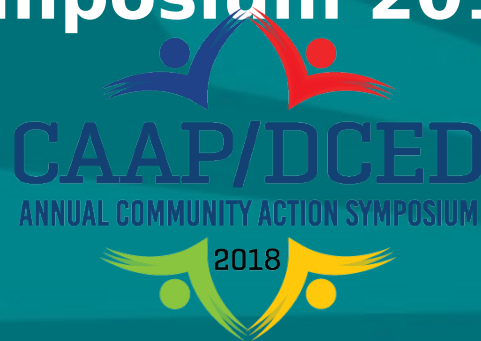# CAAP/DCED Annual Community Action Symposium 2018

Opening Keynote: Race and Poverty in a Time of Othering

PRESENTER:
john a. powell

DATE:
April 19, 2018

Who do you call?

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Who do you call in an emergency?

Does it matter whether you are . . .

- ❖ White?

- ❖ Latinx?

- ❖ Female?

- ❖ Living life in the U.S. undocumented?

Understanding Implicit/Unconscious Bias

- People's conscious values and beliefs are only part of how they process information and make decisions

- Many biases affecting behavior towards others reside in the unconscious mind

Understanding Implicit/Unconscious Bias

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- In other words, people who consciously value racial or other forms of equality can act and make decisions based on biases without even being aware that they have any biases at all

- Implicit/unconscious bias is when a person's actions are motivated by unconscious processes.

4

How Implicit/Unconscious Bias

Leads to Discrimination

- When one holds a negative stereotype about a group and meets someone who fits the stereotype s/he may discriminate against that individual

- It occurs even among persons who are not consciously prejudiced

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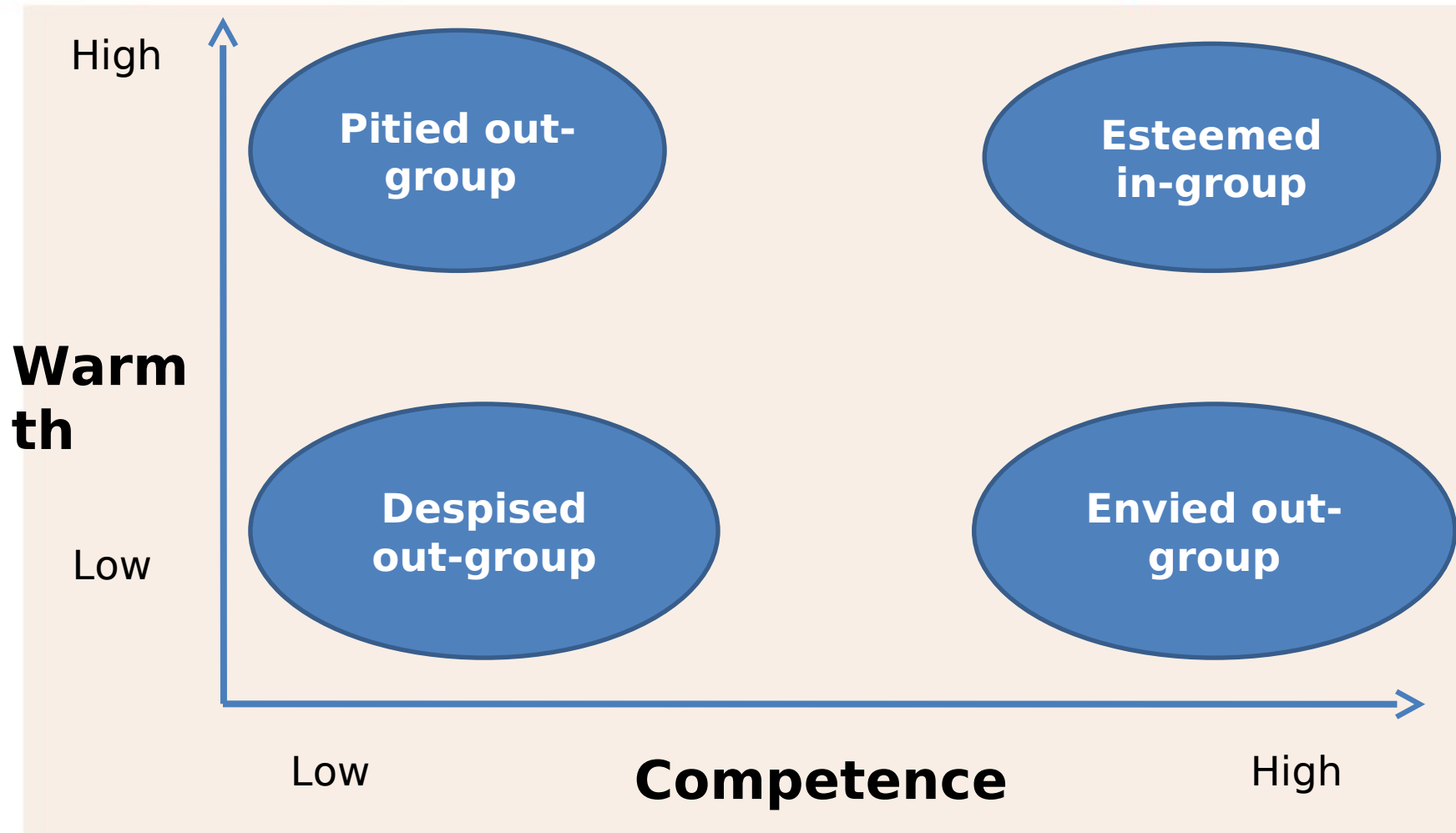FOR A FAIR AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETY

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Priming

- Our environment affects our unconscious networks
- Priming activates mental associations
  - Telling someone a scary story activates a frame of fear

- Claude Steele's "stereotype threat":
  - For example, tell students about to take a test that Asian students tend to do better than whites, and the whites will perform significantly worse than if they had not been primed to think of themselves as less capable than Asians.
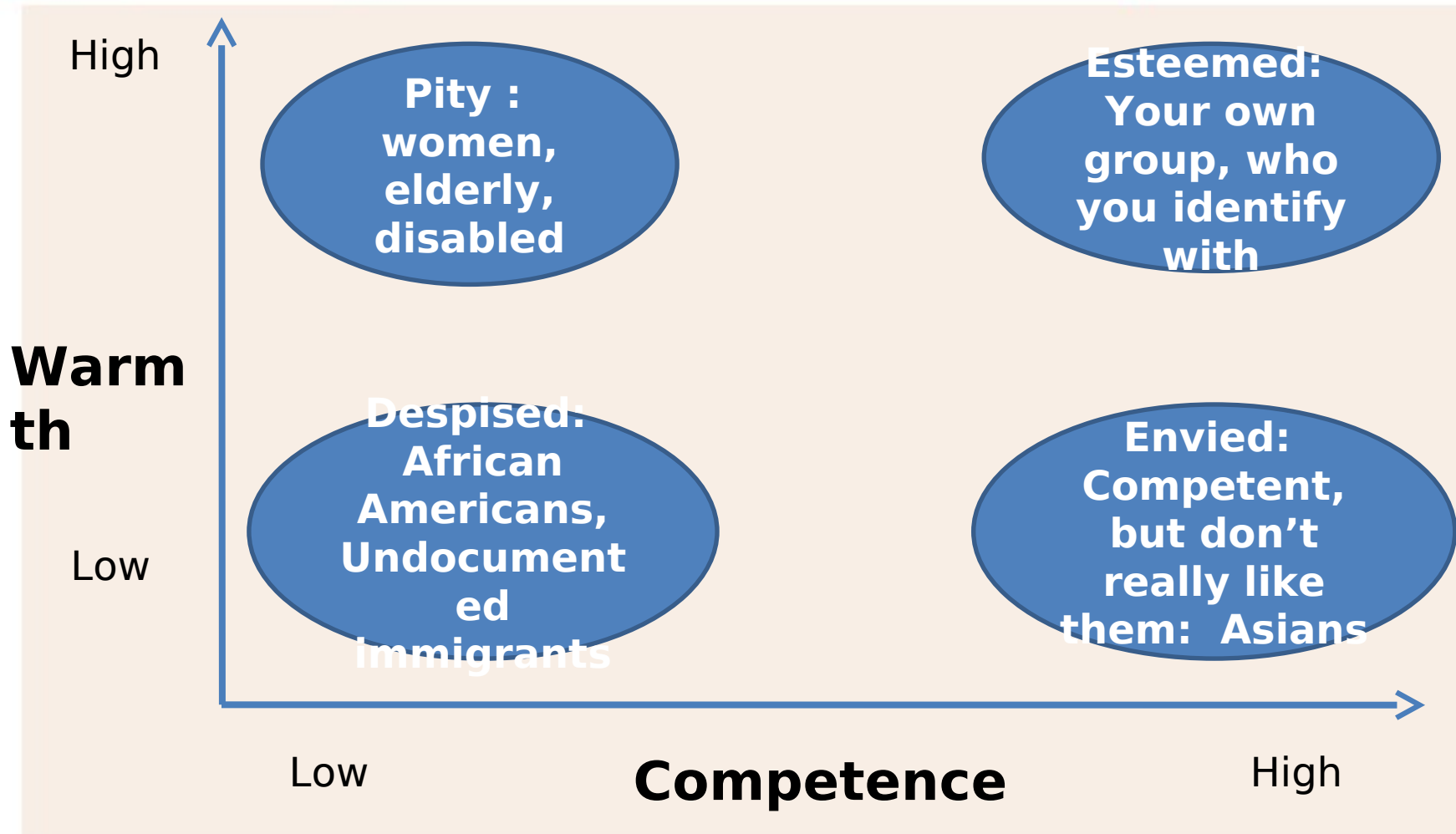
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- Individuation: focus on the individual attributes of specific person versus categorization or perceiving person through filter of their social group
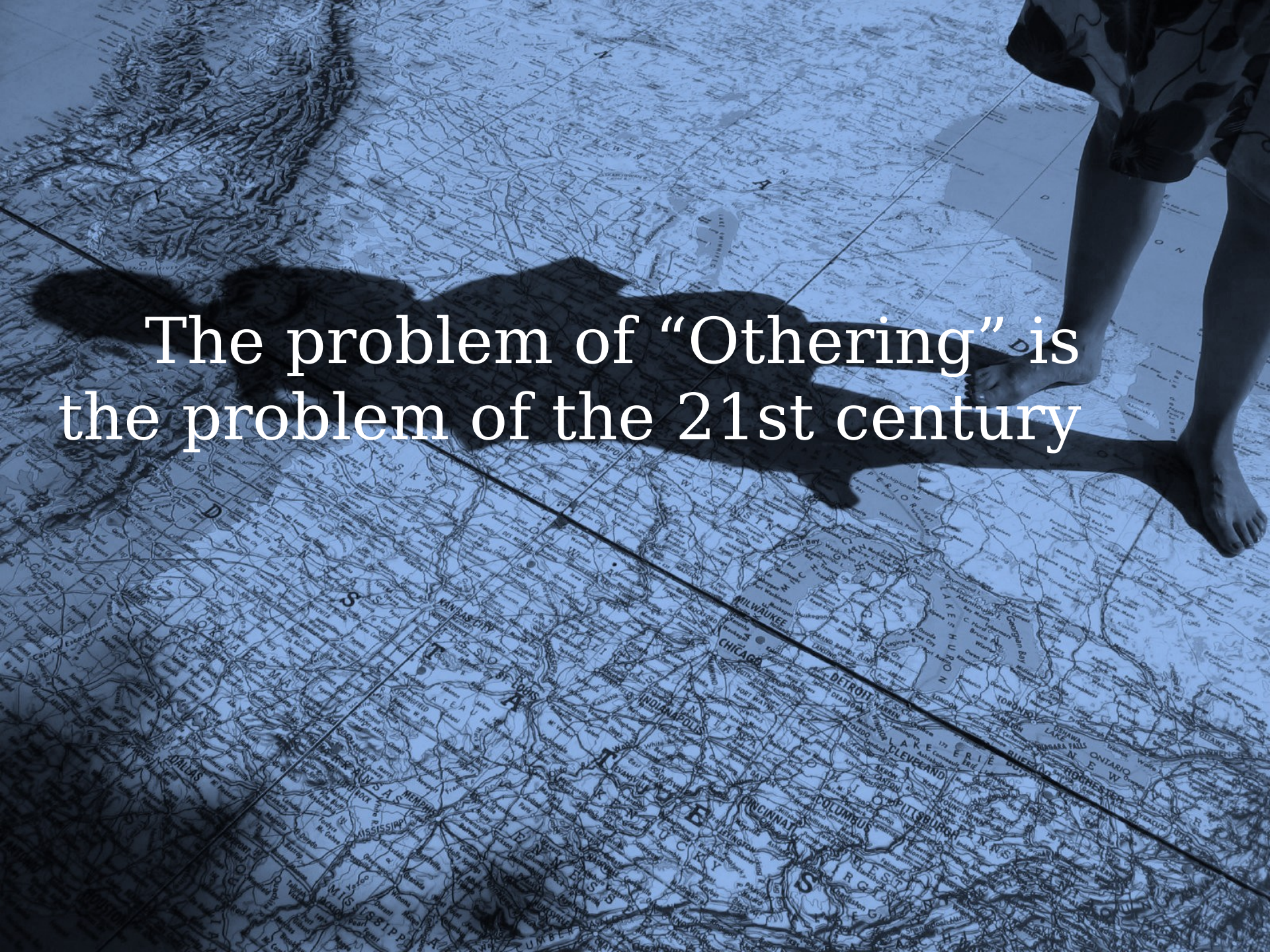
Stereotype Content Model

Social Cognition: Warmth and Competence

Warm th

High

Pity : women, elderly, disabled

Esteemed: Your own group, who you identify with

Despised: African Americans, Undocumented Immigrants

Envied: Competent, but don't really like them: Asians

Low

Low   **Competence**   High

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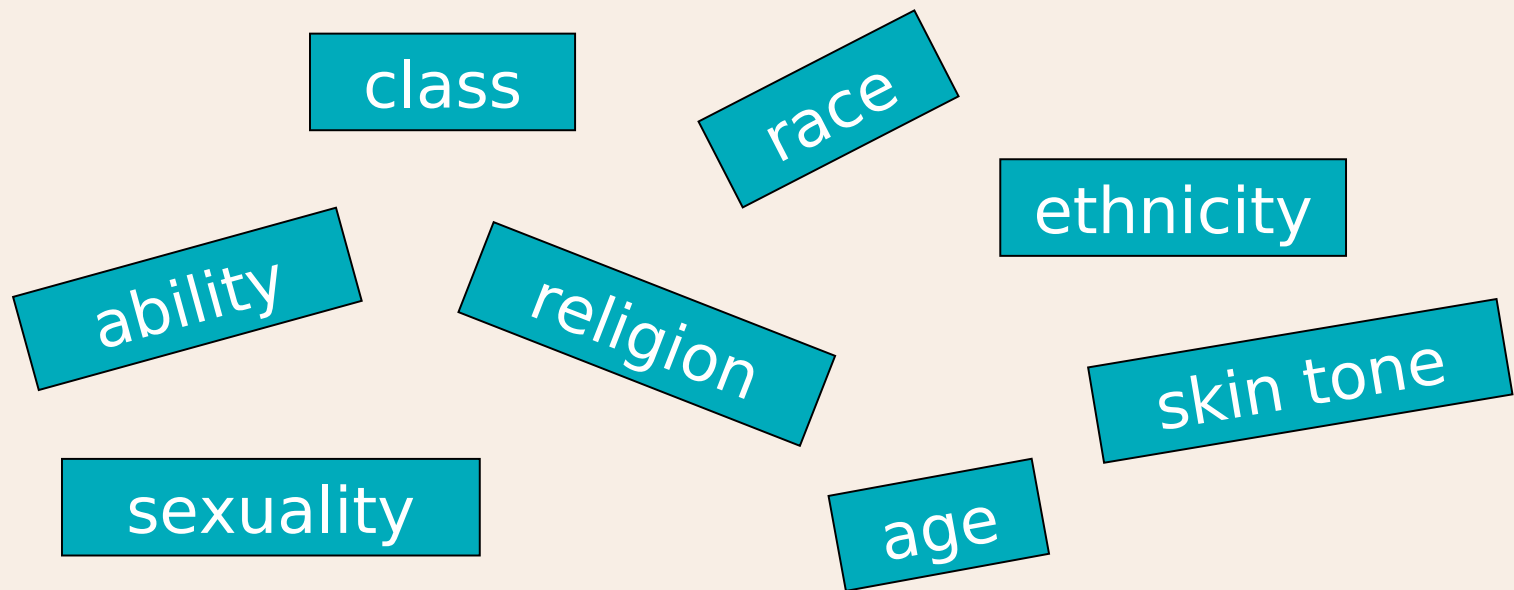The problem of "Othering" is the problem of the 21st century

"Othering," defined…

We define othering as a set of processes, structures, and dynamics that engender marginality and persistent inequality across any of the full range of human differences. Othering and marginality can occur on a group basis or at the individual level.

Dimensions of othering.

Dimensions include but are not limited to, sex, religion, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, disability, sexual orientation, and skin tone.

class

race

ethnicity

ability

religion

skin tone

sexuality
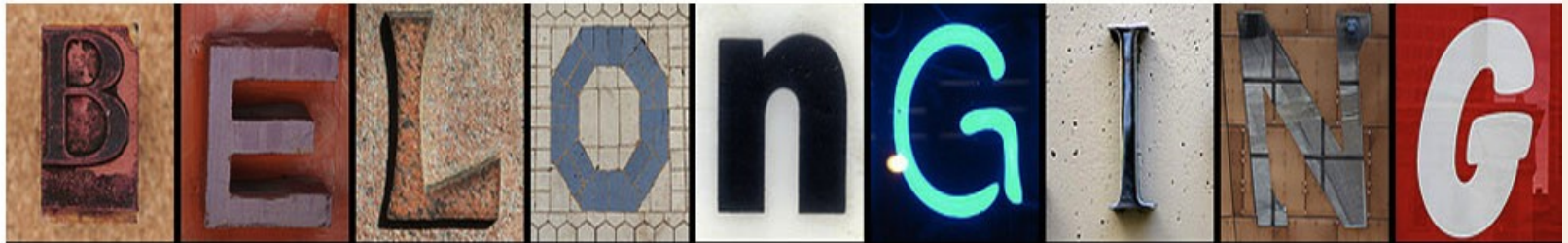
age

Othering, health, and well-being.

Othering and uncivil discourse can affect one's health. After 9/11, there was an increase in harassment and discrimination of Arab Americans. A study looking at Arab American women that gave birth 6 months prior to 9/11, and 6 months after 9/11, found that the women who gave birth 6 months after 9/11 were more likely to give birth to low-weight and premature infants.

Source: Here's how racism and uncivil discourse can affect your health, *Washington Post*

Belonging, defined.

The term belonging reflects an objective position as well as the inter-subjective nature of group-based identities. In that respect, the process of othering and belonging are deeply relational and important in forming group identities and the self.

We all need to *belong*.

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.

Belonging, health, and well-being.

Our social networks impact our health and well-being.

❖A person's social network is a key predictor in whether an individual will become a victim of a gun homicide, even more so than race, age, gender, poverty, or gang affiliation.

❖Individuals who lack social networks tend to suffer higher rates of morbidity and mortality, as well as infection, depression and cognitive decline.

❖Social disconnectedness is associated with worse physical health, regardless of whether it prompts feelings of loneliness or perceived lack of social support.

All of our lives are made up of multiple networks.

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Our lives are made up of many different networks. Social networks; business and professional networks; community networks; and opportunity networks.
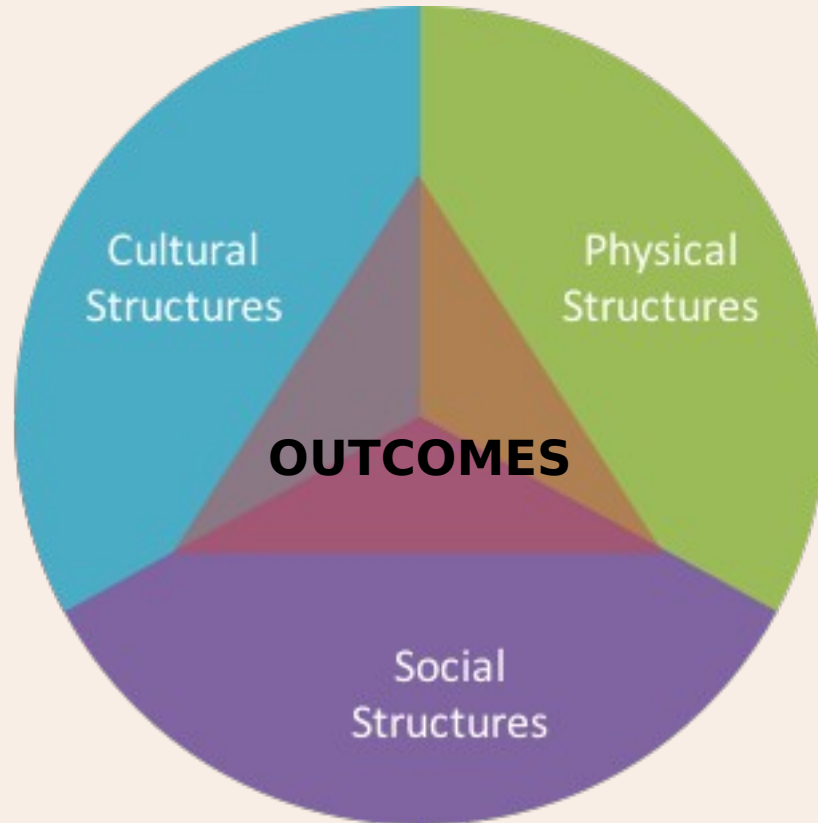
What are the structures that affect our lives?

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What are the structures that affect our lives?

How are these structures connected?

Understanding structures as systems.

We are all situated within structures but not evenly

These structures interact in ways that produce a differential in outcomes

Feedback Loops: Opportunity is Racialized

- Structures and policies are not neutral
- They unevenly distribute benefits and burdens to different groups differently
- Institutions can operate jointly to produce racialized outcomes

School segregation and concentrated poverty

Lower educational outcomes

Increased flight of affluent families

Racial and economic neighborhood segregation

Place and opportunity structures.

Neighborhoods & access to opportunity

- Five decades of research indicate that your environment has a profound impact on your access to opportunity and likelihood of success
- High poverty areas with poor employment, underperforming schools, distressed housing, and public health/safety risks depress life outcomes
  - A system of disadvantage
  - Many manifestations: urban, rural, suburban
- People of color are far more likely to live in opportunity: deprived neighborhoods and communities
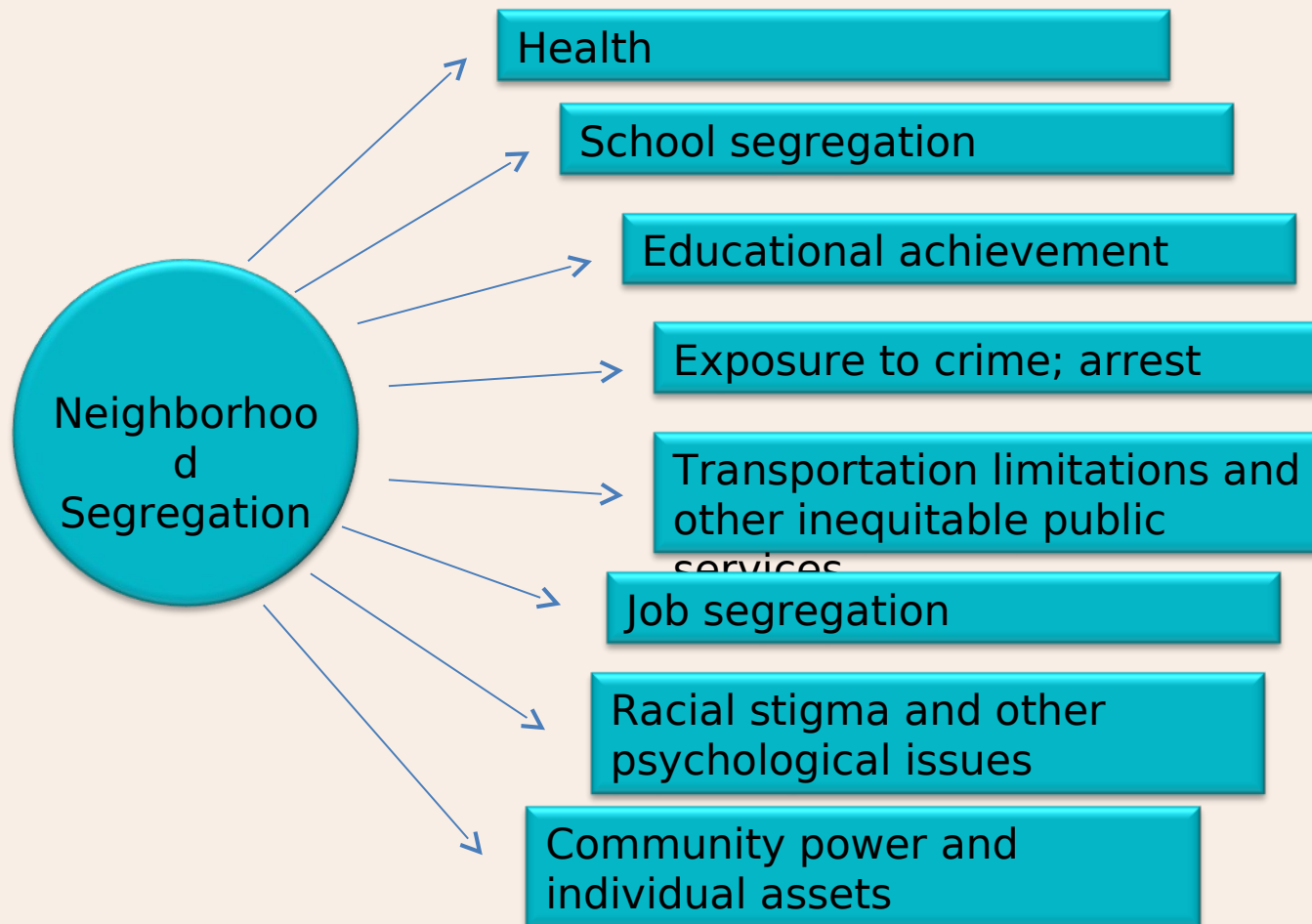
Multidimensional understanding of opportunity

Structural Inequality

Example — bird in a cage:

•Examining one bar cannot explain why a bird cannot fly. But multiple bars, arranged in specific ways, reinforce each other and trap the bird.

Spatial, racial, and opportunity segregation impact a number of life opportunities.

Neighborhood Segregation

- 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

The Impact of Concentrated Foreclosures in a Neighborhood

THE TOLL ON ONE STREET

According to Cuyahoga County records, there have been foreclosure filings against at least 37 of the 123 properties on the half-mile block of East 144th Street between Kinsman Road and Bartlett Avenue since 2006. The street is in Cleveland's Mount Pleasant neighborhood. Some of the homes shown in this photo, taken in 2006, have since been demolished.

KEY FOR FORECLOSURES

- Filings in 2006
- Filings in 2007
- Filing in 2008

SOURCES: Cuyahoga County engineer's office, Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Court.

Cleveland

By the numbers

- More than 15,000 foreclosure lawsuits were filed in Cuyahoga in 2007, up from 3,000 in 1995.
- There are an estimated 10,000 abandoned or vacant homes in Cleveland.
- There were $1.6 billion in subprime loans issued in Cuyahoga in 2006, the peak year.
- Properties within 100 feet of abandoned homes lost an average of $5,000 to $7,000 in market value.

SOURCES: Testimony from housing; City of Cleveland; Frank Ford of Neighborhood Progress Inc.; Plain Dealer research

Find foreclosures in your neighborhood
cleveland.com/news/foreclosuredata

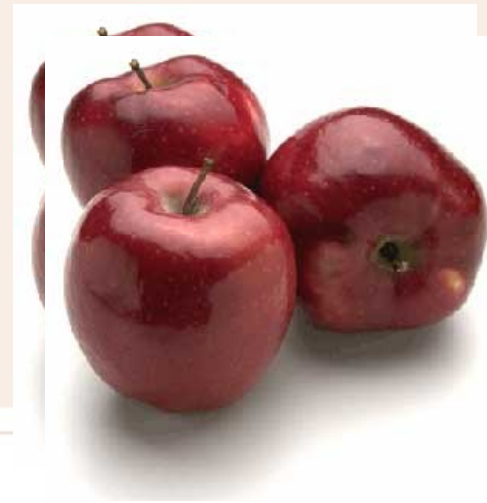**Read previous stories online**
cleveland.com/foreclosure

- ☐ Foreclosures pull wealth/equity and assets out of the neighborhood
- ☐ Widespread displacement of renters, homeowners which rips the neighborhood's social fabric and creates instability for school age children
- ☐ The growth of vacant property encourages crime, disinvestment and public safety risks
- ☐ Challenges which eventually ensnare all residents (even those who were never foreclosed upon)

Living in Low-Opportunity

- Reduces IQ points of students by 4 points, equivalent to one year of school (Sampson 2007)

- Generates unhealthy levels of stress hormones in children, which impairs their neural development

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- Correlates with children having levels of lead in their blood 9 times above the average; high levels of lead linked to ADD and <u>irreversible</u> loss of cognitive functioning

- Links to higher levels of violent offending among juveniles

- Is highly correlated with childhood aggression and social maladjustment

A Tale of High and Low Opportunity Structures

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Low Opportunity

- Less than 25% of students in Detroit finish high school
- More than 60% of the men will spend time in jail
- There may soon be no bus service in some areas
- It is difficult to attract jobs or private capital
- Not safe; very few parks
- Difficult to get fresh food

High Opportunity

- The year my step daughter finished high school, 100% of the students graduated and 100% went to college
- Most will not even drive by a jail
- Free bus service
- Relatively easy to attract capital
- Very safe; great parks
- Easy to get fresh food

Remedying Opportunity Isolation

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- Adopt strategies that open up access to levers of opportunity for marginalized individuals, families, and communities
  - Bring opportunities to opportunity-deprived areas

  - Connect people to exist throughout the metrop

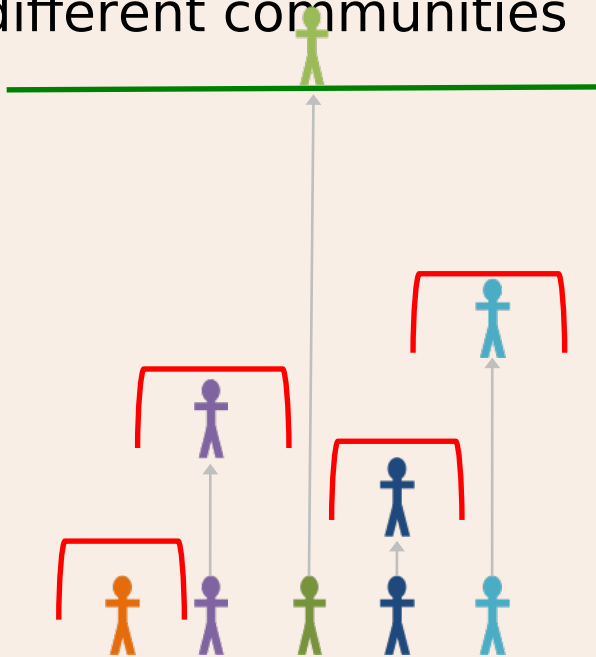 - Targeted Universalism

Moving towards structural inclusion.

We need to change the way our structures are built, operated, and reinforced. Specifically, we need to create structures and policies that bridge instead of break.

Audience assignment: Think of a policy that is either bridging or breaking. What makes this policy bridging or breaking? If the policy is breaking, how can it be turned into a bridging one?
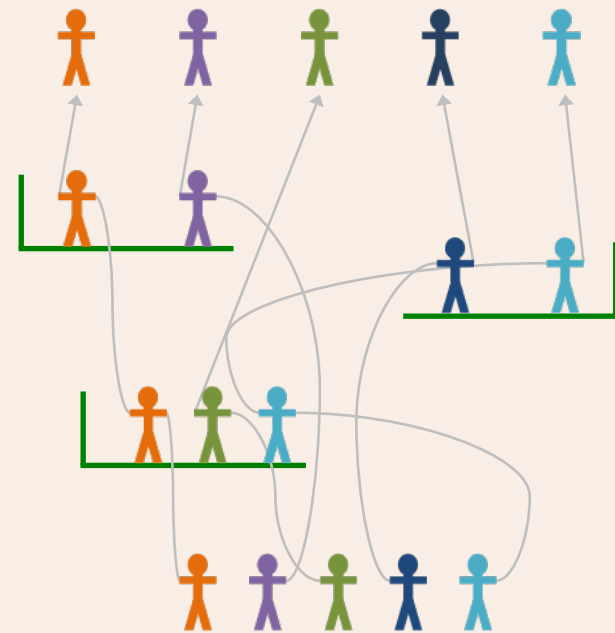
Targeted Universalism, Equity 2.0

Structural inequity produces consistently different outcomes for different communities

Targeted universalism responds with universal goals and targeted solutions

vs.

Why targeted universalism?

Universal Programs

Targeted Programs

Targeted Universalism

- ❖ Universal programs alone are not truly universal.
    - ❖ Often based on a non-universal standard.
    - ❖ Example: social security. Able-bodied white males working outside the home full-time for pay.
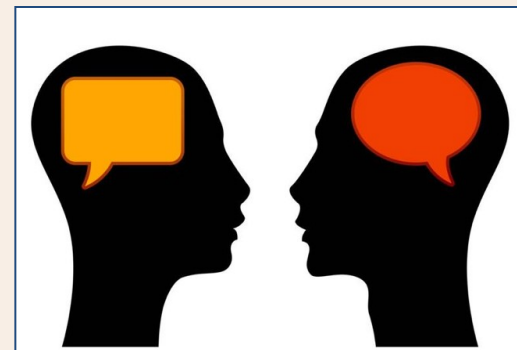
- ❖ Targeted programs alone are not desirable because they appear to show favoritism toward a certain group, thus stigmatizing them

- ❖ Targeted universalism recognizes racial disparities, while acknowledging their presence within a larger inequitable, institutional framework.   Set a benchmark for all.

Targeted Universalism, continued

❖ An **intervention strategy.**

    ❖ Repairs social cleavages not just distribution.

❖ A **communications strategy.**

    ❖ Employs strategic communications regarding universal goals and targeted approaches to inform the allocation of resources and policy approaches.

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.

❖ Set a universal bench mark/goal not dependent on the dominant group. As we move all to universal goal, disparities also addressed. This is not simple distributive. Should support the identification of specific obstacles in particular geographies that limit certain populations from reaching those goals.

❖ Should identify particular barriers and enhancement for target group.

❖ Situate targeted group as canary in mine if possible.

Problem Identification.

Level of Analysis	Problem	Possible Intervention
Individual Fix the Individual	Individuals sign loan documents that they don't understand	Borrower education
Institutional Fix the institution	A particular bank won't make loans in historically red-lined neighborhoods	Organize a local, regional or state action, file a lawsuit, etc. to force that particular bank to change its lending practices
Structural Fix the system	All of the major leaders in the area have stopped giving loans or will only give sub-prime loans in historically red-lined neighborhoods	Collaborate with national alliances working to increase and enforce fair lending practices, community reinvestment act, etc. through community organizing and advocacy at the state and national level
Global Fix the global system	Loans are no longer held by local or even national banks, but are owned by foreign governments	Work with national and transnational organizations to increase regulation of multinational corporations, and reduce regulation of transnational population migration

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The city of Austin, Texas, Department of Parks and Recreation developed a TU plan designed to improve recreational services and delivery by the department.

• They set as a universal goal that every resident should live within ¼ to ½ mile of a city park.

• An assessment revealed severe gaps for particular communities.

What *is* "race?"

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The Invention of Whiteness
with John a. powell Professor of Law, UC Berkeley

https://
www.youtube.com/
watch?v=bOYzr3mupbk

Framing the conversation on race

UNITY

LINKED FATE

Bridging conversation practice

- Shared suffering
- Empathy space
- Bridging practices

Closing thoughts & remarks

Read *Racing to Justice* today!

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