Developing a Strategic Narrative to Combat Structural Racism

November 12, 2016 - Atlanta, GA
WORKSHOP AGENDA

1. Introductions (5 min.)
2. Defining Structural Racism (5 min.)
3. Defining Othering and Belonging (5 min.)
4. Defining Strategic Narrative (20 min.)
5. Q&A (15 min.)
6. Small Group Discussions (20 min.)
7. Small Group Report Backs (15 min.)
8. Wrap-up (5 min.)
DEFINITIONS OF STRUCTURAL RACISM

HAAS INSTITUTE:
Structures (institutions, markets, policies and norms) that generate or reinforce group-based advantages and disadvantages and shape life chances on the basis of race.

RACEFORWARD:
Structural Racism in the U.S. is the normalization and legitimization of an array of dynamics – historical, cultural, institutional and interpersonal – that routinely advantage whites while producing cumulative and chronic adverse outcomes for people of color. It is a system of hierarchy and inequity, primarily characterized by white supremacy – the preferential treatment, privilege and power for white people at the expense of Black, Latino, Asian, Pacific Islander, Native American, Arab and other racially oppressed people.
**STRUCTURAL**
Dynamic, cumulative, among institutions, durable

**INSTITUTIONAL**
Bias in policies & practices in a school, agency, etc.

**INTERPERSONAL**
Bigotry and implicit bias between individuals

**PERSONAL**
Beliefs within individuals, including stereotype threat
Structural racialization limits opportunity

We can define opportunity through **access** to…

- **EDUCATION**
- **ECONOMIC**
- **TRANSPORTATION**
- **FOOD**
- **HOUSING**
- **JUSTICE**
- **HEALTHCARE**
- **COMMUNICATIONS**
Opportunity Structures: Space, Place, & Life Outcomes

• **Opportunity structures** are the web of influences 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.
Spatial, racial, and opportunity segregation impact a number of life opportunities

- Health
- School segregation
- Educational achievement
- Exposure to crime; arrest
- Transportation limitations and other inequitable public services
- Job segregation
- Racial stigma and other psychological issues
- Community power and individual assets
City of Flint, Michigan

- Second poorest city in the US, hit hard by deindustrialization
- 40% of residents earn below the poverty line (state average: 16.2%)
- The city is predominantly black
- Using 2007-2011 census: 3 out of 4 persons living in high-poverty neighborhoods of concentrated poverty were non-white
The problem of OTHERING is the problem of the 21st century
Ben Carson

Syrian refugees as “rabid dogs”

Donald Trump

Calls for a database of Muslims in the US
Circle of Human Concern
Who Will We Become?

- U.S. will be majority people of color by 2040
- California became majority people of color in 2000
- How do we convert this power into historic change for communities that have been left out?
- Strategic Narrative gives us a north star that unifies communities, issues, and policies to make possible a broad platform of progressive change
STRUCTURAL CONDITIONS FUELED BY RACE

Concentrated Wealth & Racialized Inequality

Extraction of wealth
Re-write the rules

Divided & Marginalized Communities

Weak power

Exclusive Government
WHAT IS A STRATEGIC NARRATIVE?

A strategic narrative is meant to convey a set of core values and a vision (rather than a set of policies) against an assessment of the dominant social and economic realities and forces of the day—and it holds true across issues and movements. Strategic narrative is applied as much to raps on the door, editorials in the newspapers, and in television ads as it does to philanthropic portfolios and research agendas. It is to be the underpinning of more specific narratives and messages. While the exact words may vary, the underlying values are. It is the constant reference that helps to give it is power. While it points to values, it does more that just reflect existing dominant values. It also aims to move people to embrace those values.
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Components of Strategic Narrative

- Values
- Vision
- Analysis of Society

Strategic Narrative
RIGHT-WING NARRATIVE

- Individualism
  - Used to amass power & wealth.
- Ineffective Government
- Free Market
  - Strategic Racism
  - Racial Anxiety
  - Unconscious Bias
Figure 4. **The Evolution of Koch Core Political Organizations**

Ideas, Policy Advocacy, Donor Coordination, Constituency Mobilization, Utilities

- Cato Institute
- Mercatus Center
- Charles G. Koch Foundation
- Citizens for a Sound Economy
- 60 Plus Association
- Center to Protect Patient Rights/American Encore
- American Energy Alliance
- Koch Seminars
- Freedom Partners Chamber of Commerce
- Americans for Prosperity/ AFP Foundation
- Generation Opportunity
- Libre Initiative
- Concerned Veterans for America
- Themis/i360
- Aegis Strategic

![Graph showing the timeline of Koch Core Political Organizations from 1975 to 2015](image)
PILLARS OF A PROGRESSIVE STRATEGIC NARRATIVE

Eliminate Racialized Inequality

Inclusion & Belonging

Empathy & Bridging Based Identity

Inclusive & Responsive Government
Strategic Narrative Infrastructure

B4B Next Steps

Communications & Media: Develop an aligned B4B comms strategy; develop effective messages for our initiatives

Power Building & Campaigns

Alliances That Address Anxiety

Research & Analysis: public views on our strategic narrative informed by mind science; regional analysis

Elected’s & Government

Philanthropy

Political Identity

Capacity Building: Develop political education & other curriculum for refining, advancing, & operationalizing the strategic narrative

Policy & Law
Understand what is driving racialized inequality and develop a strategic narrative and agendas for structural belonging.

Engage organizations & networks in developing & using a political education curriculum & in refining the strategic narrative.

Work with organizations and networks to build infrastructures to advance the strategic narrative.
Large Group Discussion

What resonates with you?

What do you disagree with?

What are your questions?
Small Group Discussion

- Do you think strategic narrative could be valuable to your work? If so, how?
- How would you apply strategic narrative to your work?
- What capacity do you need to move forward?
THANK YOU!