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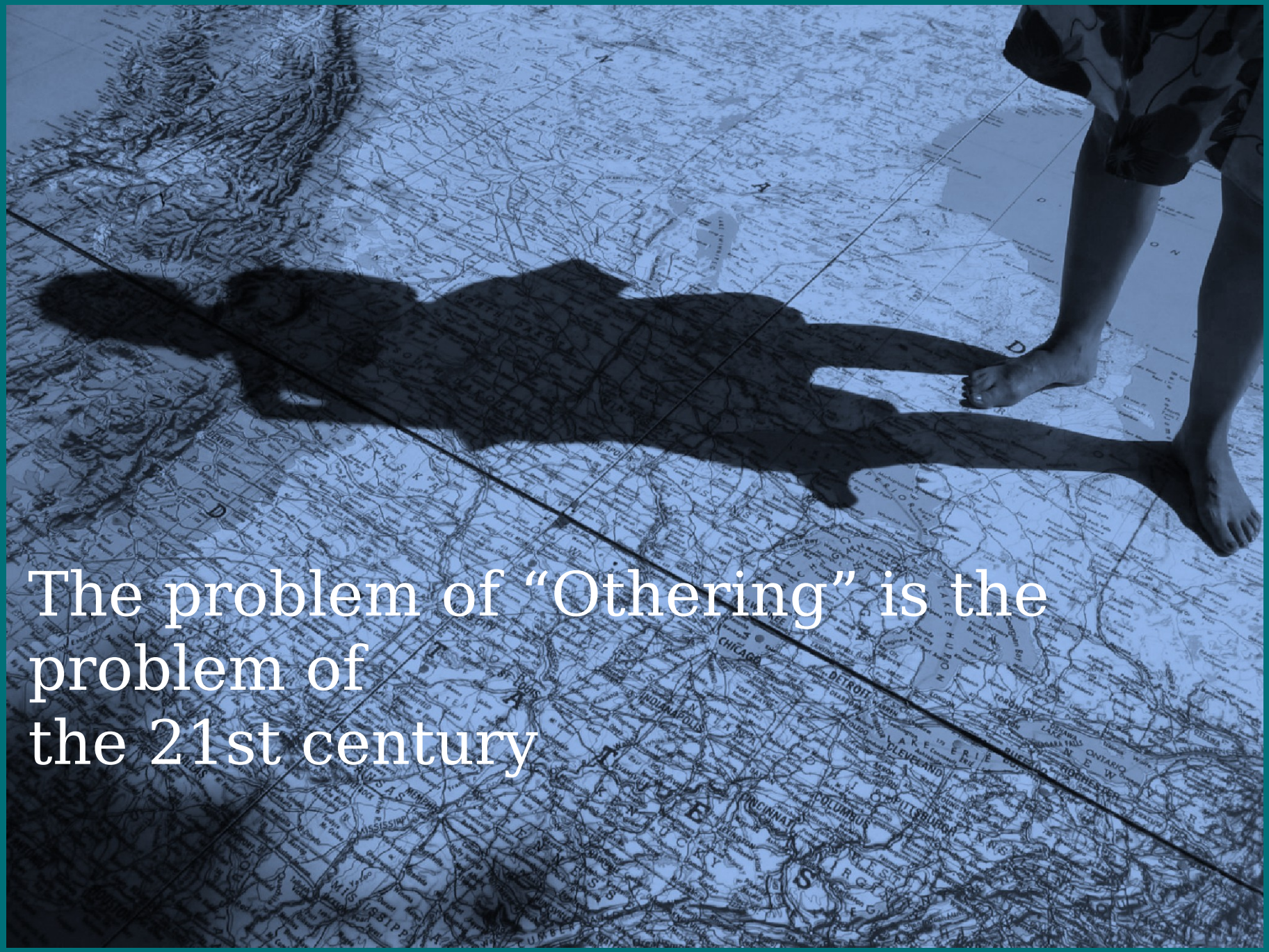
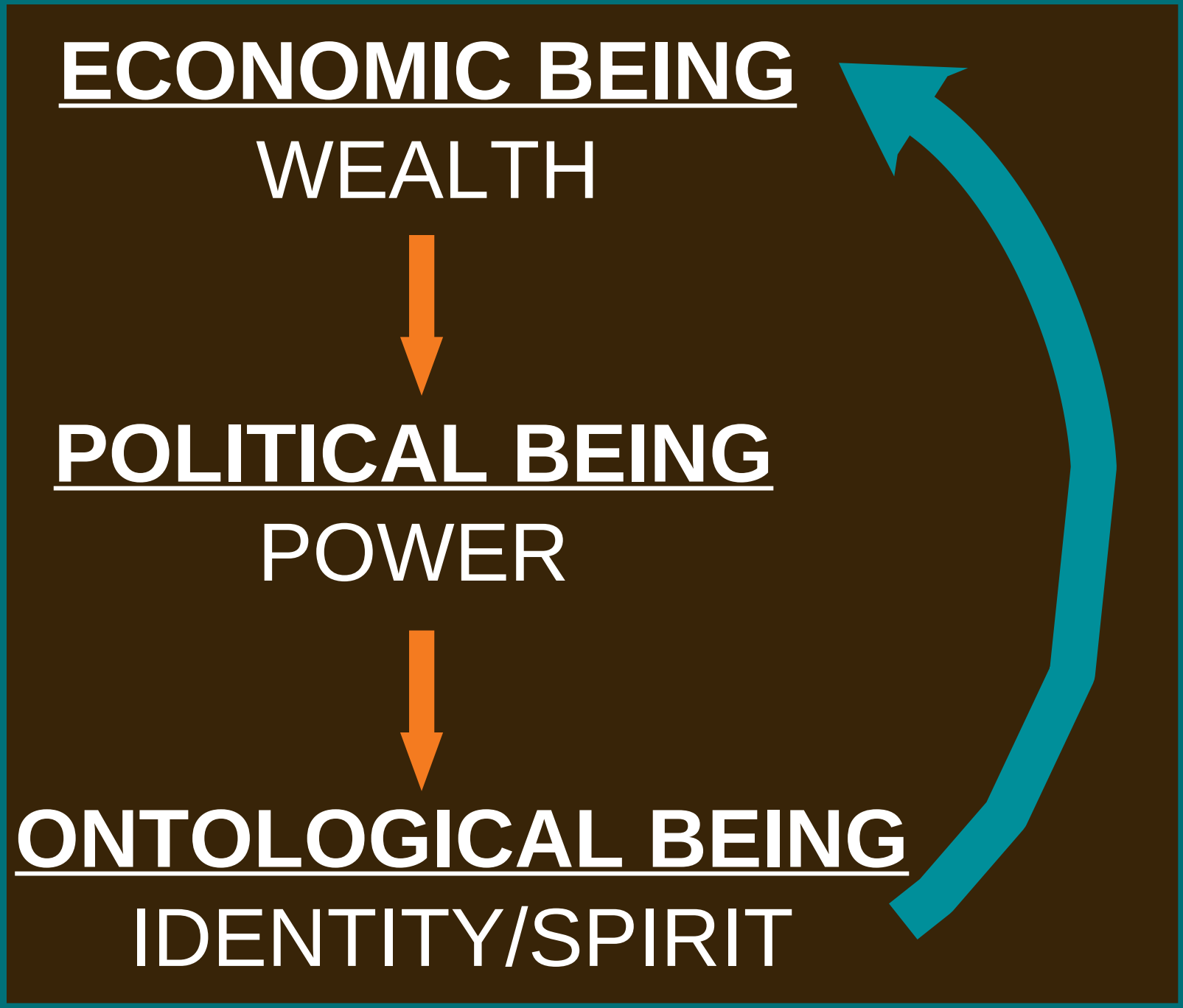
Marin Equity Summit

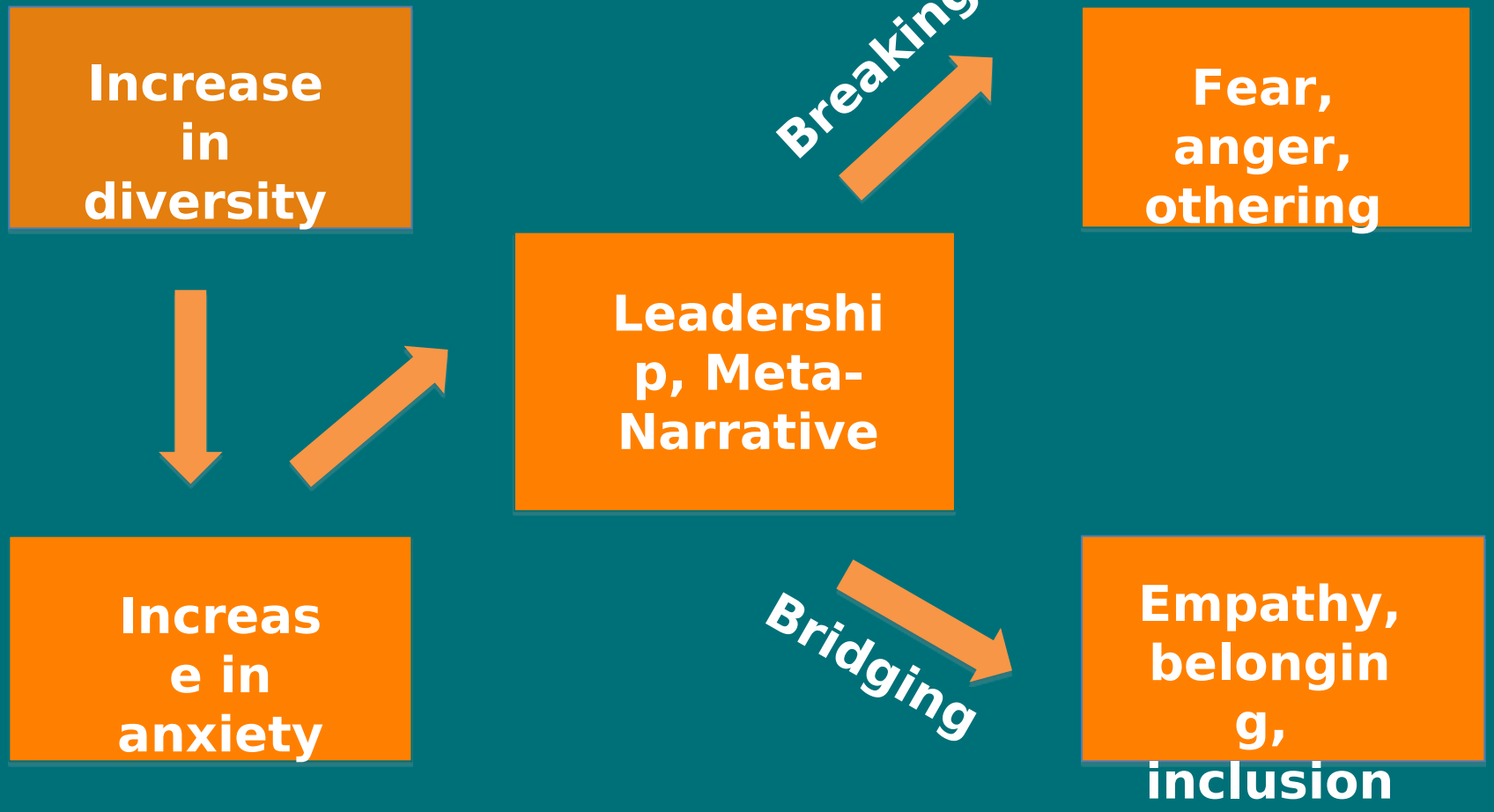
PRESENTER:
john a. powell

DATE:
November 9th, 2017


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


ECONOMIC BEING
WEALTH
POLITICAL BEING
POWER
ONTOLOGICAL BEING
IDENTITY/SPIRIT

As diversity grows, so does anxiety.



Framing the Conversation

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UNITY

BRIDGING

Framing the Conversation, continued…

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UNITY

- Focus on expanding the circle of human concern to include all humans.
- Focus on terms that bring people together rather than those that are divisive
- Focus on a “we” mindset and perspective, rather than an “us/them” mentality”

BRIDGING

- We are all deeply and profoundly connected.
- The fates of all people are inextricably linked.
- We need to understand the effect that structures, systems, and institutions have on ***all*** individuals.

“NIMBYism”

- **Not in My Backyard**
  - Means there is opposition to the locating of something considered “undesirable” in one’s neighborhood

- **The term first appeared nationally in the 1970s.**
- **The term started being used in Marin more recently.**

“NIMBYism” continued

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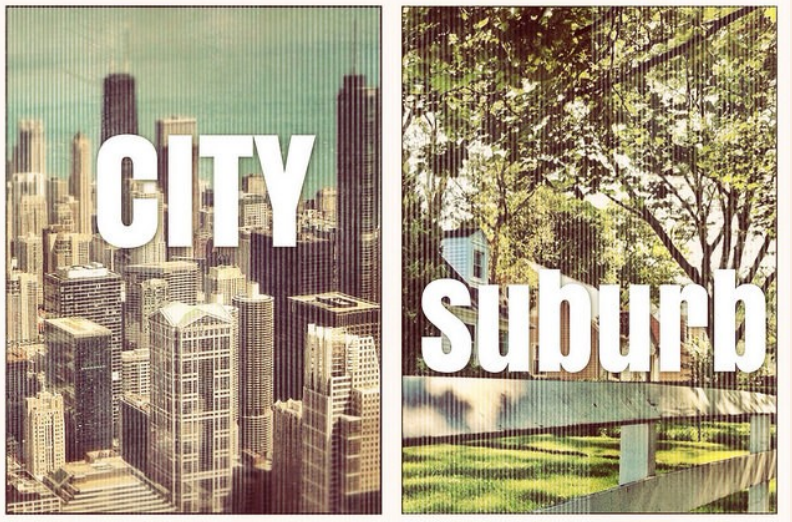
Assembly Bill 1537

- Adopted into law in 2014
  - Changed the designation of Marin County from “**metropolitan**” to “**suburban**” until 2023
  - This change requires fewer low-income housing units to be created



“NIMBYism” continued

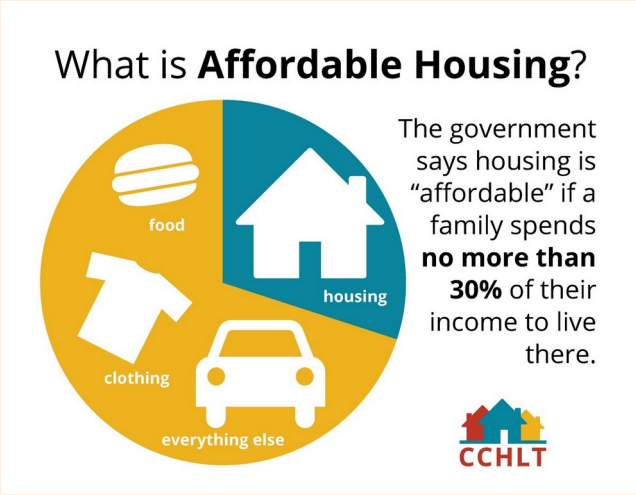
ABA 121

- Assemblyman Levine proposes extending Marin’s “suburban” designation until 2028

What housing crisis? Last-minute bill would let wealthy Marin County limit home building

Assemblyman Marc Levine (D-San Rafael), right, discusses legislation in 2016. (Rich Pedroncelli / Associated Press)

By Liam Dillon · Contact Reporter



Problems This Creates

- A family of four with an income of $105,350 per year is considered low-income in Marin County
  - Higher than Seattle, Boston, and Los Angeles
- Lack of low-income housing

Marin County Statistics

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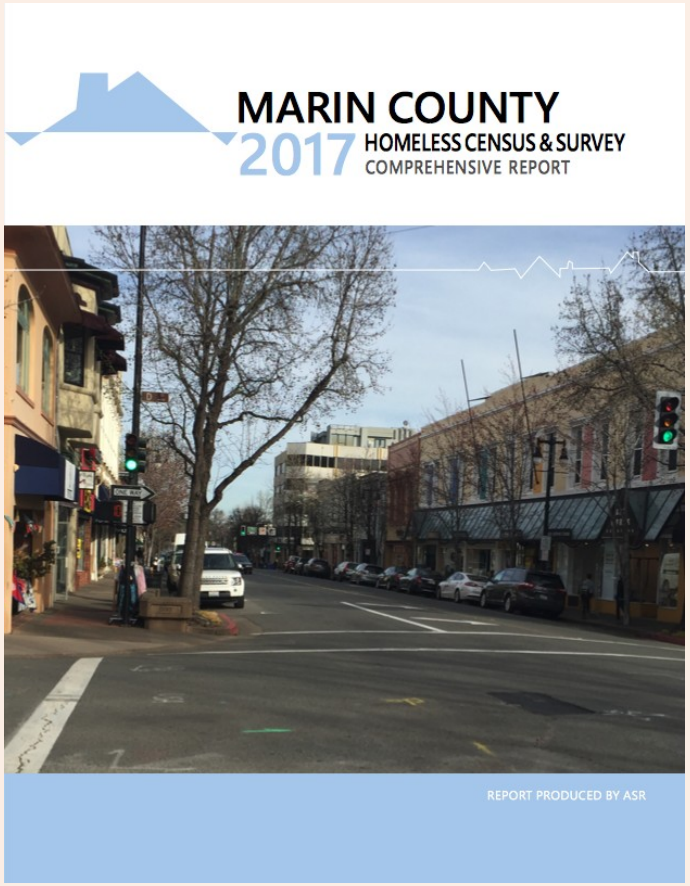
Point-in-Time Those Who are Homeless Report for Marin County

- 1,117 individuals were counted as without a home in Marin County
  - This means staying in transitional housing, shelters, and on the street during the Point-in-Time count
  - Down from 1,309 in 2017

Only 37% of those without a home were in shelters



Marin County Statistics

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The incidence of those without homes is down overall in Marin County but chronically being without a home is up

- 32% (239 people) of those who are without home were chronically without homes in 2017
  - The most common sleeping place is vehicles

- 71% of those who are without home lived in Marin County before becoming without homes, while 53% lived in Marin County for 10 or more years before becoming without a home

Marin County Statistics

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Youths without Homes

- 11% were children under the age of 18, 11% were transition-age youth (18-24 years old)
- The number of transition-age youth has declined from 377 to 121 since 2015
- Unaccompanied Children are all unsheltered (18 individuals)

Families

- 15% of families without homes are unsheltered (8 families, totaling 30 members)

Race

- 64% White, 15% Black or African American, 18% Hispanic/Latino, 3% American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 15% reported as multi-racial

Marin County Statistics

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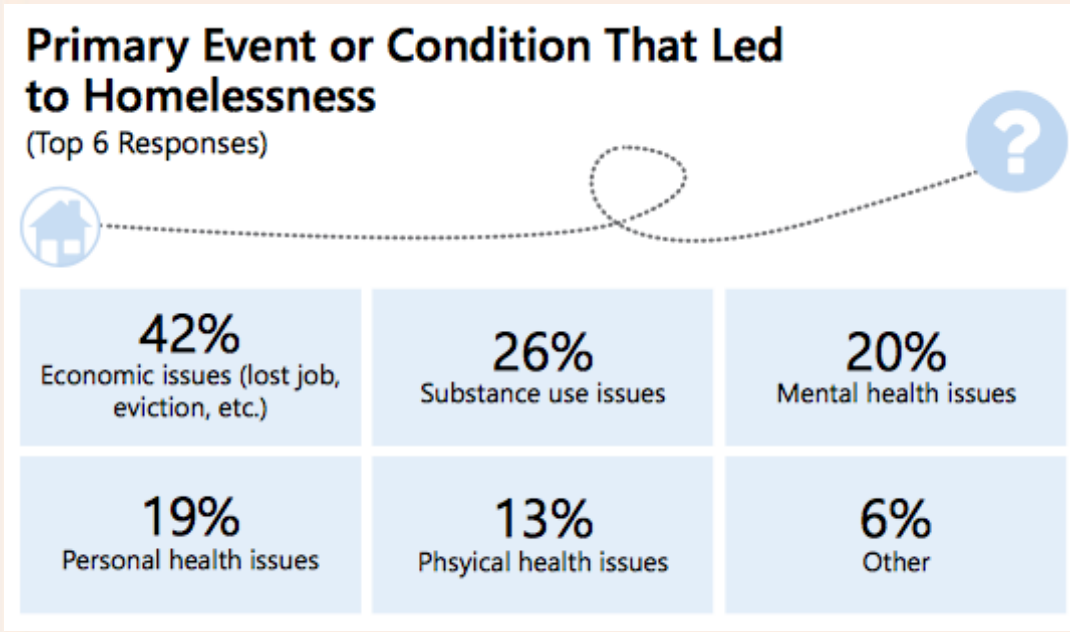

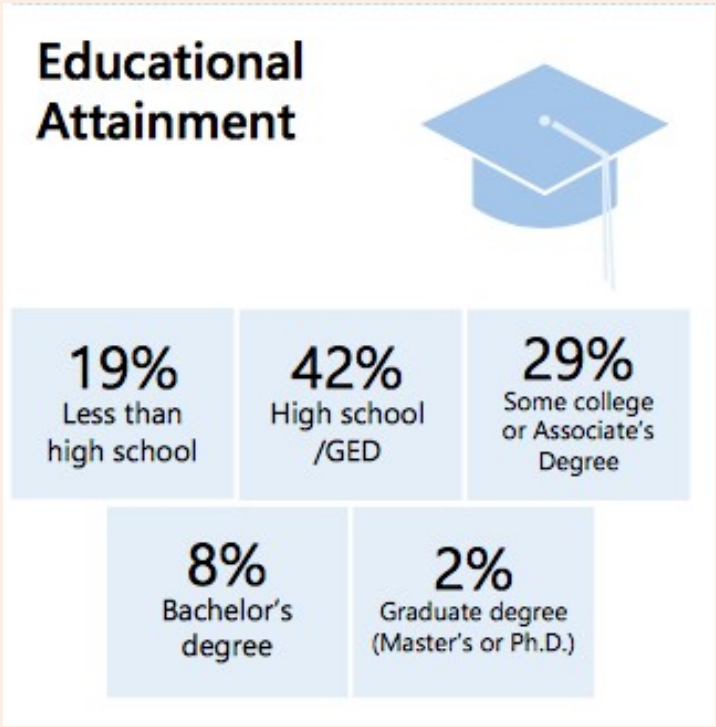

Image credit: Marin Health and Human Services

Marin County Statistics

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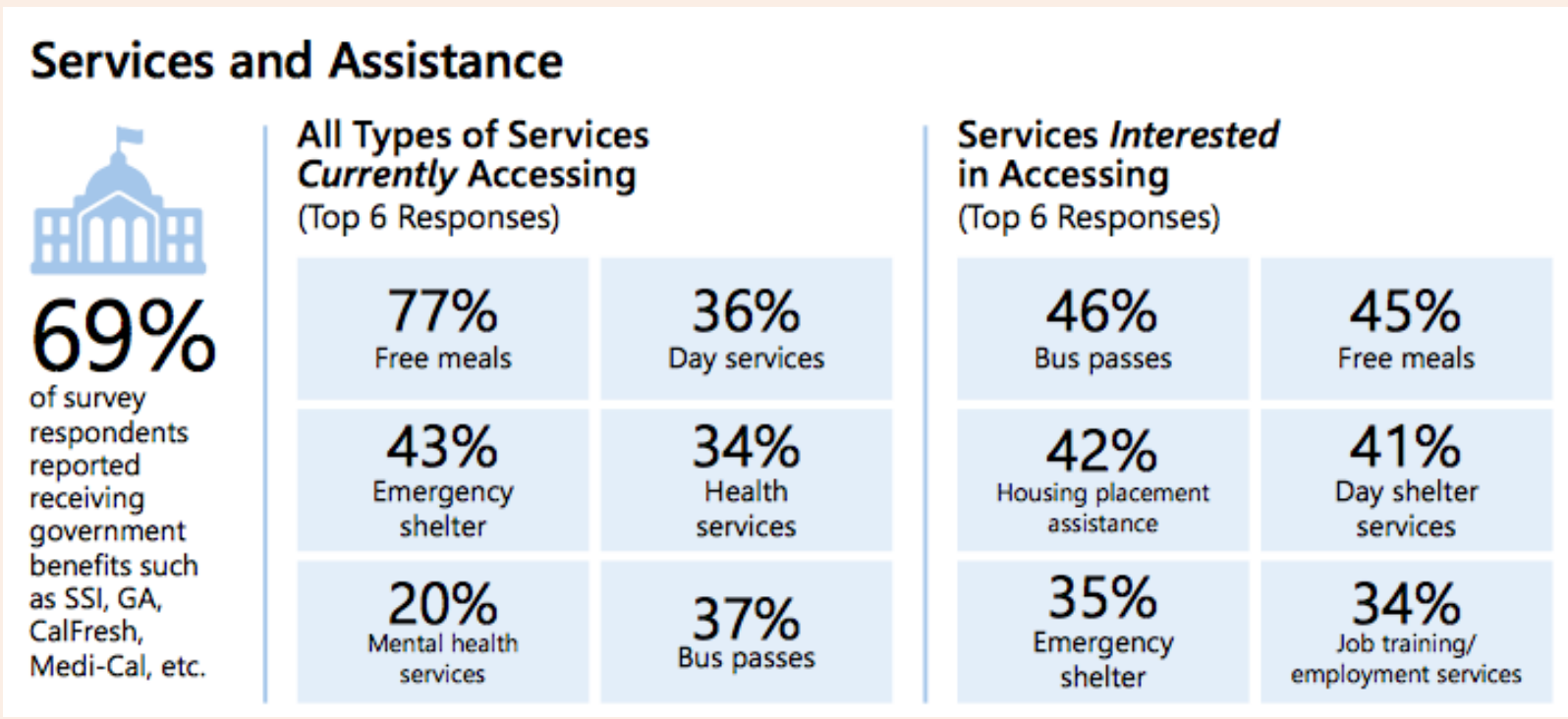
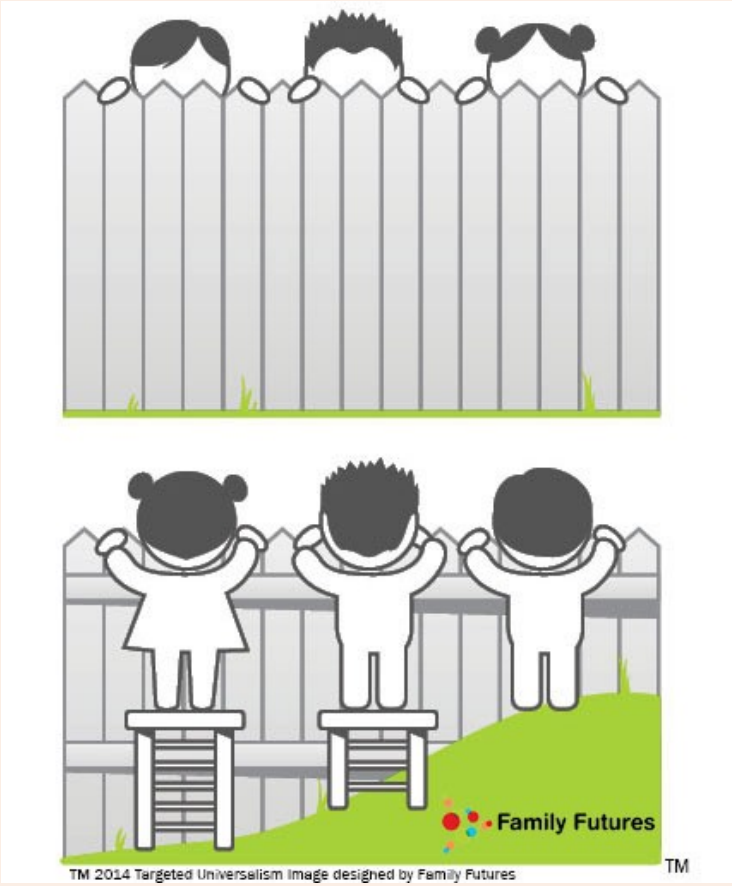


Image credit: Marin Health and Human Services

TOPIC FOCUS:

How do we ensure equal access to opportunity for *all*?

Targeted Universalism & Equity 2.0



- Targeted Universalism creates a universal goal and targets strategies based on where and how people are situated.
- Equity focuses on closing gaps.
- See the difference?

Image credit: Family Futures

Targeted Universalism

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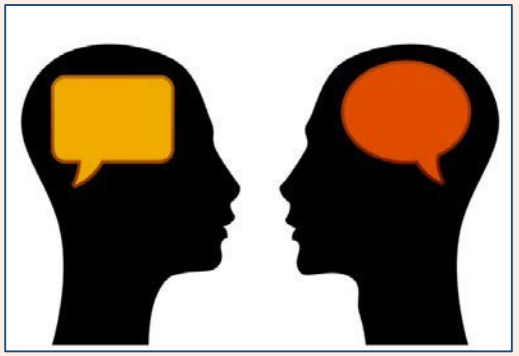
- **Targeting within universalism** means setting universal goals and targeted means/processes

- **This approach supports the needs of the particular while reminding us that we are all part of the same social fabric**
  - Universal, yet captures how people are differently situated
  - Inclusive, yet targets those who are most marginalized

Targeted universalism is…

- 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.



Creating Space to Reach Opportunity

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Some people ride the “up” escalator to reach spaces of opportunity.

But what if...

Targeted Universalism

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

-

Universal Goal with Targeted Strategy

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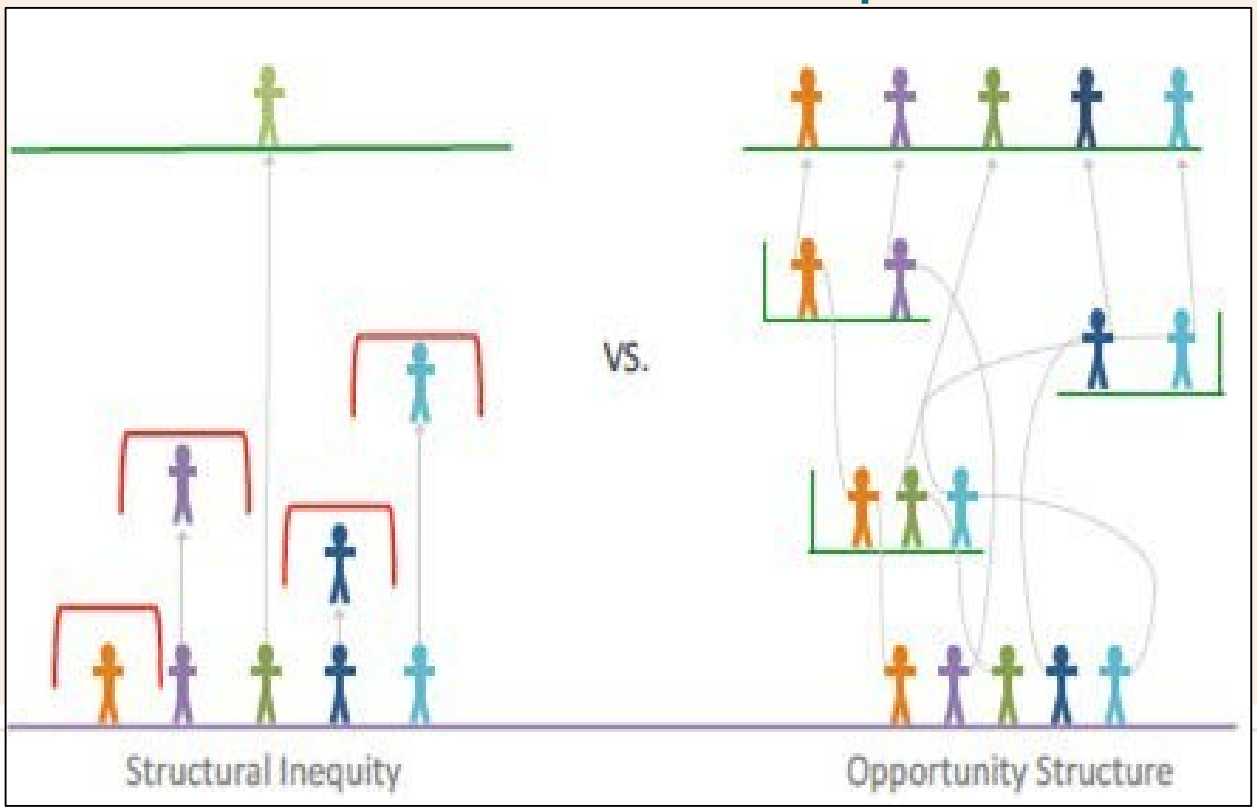
Structural inequity & othering is created by different groups and people having different pathways with structural roadblocks to a goal.

Targeted Universalism directs attention to pathways different groups face & suggests structural changes to make those paths smoother.



The Necessity of Solidarity

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Addressing issues like climate change, poverty, health and disease, requires us to think about how we are all related and connected….how we structure our societies, policies, and practices, and how we can achieve our common goals in a way that acknowledges our deep connection to each other.

System
s

Bad apple or rotten tree?

What about the soil underneath?

Understanding Types of Problems

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Types of Problems	Examples
Individual	Losing a credit card.
Interpersonal	Having a credit card stolen.
Structural	Being charged high interest rates on credit card debt.

Understanding Structures as Systems

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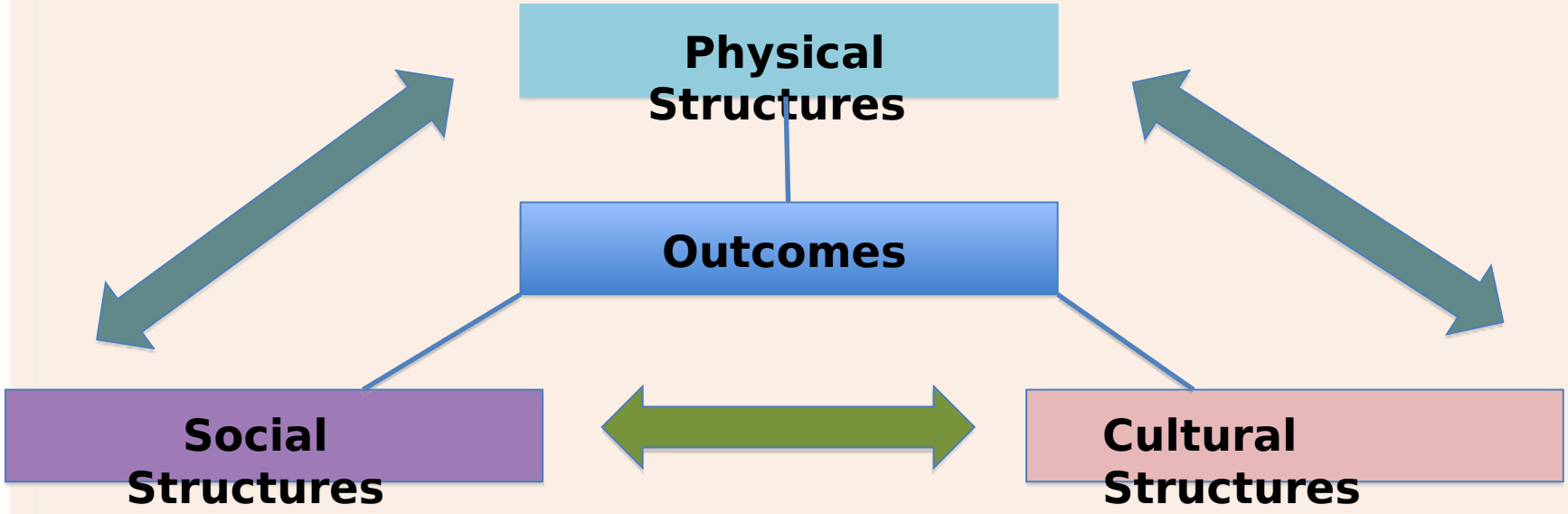
We are all situated within structures, but not evenly. Structures interact in a way that produces a differential in outcome. Structures unevenly distribute benefits and burdens to various groups. Institutions can operate jointly to produce negative outcomes.



Introducing Systems Thinking

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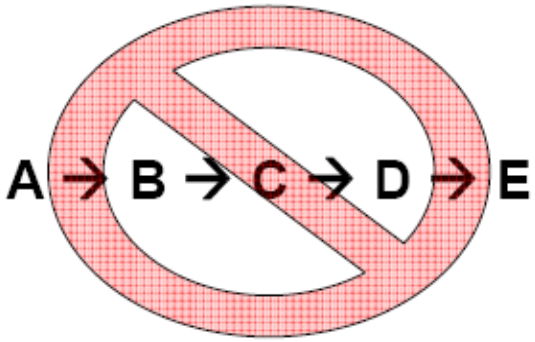
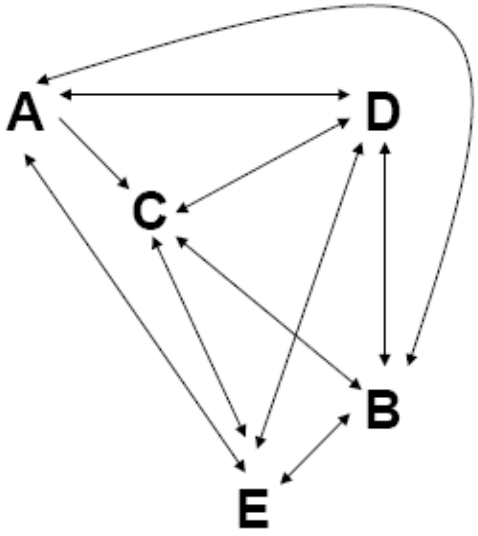
We need to think about the ways in which the institutions that mediate opportunity are arranged – systems thinking.

The Newtonian Perspective:



Social phenomena may be understood by breaking down the sum of the constituent parts.

Systems Thinking:



Causation is reciprocal, mutual, and cumulative.

Introducing Systems Thinking, continued…

Example: A bird in a cage

Examining one wire cannot explain why a bird cannot fly.

But **multiple wires**, arranged in specific ways, reinforce each other and trap the bird.

Complex Adaptive Systems

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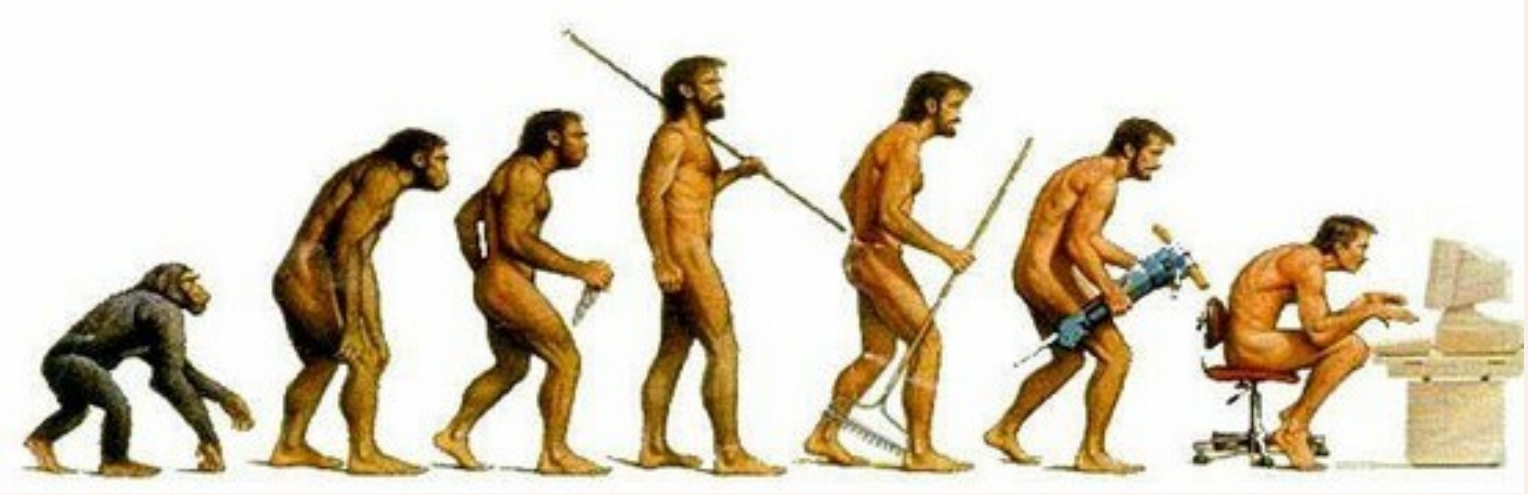
1. These systems are resistant to transformative change.
2. Systems are emergent
3. They adapt to interventions
4. Change is not best through holistic approach.
5. Instead for leverage point or strategic intervention



Problem Identification

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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

Moving Forward

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- Moving from Marin excluding people to people fully belonging
- Looking at Cultural Narratives

- **Example: Utah's Housing First Approach**
  - The State aims to provide housing first, then services later
  - This has reduced the percentage of those chronically without homes by 91% in a span of 10 years
- **Housing is seen as "opportunity based"**
  - Housing is the path to other opportunities (i.e.: belonging, schools, jobs, healthcare, etc.)

Appendix

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Applying targeted universalism in education

UNIVERSAL GOAL

Joyful and meaningful education for all children

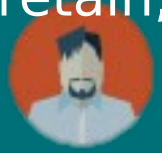
STUDENT GROUP

Middle-class children of all races

TARGETED STRATEGY

Students ready for school and school ready for students.

1. Provide resources and support to cultivate, retain, and nurture good students and teachers.



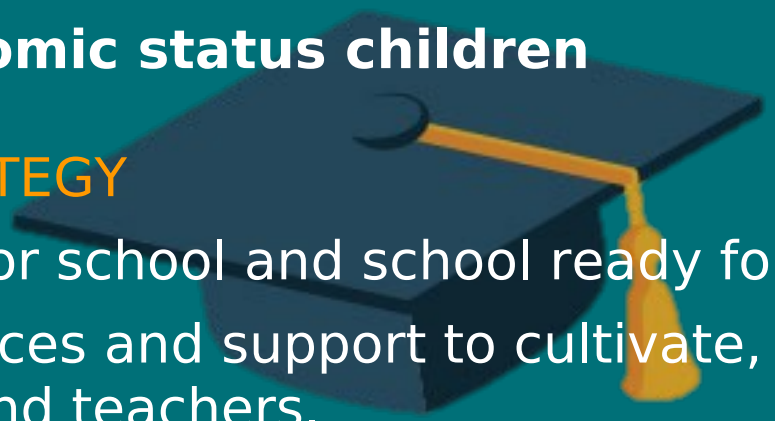
Applying targeted universalism in education

UNIVERSAL GOAL

Joyful and meaningful education for all children

STUDENT GROUP

Low socioeconomic status children



TARGETED STRATEGY

Students ready for school and school ready for students.

1. Provide resources and support to cultivate, retain, and nurture good students and teachers.
2. Provide nutritious meals, stable housing, and medical care.

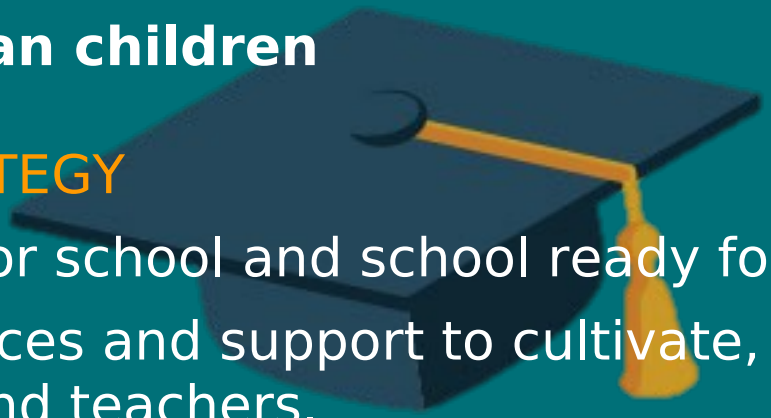
Applying targeted universalism in education

UNIVERSAL GOAL

Joyful and meaningful education for all children

STUDENT GROUP

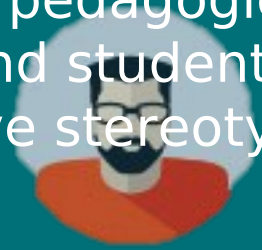
African American children



TARGETED STRATEGY

Students ready for school and school ready for students.

1. Provide resources and support to cultivate, retain, and nurture good students and teachers.
2. Provide nutritious meals, stable housing, and medical care.
3. Curriculum and pedagogical approaches for teachers, administrators, and students that counter unconscious impact of pervasive negative stereotypes.



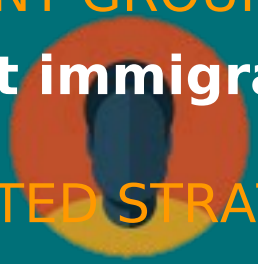
Applying targeted universalism in education

UNIVERSAL GOAL

Joyful and meaningful education for all children

STUDENT GROUP

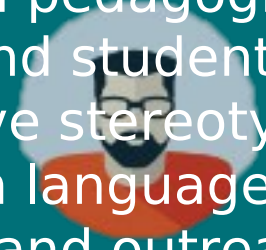
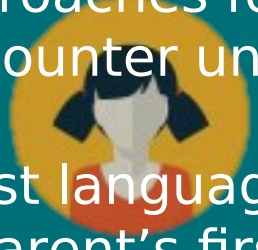
Recent immigrant children



TARGETED STRATEGY

Students ready for school and school ready for students.

1. Provide and support to cultivate, retain, and nurture good students and teachers.
2. Provide nutritious meals, stable housing, and medical care
3. Curriculum and pedagogical approaches for teachers. administrators, and students that counter unconscious impact of pervasive negative stereotypes.
4. Provide English language and first language supports, as well as interpretation and outreach in parent's first language.

Discussion: Targeted Universalism

"I just started questioning everything: Am I suppose to be here? Am I good enough?"

PROFILE — VANESSA B. AT UT AUSTIN

- From a low-income family
- First-generation college student
- Top 7% of her high school class
  - Top 10 percent law in Texas
- Failed her first college exam in statistics, a prerequisite for admission to the nursing program

Why didn't Vanessa excel like her high school record suggest?

PAUL TOUGH, WHO GETS TO GRADUATE? *THE NEW YORK TIMES*, MAY 15, 2014

Discussion: Targeted Universalism

WHAT MAKES STUDENTS SUCCESSFUL?

- Quality of high school education
- Availability of college
- Family support system
- Resources

"The UT experiment reminds us that the process of giving working-class teenagers the tools to become successful professionals isn't easy; it never has been. But it also reminds us that it is possible."

PAUL TOUGH, WHO GETS TO GRADUATE? *THE NEW YORK TIMES*, MAY 15, 2014

Do we actively bridge communities?

Does your organization's racial equity goals address the individual, institutional, or structural level through which barriers to opportunity can occur?

Do they address more than one level? Why or why not?

How do your organization's racial equity goals align with the goals of local leaders, organizations, and institutions in the community you serve?

How do your organization's racial equity goals align with and/or support the goals of others in the room working in different levers for change?

Expanding the circle of human concern requires:

EMPATHETIC SPACE

Focus on terms that unify people, rather than those that divide. Instead of an us/them mentality, focus on a “we.”

UNDERSTANDING OUR LINKED FATE

We are inextricably linked. We need to understand the effect structures have on all individuals.

Uncomfortable Conversations

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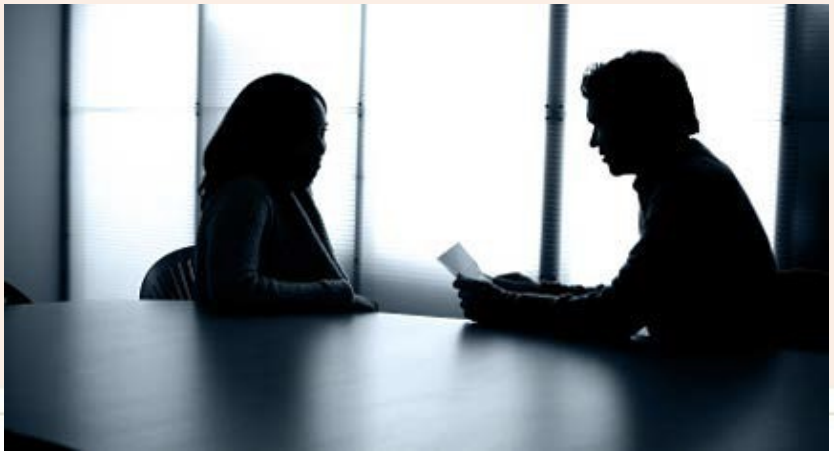
Why is talking about race so difficult?

- Long history of violence, oppression, and injustice toward people of color.
- Can triggers feelings of guilt, resentment, fear, and hostility.
- Fear of being labeled a racist.
- Can trigger the effects of stereotype threat, or self-fulfilling prophecies.
- Lack of information about the consequences of racial inequality.
- Implicit bias.