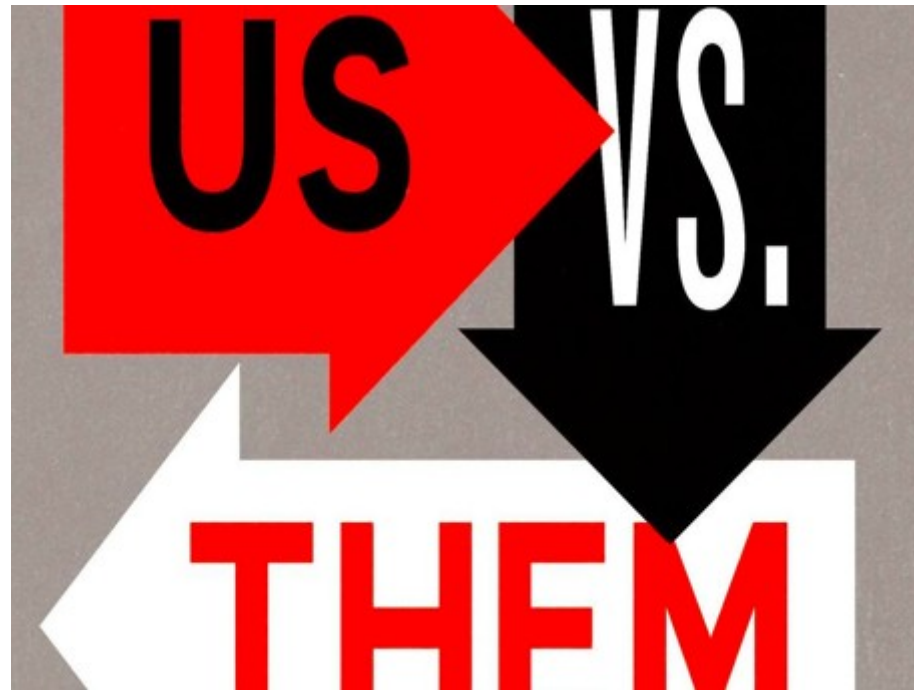
**Lack of power**



*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.*



“Breaking language frames efforts for equality and justice as being ‘us vs. them,’ a zero-sum game where one group’s benefit comes to another group’s detriment...”





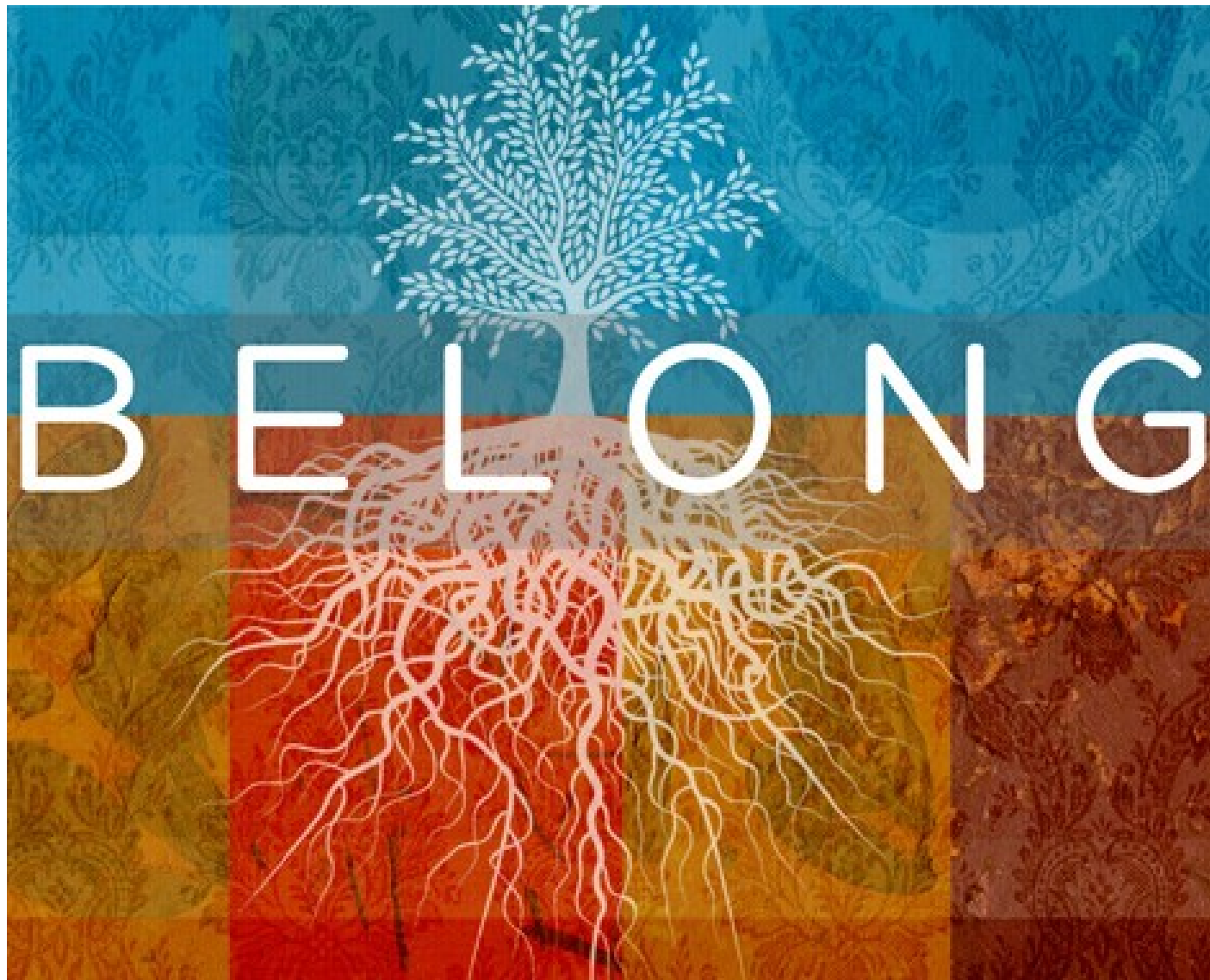
**IN THE MIDST OF  
EVERY CRISIS, LIES  
GREAT OPPORTUNITY**

**ALBERT EINSTEIN**



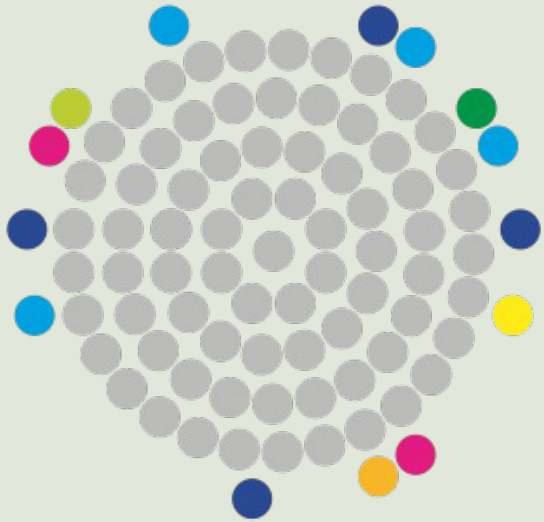
A close-up photograph of many red, glossy spheres arranged in rows, with one blue sphere standing out in the middle. The spheres are highly reflective, showing bright highlights and dark shadows. The background is a solid blue color.

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

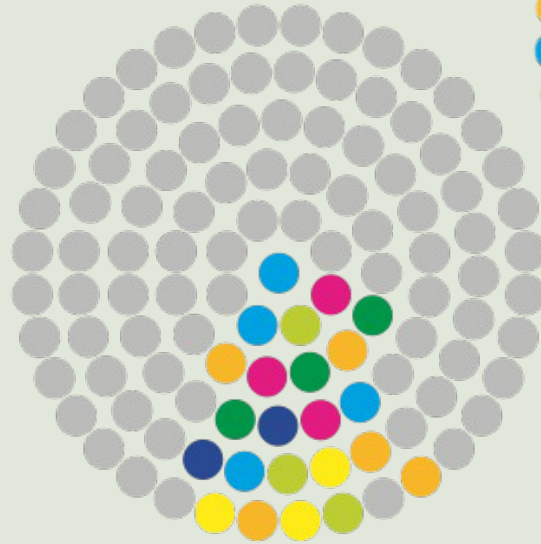


- Belonging or being fully human means more than having access. Belonging entails being respected at a basic level that includes the right to both co-create and make demands upon society.

**Belonging**



Exclusion



Inclusion



Belonging





Ubuntu  
u

“I am because  
...yOU are”

# 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

# Bridging On the One Hand, Breaking on the Other



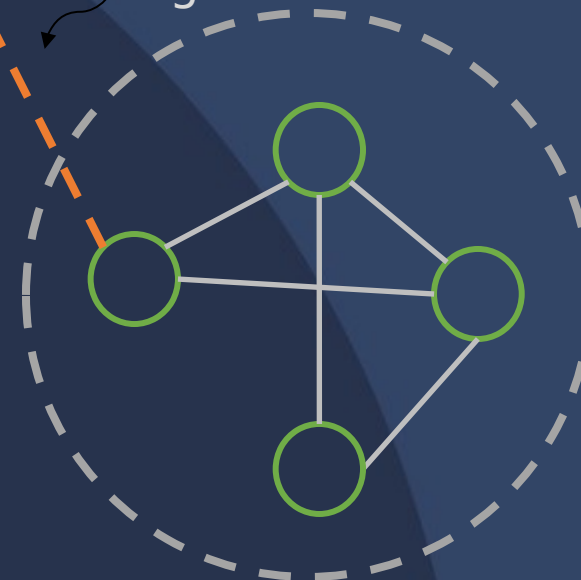
## BREAKI

**NG** Social ties among an exclusive group who explicitly push away from other groups who are seen as dangerous or a threat.



## BRIDGI

**NG** Social ties that link people together with others across a cleavage that typically divides society.







# 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.

# 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.



# Transactional vs Transformational

| <b>Transactional Leadership</b>  | <b>Transformational Leadership</b>  |
|--|---|
| <b>Leadership is responsive and its basic orientation is dealing with present issues</b> | <b>Leadership is proactive and forms new expectations in followers</b>      |
| <b>Works within the organizational culture</b>   | <b>Works to change the organizational culture by implementing new ideas</b> |



Belonging  
requires  
agency  
power, love  
and  
responsibility  
to co-create.

Co-  
creating

Change

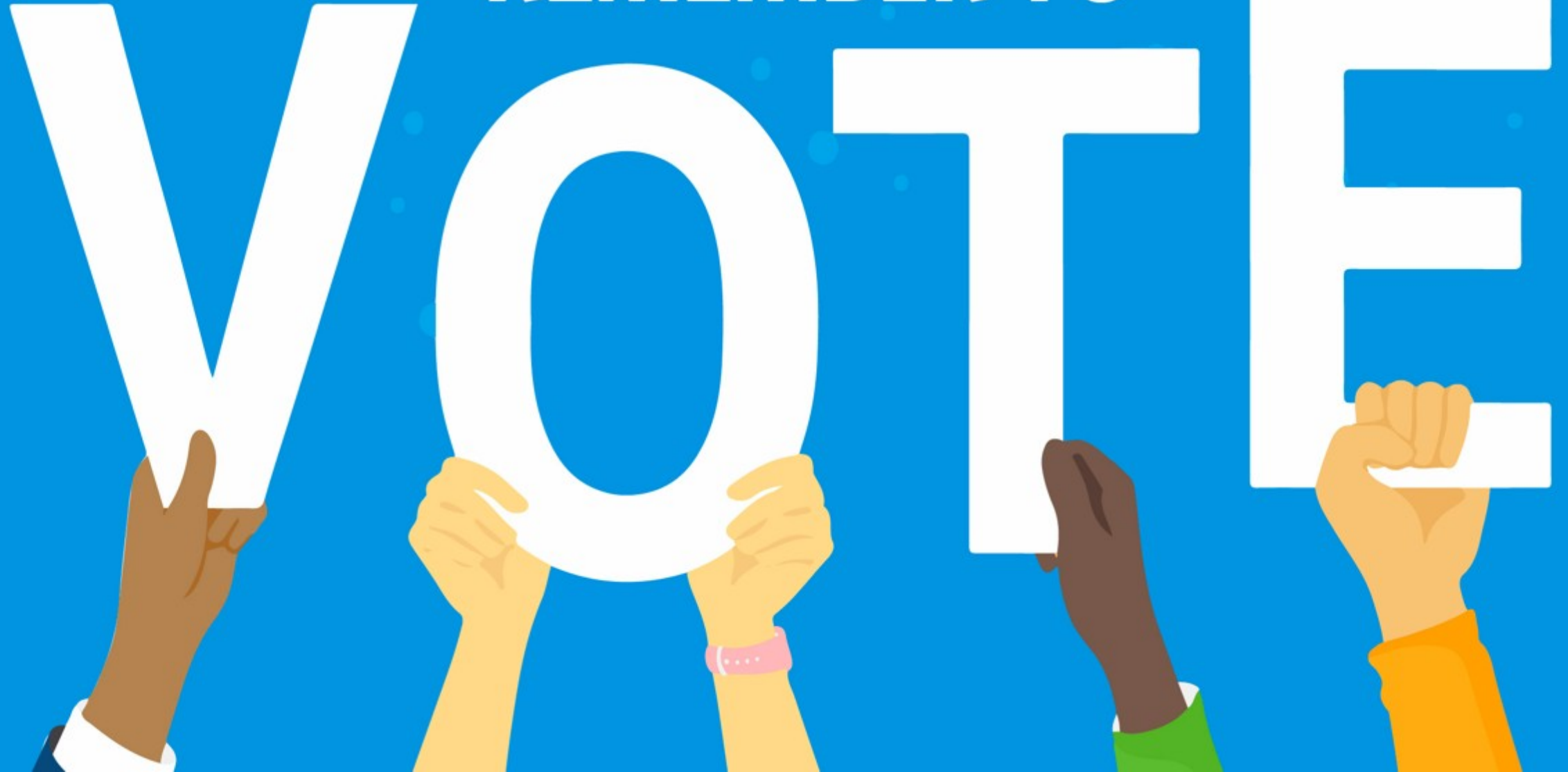


Bridging  
or  
Breaking  
?

The stories  
we tell will  
create both  
the future we  
inhabit and  
who we are to



**REMEMBER TO**



# Q&A

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS SESSION

