



Othering & Belonging
Institute at UC Berkeley



Building a Society of Belonging in a Time of Othering

DATE

January 17, 2020

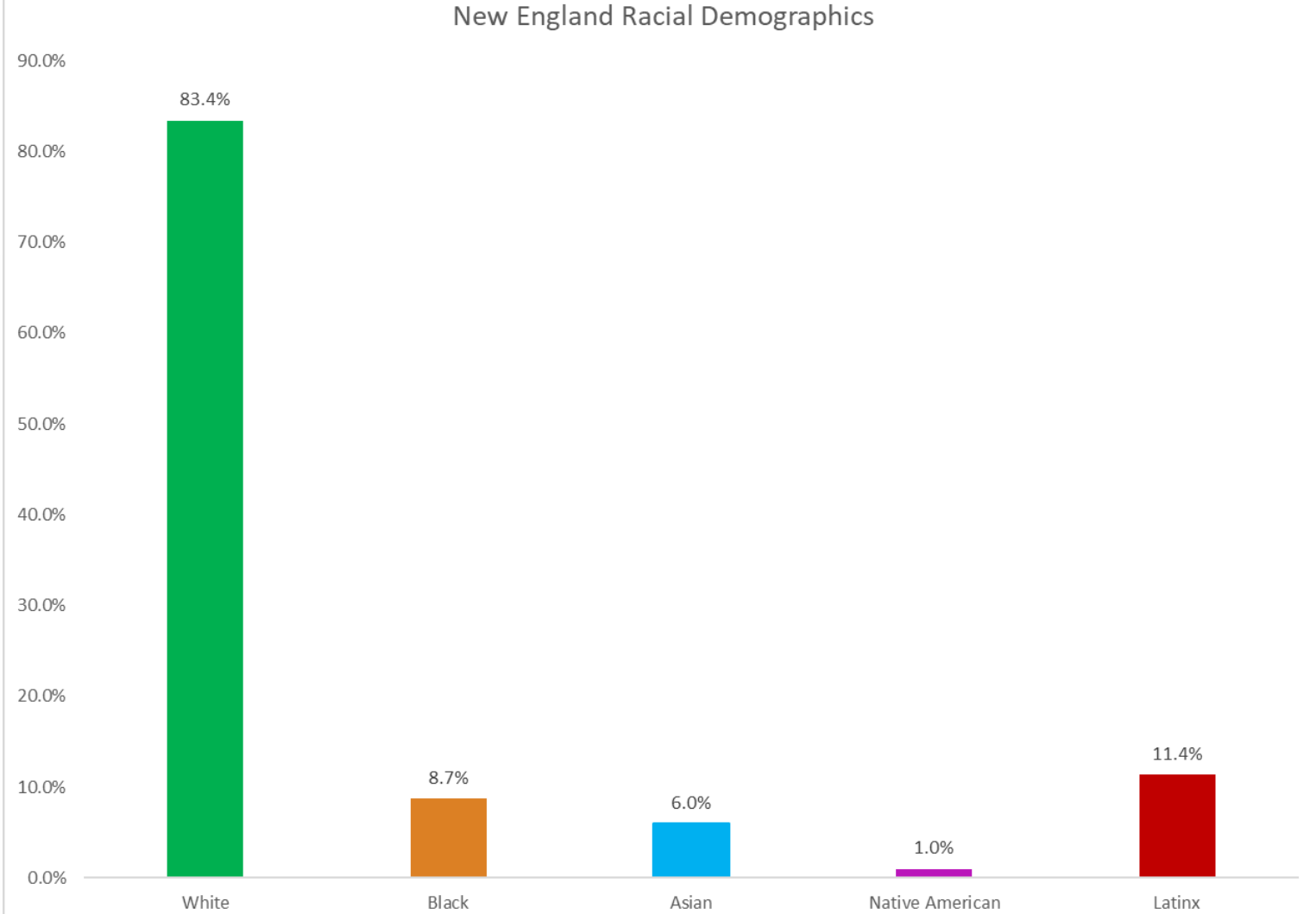
PRESENTER

john a. powell, Director
Othering & Belonging Institute

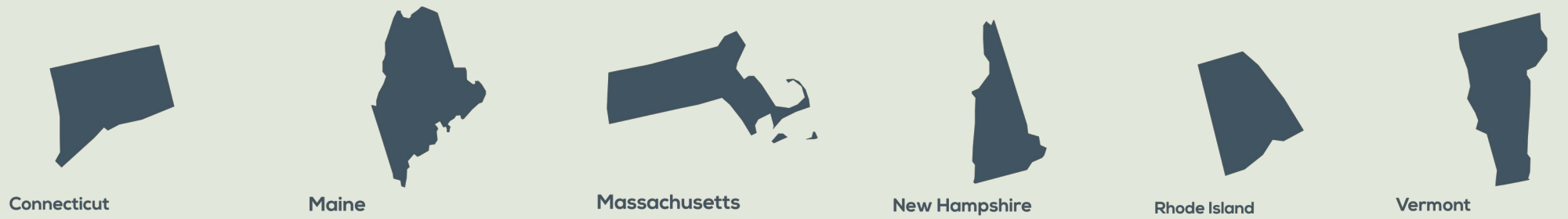
AUTHORIAL SUPPORT

Othering & Belonging
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New England Racial Demographics

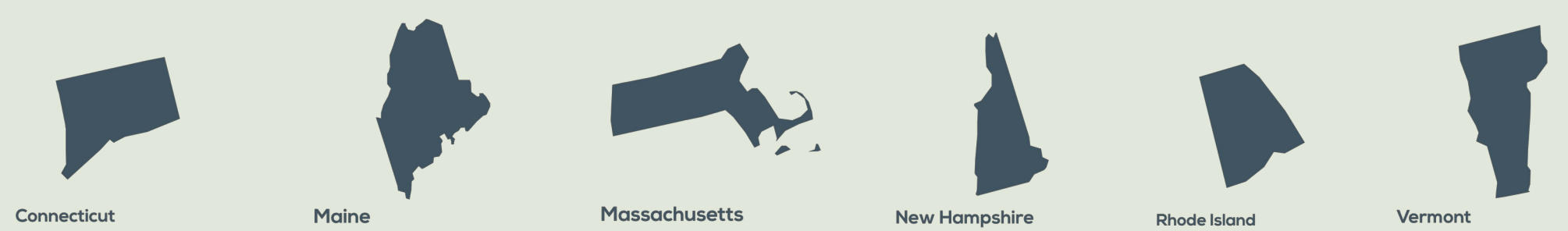


New England Racial Demographics By State



Race	Connecticut	Maine	Massachusetts	New Hampshire	Rhode Island	Vermont
White 90%	72%	66.5%	93%	92.5%	71.4%	71.4%
Black 1.7%	8.4%	12%	1.6%	1.4%	9%	9%
Latinx 4%	16%	16.5%	1.7%	2%	12.3%	12.3%
Asian 3%	3.6%	5%	1.2%	2%	7.1%	7.1%

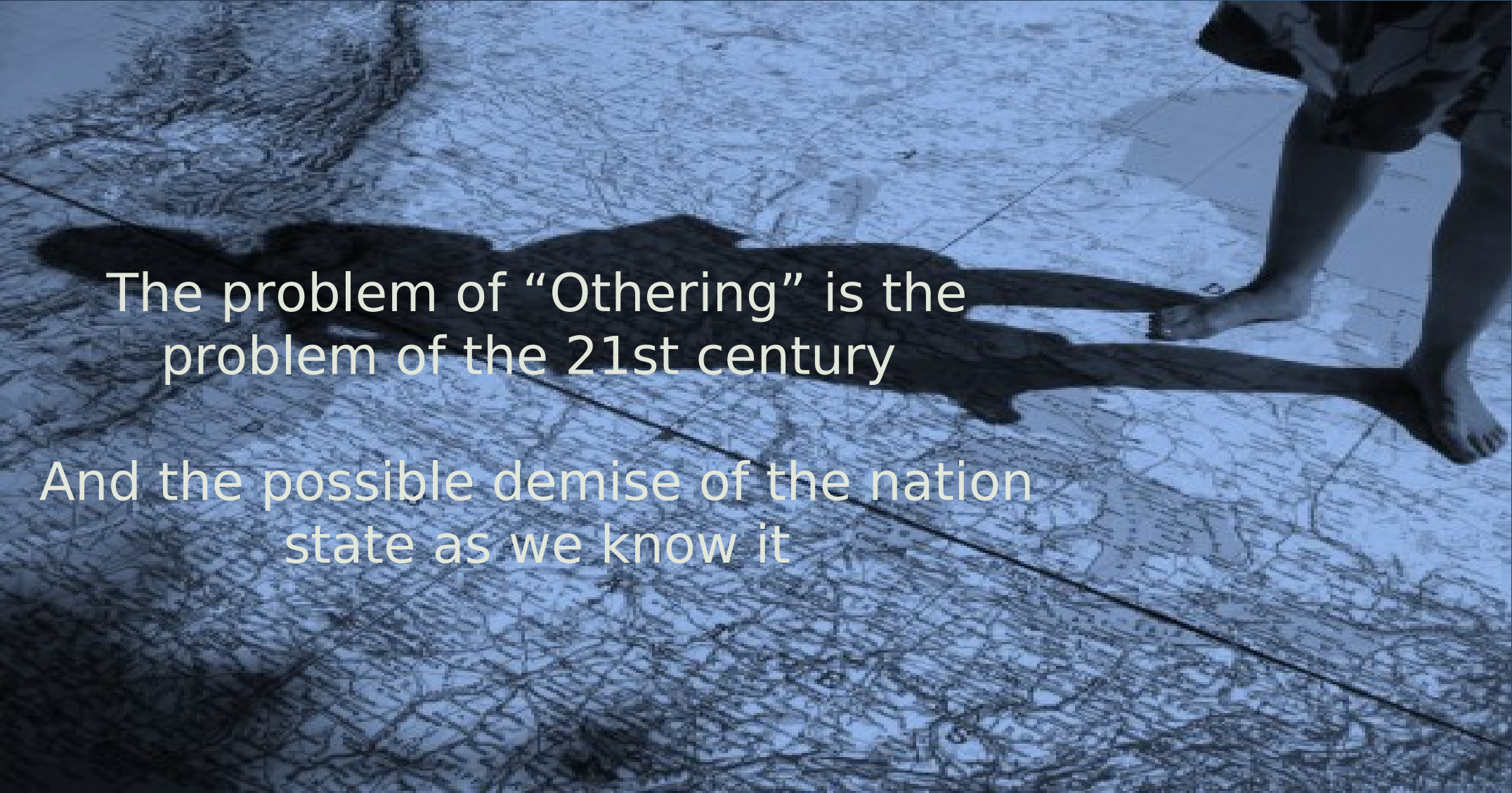
New England Socioeconomic Stats By State



	Connecticut	Maine	Massachusetts	New Hampshire	Rhode Island	Vermont
High School Or Higher 93%	90.5%	92.6%	92.3%	90.4%	88%	92%
Bachelor's Or Higher 36.5%	39%	37%	31%	43%	33%	35%
Percent in Poverty 7.6%	10.4%	11%	11.6%	10%	13%	12%
Percent without Health Insurance (Under 65) 7%	6.2%	5%	10%	3.2%	4.8%	6%



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PGcbFj4J_gc

A photograph showing the lower legs and feet of a person walking on a cobblestone path. A long, dark shadow is cast across the stones, extending from the person's feet towards the left. The image has a blue tint and is overlaid with white text.

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

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

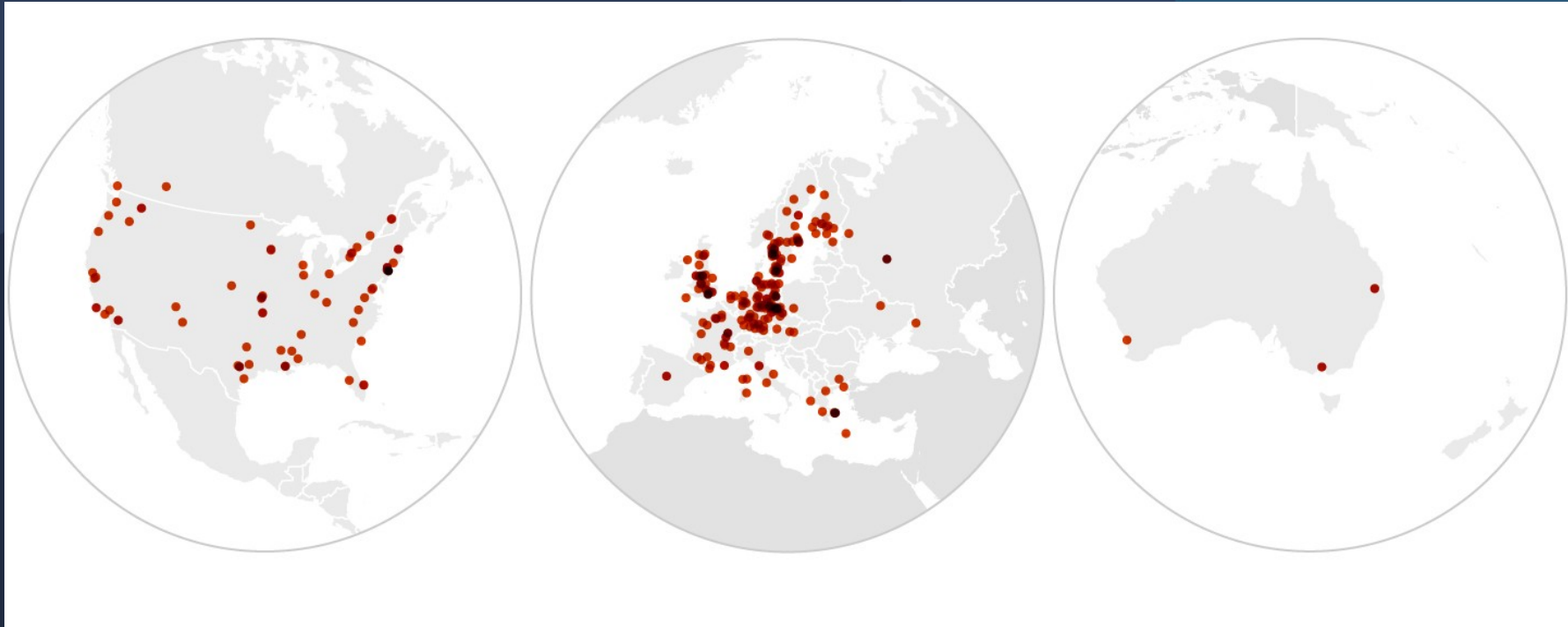
Global Trends

- 1. Demographic Change & Mass Migration**
- 2. Technology & Social Media Communication**
- 3. Globalization (minus)**
- 4. Income and Wealth Inequality**

The result is a cataclysm of xenophobic populism, reactionary ethno-nationalism, demagoguery, and fear of the other.



Nationalist Attacks – Attacks by White Extremists Growing (NYTimes)



THE RIGHT'S RESPONSE TO OTHERING —

“[Trump] has a good idea: *Keep ‘em
Muslims & Mexicans in the
outs.*”
Transgender military ban





A POTENTIAL LEFT RESPONSE TO OTHERING — same-ing

“I don’t see race. I am colorblind.”

“All lives matter!”

“You & I are human. We are the same.”

Two Competing Global Visions

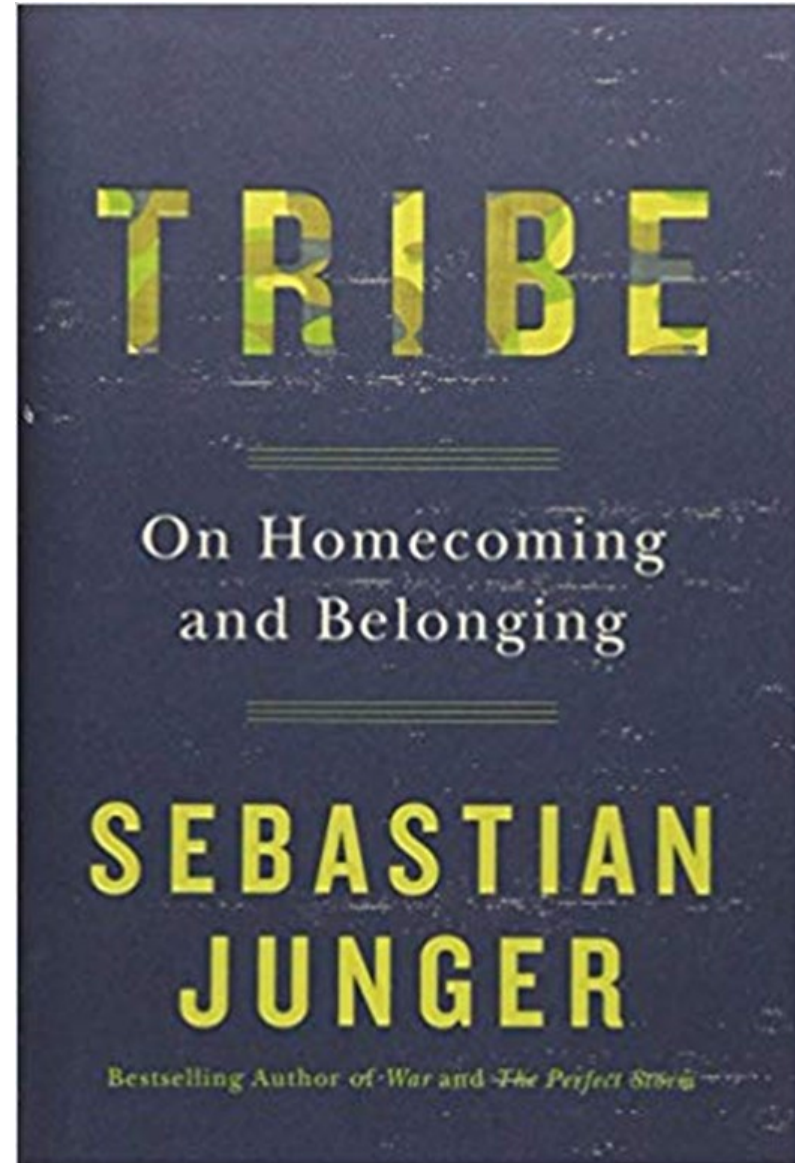
- The first vision is of a smaller, and more hierarchical exclusive “We”
 - This is based on fear, control, and purity, and one that dominates and controls the “other” and the earth.
- The second vision is of a more inclusive, connected and larger “We.”
 - This vision is one where we learn to share the earth and love and care for one another.
- These visions are competing with each other across the globe.

The Trauma of Othering

In addition to demographic change, technological change, inequality and migration, another stressor is hyper-individualism.

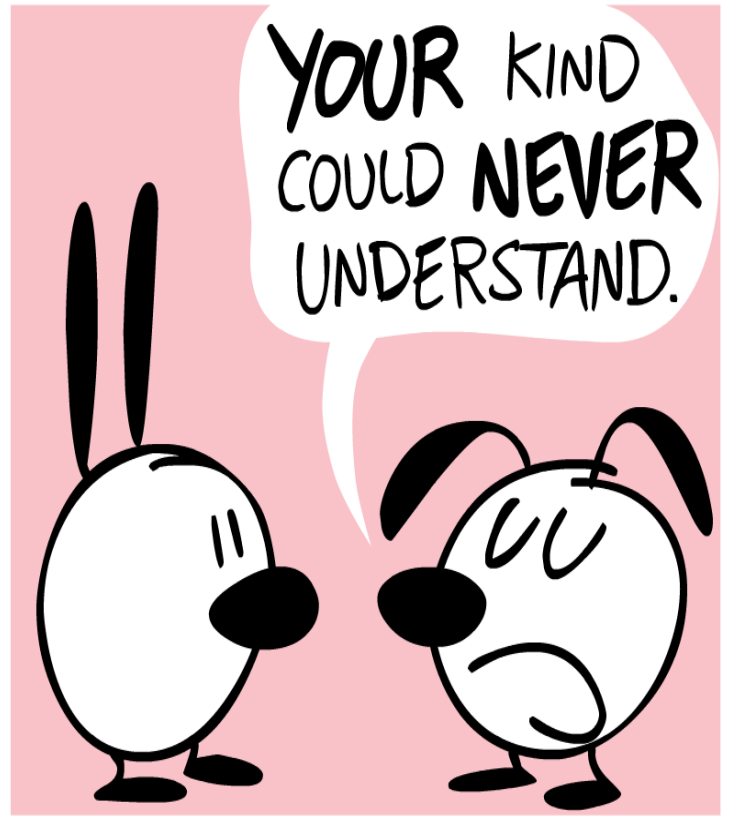
Both post-traumatic stress disorder - the trauma experienced by veterans - and even post-partum depression - are exacerbated by our hyper-individualistic society, that does not make people feel cared for.

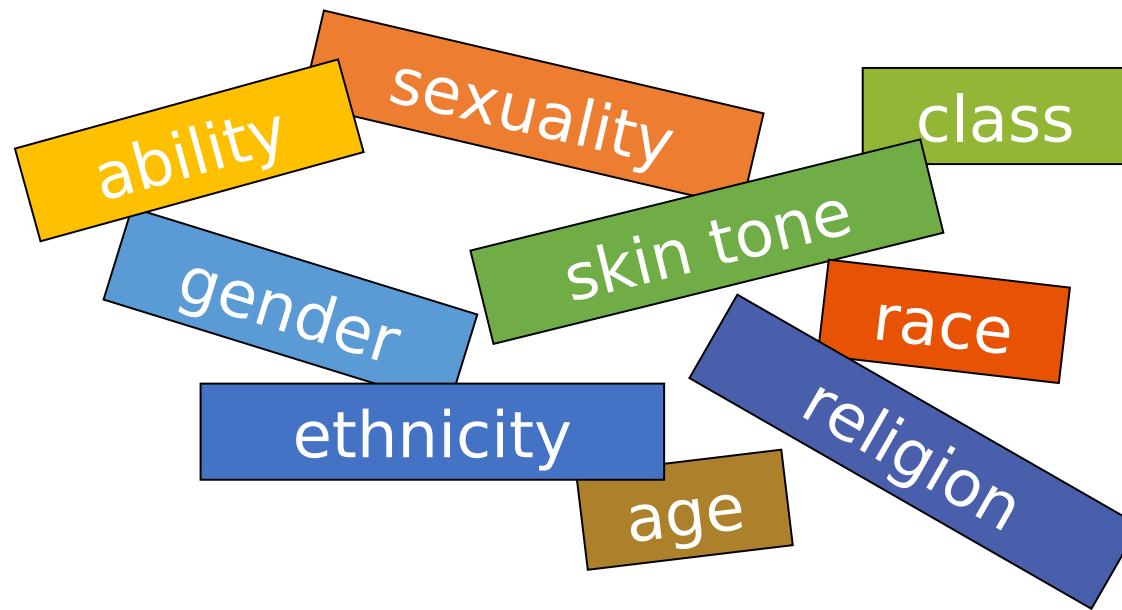
In his book "Tribe," Sebastian Junger writes "Modern society has gravely disrupted the social bonds that have always characterized the human experience."





mimiandunice.com





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.

Not Belonging Has Consequences

*A Black Yale Student Was Napping,
and a White Student Called the Police*



The Yale campus. A graduate student in the university's African studies program said she was harassed for taking a nap in a common area. Dave Sanders for The New York Times



*Starbucks C.E.O. Apologizes
After Arrests of 2 Black Men*



Stereotype Threat



Source: Henry McCausland, NYTimes

When people are made to feel they do not belong along some salient component of their identity, when that part of their identity is brought to their attention or made explicit, they do not perform well in categories that they are stereotypically “not supposed” to perform well in.

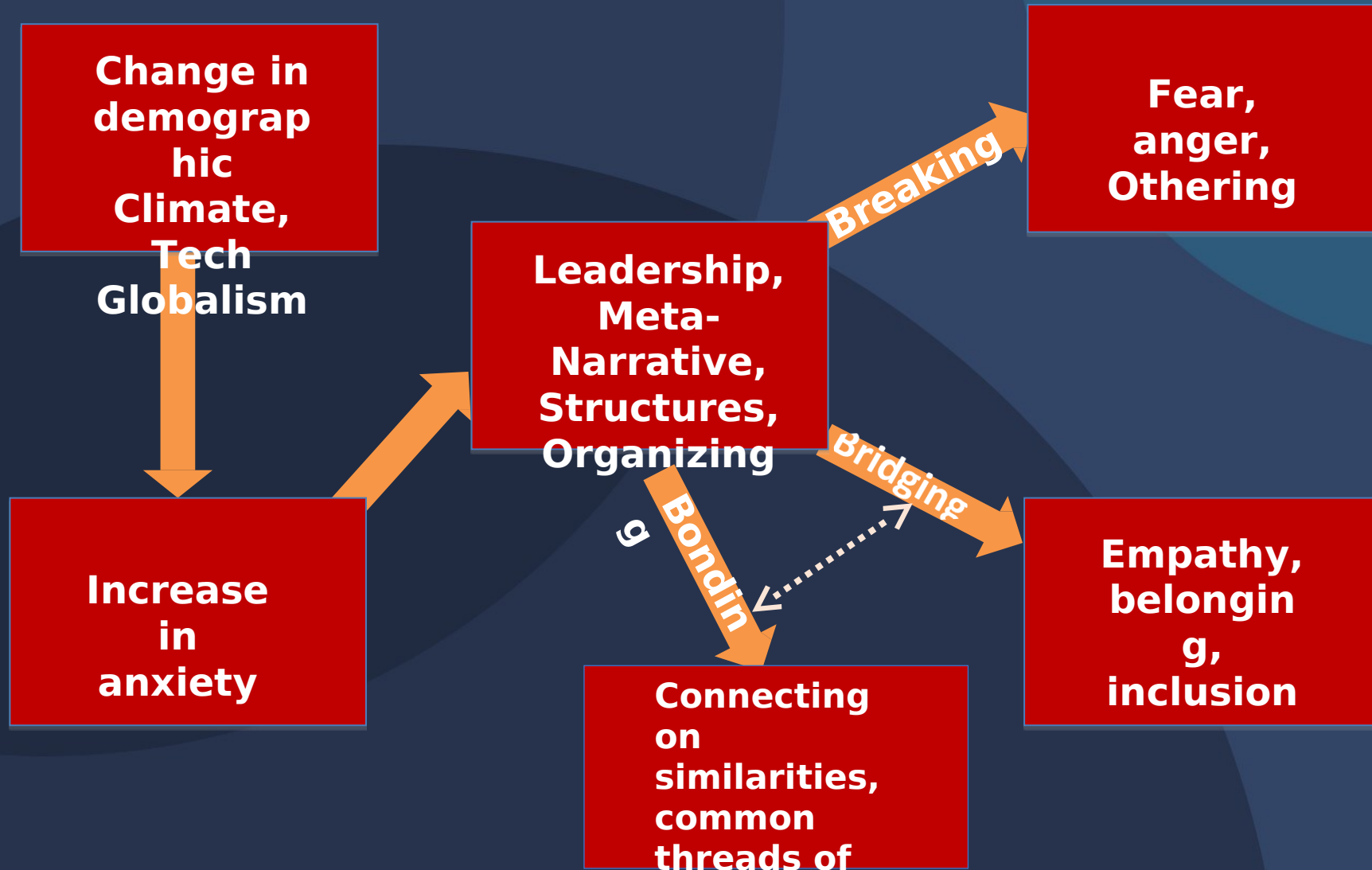
Ex: before a math test, if female students check a ‘gender’ box on the test, their performance may go down.

This is because of the added stress and anxiety of knowing the stereotype and trying to prove it wrong can take cognitive energy and attention away from performing the task well, which is true.

A background image consisting of a dense field of red spheres, arranged in a grid-like pattern that recedes into the distance. The spheres are highly reflective, showing bright highlights. In the middle of the field, one sphere is colored blue, making it stand out significantly from the rest. The overall lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights and deep shadows.

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

Rapid change produces collective anxiety:



Populism Isn't

Left



Right

It's



Up
Down



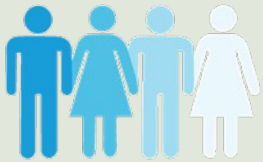
Narratives of Othering and Belonging



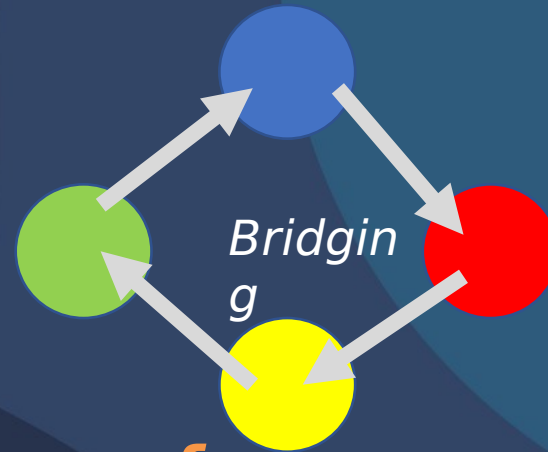
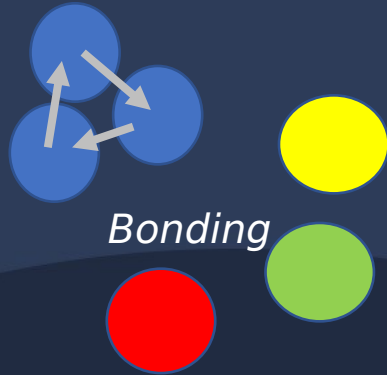
Breaking: When a group turns inwards and explicitly pushes away from other groups who are seen as dangerous or a threat



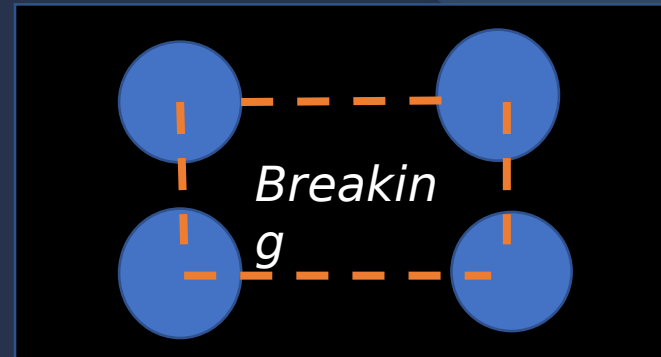
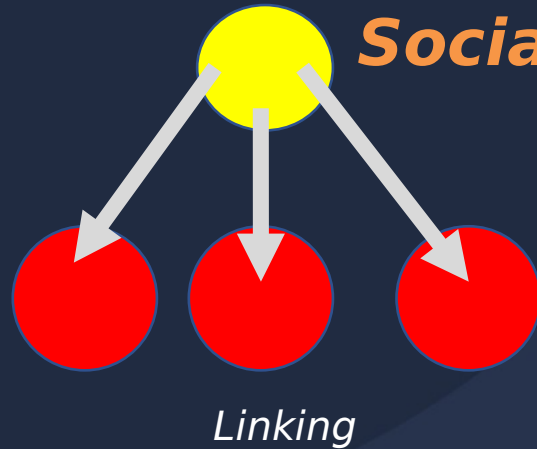
Bonding: Connecting to people like you in some important way



Bridging: Ties to people who are unlike you in some important way; stories, structure contact



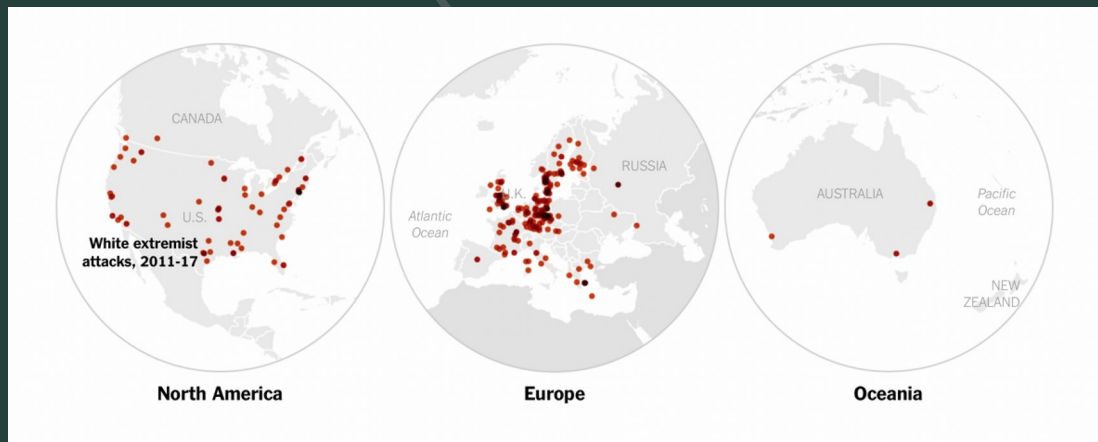
Putnam's Theory of Social Capital



Examples of breaking social capital:

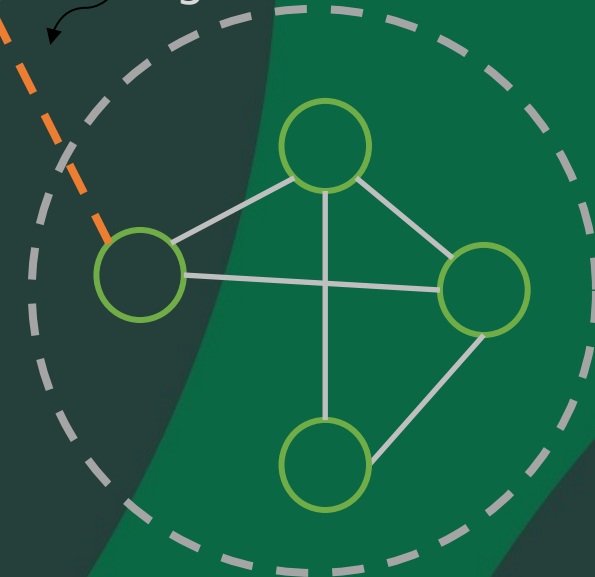


WHITE NATIONALISM



BREAKING

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



Examples of bonding social capital:



FAMILY



NEIGHBORHOOD

BONDING

NG Social ties that link people together with others who are primarily like them along some key dimension. These are

Examples of bridging social capital:



LGBT
Q



MOSQUE IN NEW
ZEALAND



Bridging On the One Hand, Breaking on the Other

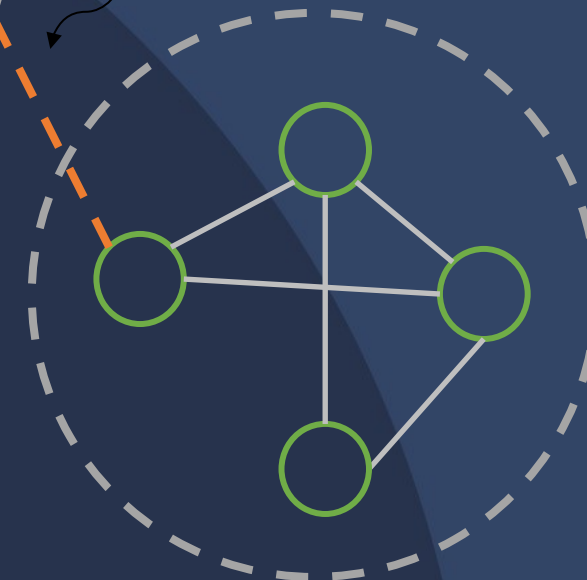


BREAKING

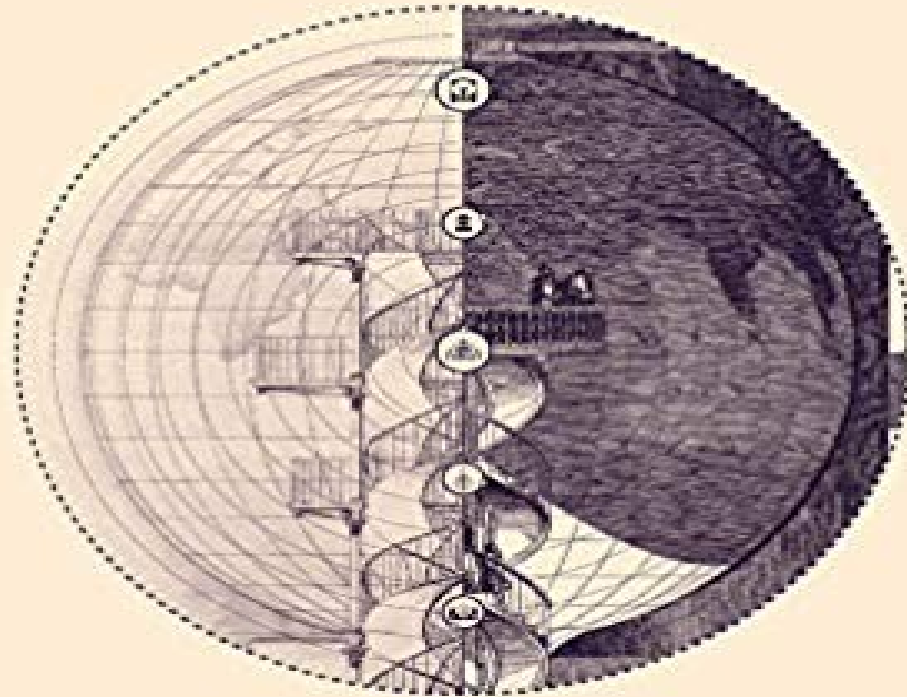
Social ties among an exclusive group who explicitly push away from other groups who are seen as dangerous or a threat.

BRIDGING

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



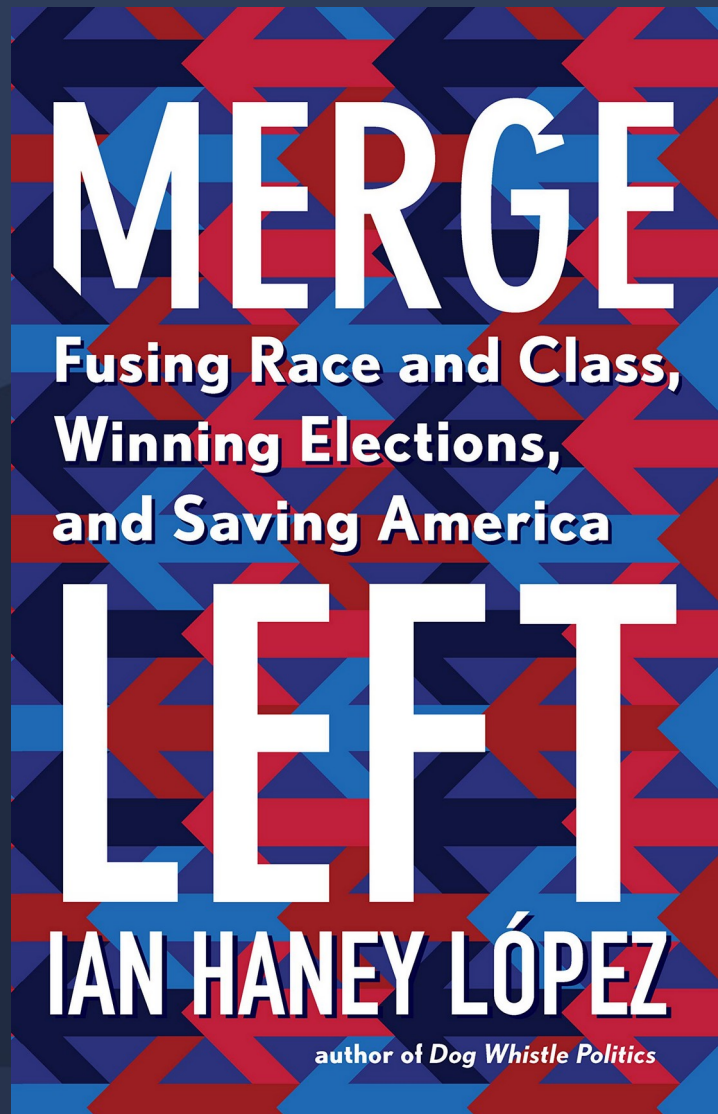
Bruno Latour



Down to Earth

Politics in the New Climatic Regime

To Build a Society of Belonging, Speak Directly to Othering



Coded messages of division appeal to people across race and class - of the persuadable middle, people of color as well as white people felt that a coded message warning of the other had resonance.

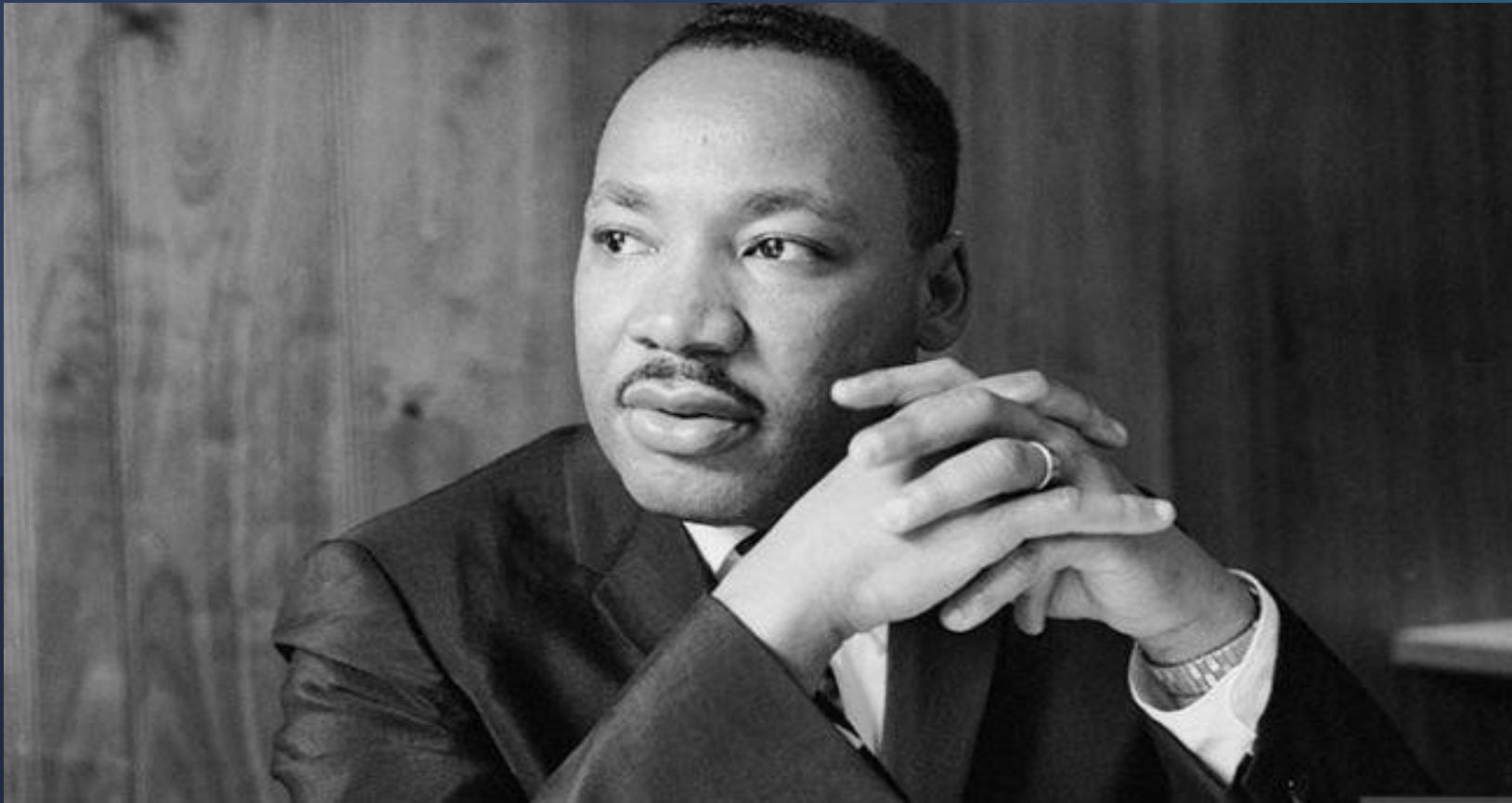
The strongest message to combat this and to build a majority coalition is to speak directly to race and explicitly call attention to the tactics of division. That othering harms everyone and that racial justice helps everyone. A movement based on cross-racial solidarity is the pathway to creating a just society.

WE NEED TO CREATE A CULTURE OF *BELONGING*.



***Sawubona*: Zulu greeting “We see you”**

1. An invitation to a deep witnessing and presence
2. This greeting forms an agreement to affirm and investigate the mutual potential and obligation that is present in a given moment



A Beloved Community
Dr. King's Legacy is a Call for
Belonging

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.

Bridging in All Facets of Life and Work



Belonging is the construction of society we are striving toward. A just and inclusive society will see all of its members as inside our circle of belonging

We need to bridge in all areas of our life. Your office life here at Raikes requires bridging to build a society of belonging in your external work and in fulfilling your mission as an organization

Bridging within your own social and professional circles will help you to bridge with the communities you serve and strengthen your commitment to targeted Universalism

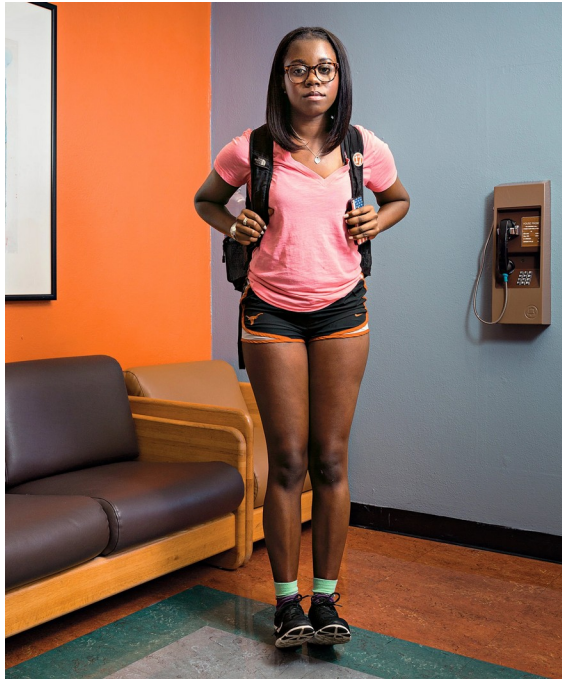
Deep Belonging

- **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.

Belongingness Intervention



Vanessa
Brewer

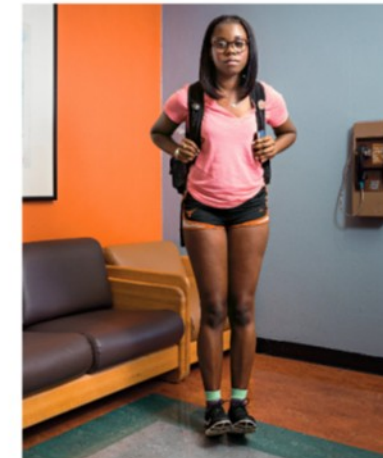
- UT-Austin Intervention - Targeted messages seemed to help individuals overcome doubts about belonging and their academic potential.
- Effects of the Intervention
 - Tripled the percentage of African-American students who earned G.P.A.s in the top quarter of their class, and it cut in half the black-white achievement gap in G.P.A.
 - Significantly decreased the number of health visits by African-American students.

The importance of belonging: how belonging affects performance.

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.



Who Gets to Graduate?

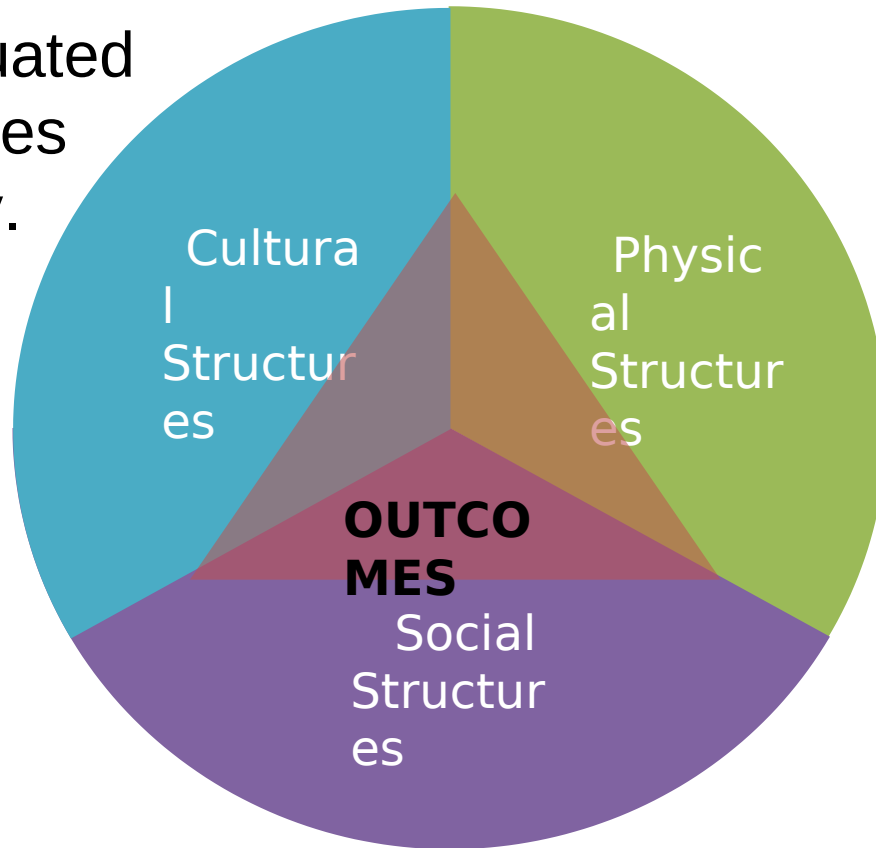


Vanessa Brewer Bill McCullough for The New York Times

The New York Times: Who Gets to Graduate?: http://www.nytimes.com/2014/05/18/magazine/who-gets-to-graduate.html?_r=2

Othering & Belonging within Structures

We are all situated within structures but not evenly.



Structures are not neutral.

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

These structures interact in ways that produce a differential in outcomes

Structures limit and enhance opportunity

We can define opportunity through access to:



EDUCATION



ECONOMIC



TRANSPORTATION



FOOD



HOUSING



JUSTICE



HEALTHCARE



COMMUNICATIONS

This is an issue of **membership** and **belonging**.

Concentrated Poverty

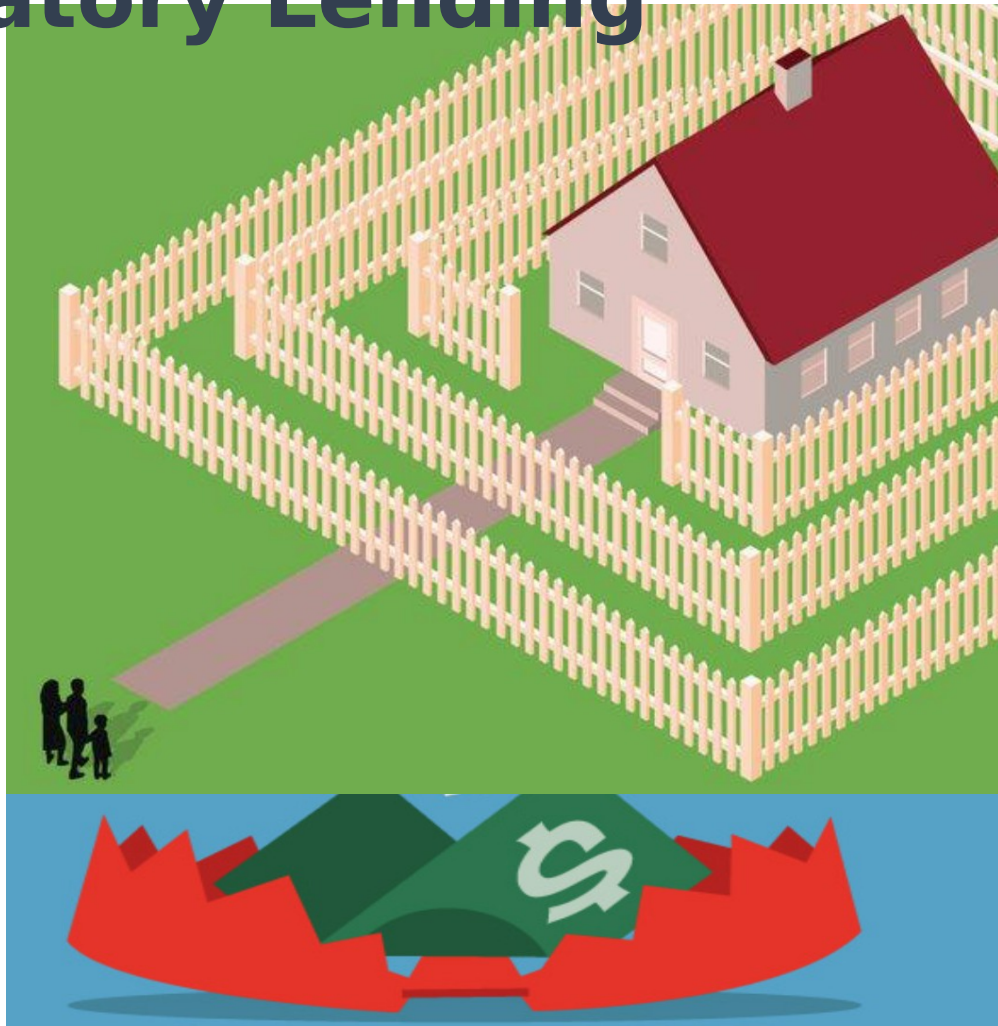


- **Poverty is racialized**
- **Only 12.3 percent of white children and 10 percent of white adults live below the poverty line, compared to 37.1 percent of black children and 22.6 percent of black adults**
- **Poverty is not simply lack or lowness of income, it is also a lack of capacities**

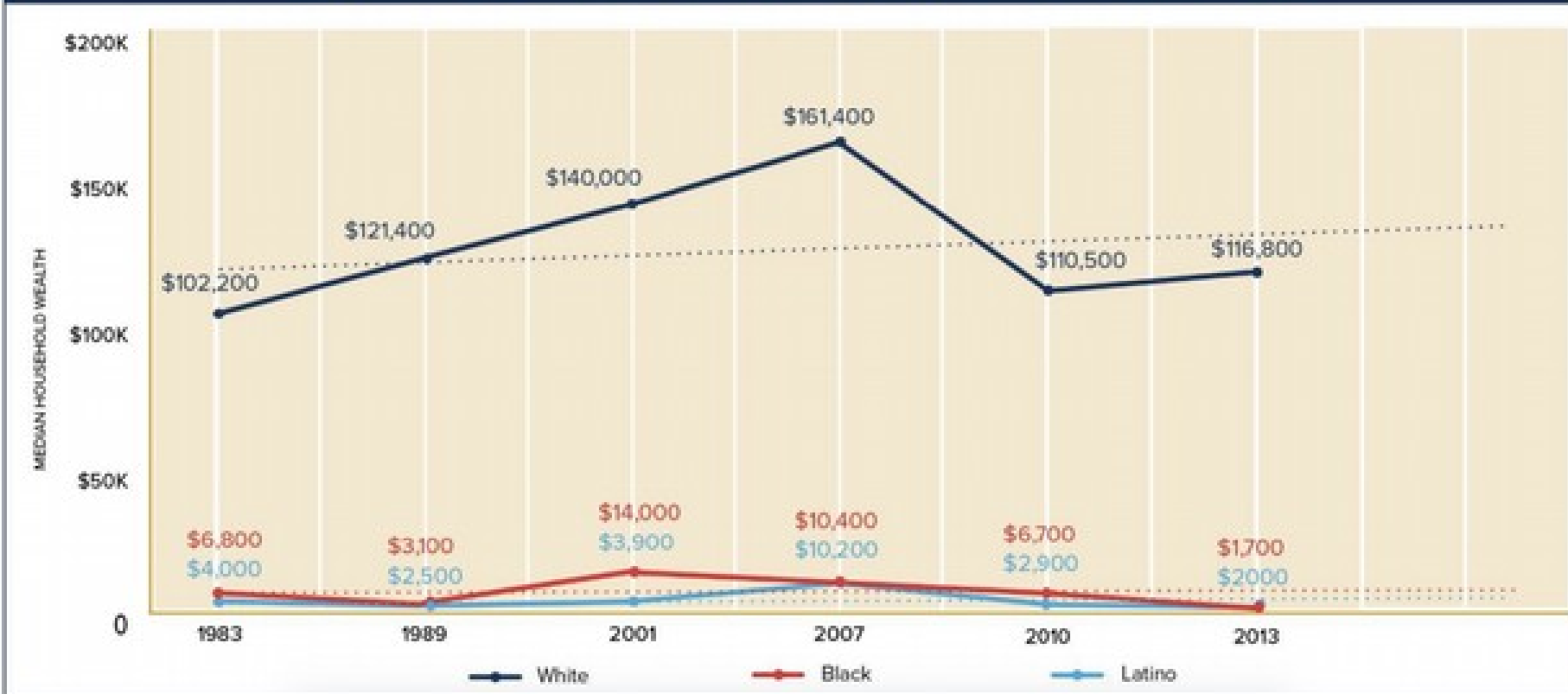
Concentrated Poverty Cont.

- **Using 2007-2011 census estimates, 3 out of 4 persons living in high-poverty neighborhoods or neighborhoods of concentrated poverty were non-white. Concentration of poverty is highest for blacks; half of all people living in concentrated poverty in the United States are black.**
- **Among white families who experience poverty in the US, two-thirds are poor for only three year or less, and only 2 percent are impoverished for more than 10 years. For example, many people report low or negative income when they enroll in college or become graduate students, or as they open or start businesses. In contrast, 17 percent of African-Americans are poor for ten or more years.**
- **While only 44 percent of poor people will be poor for the next 4 to 10 years, for blacks, that number is 61 percent.**

Black Homebuyers and Predatory Lending

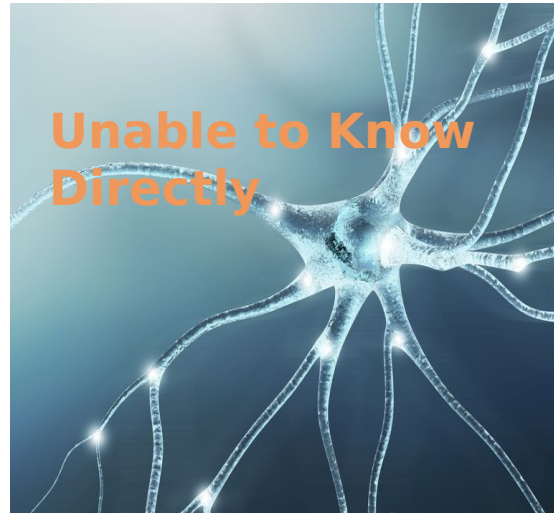


The Ever-Growing Gap: Black, Latino and White Household Wealth, 1983-2013

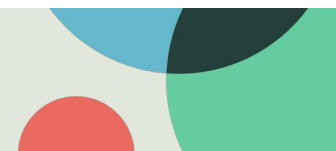


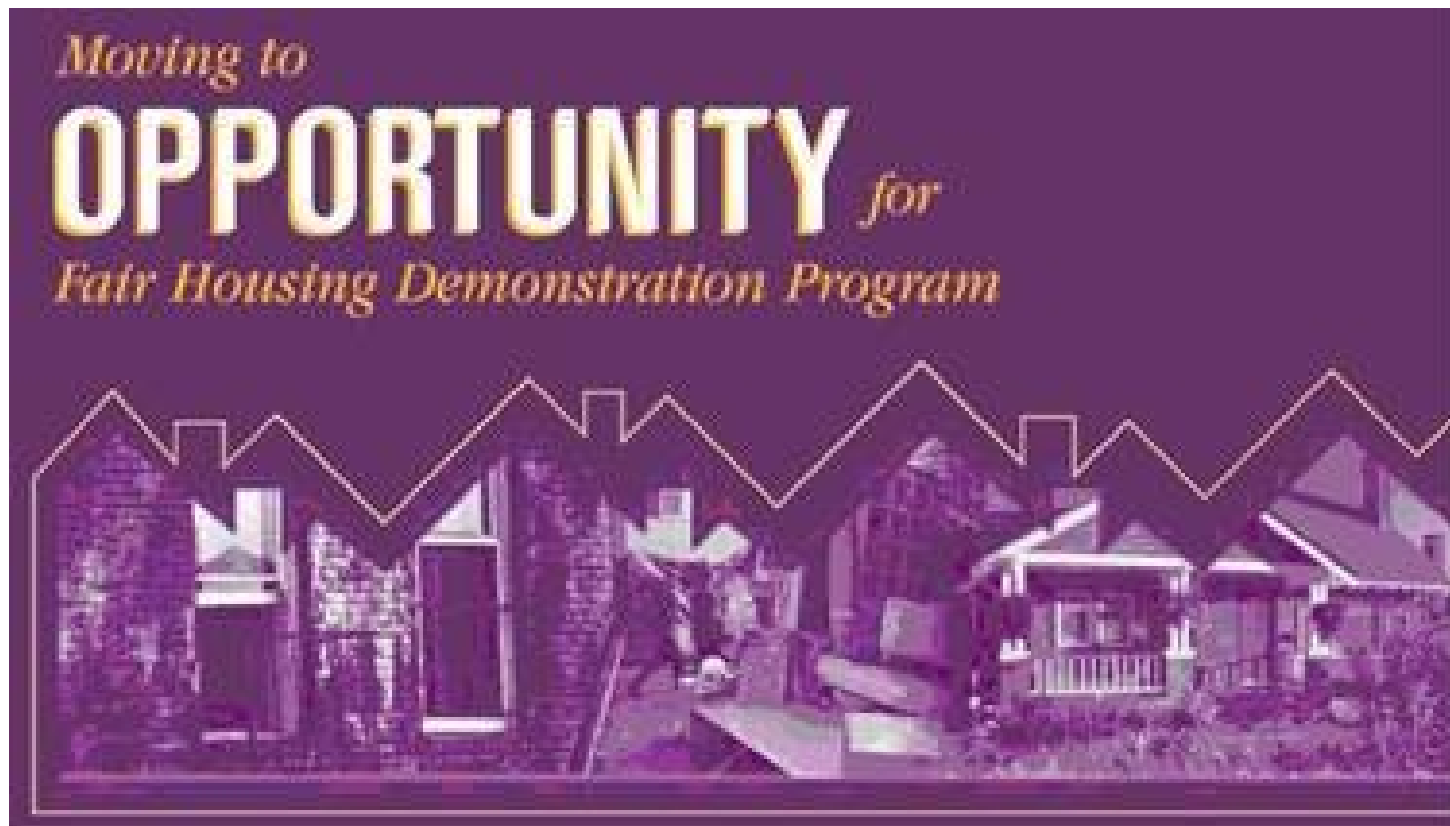
Source: Edward N Wolff, Household Wealth Trends in the United States, 1962-2013. Figures are in 2013 dollars and exclude durable goods (from *The Guardian*)

There Are Different Forms of Not Knowing



Structural Marginalization, Allostatic Load, and Telomere Length





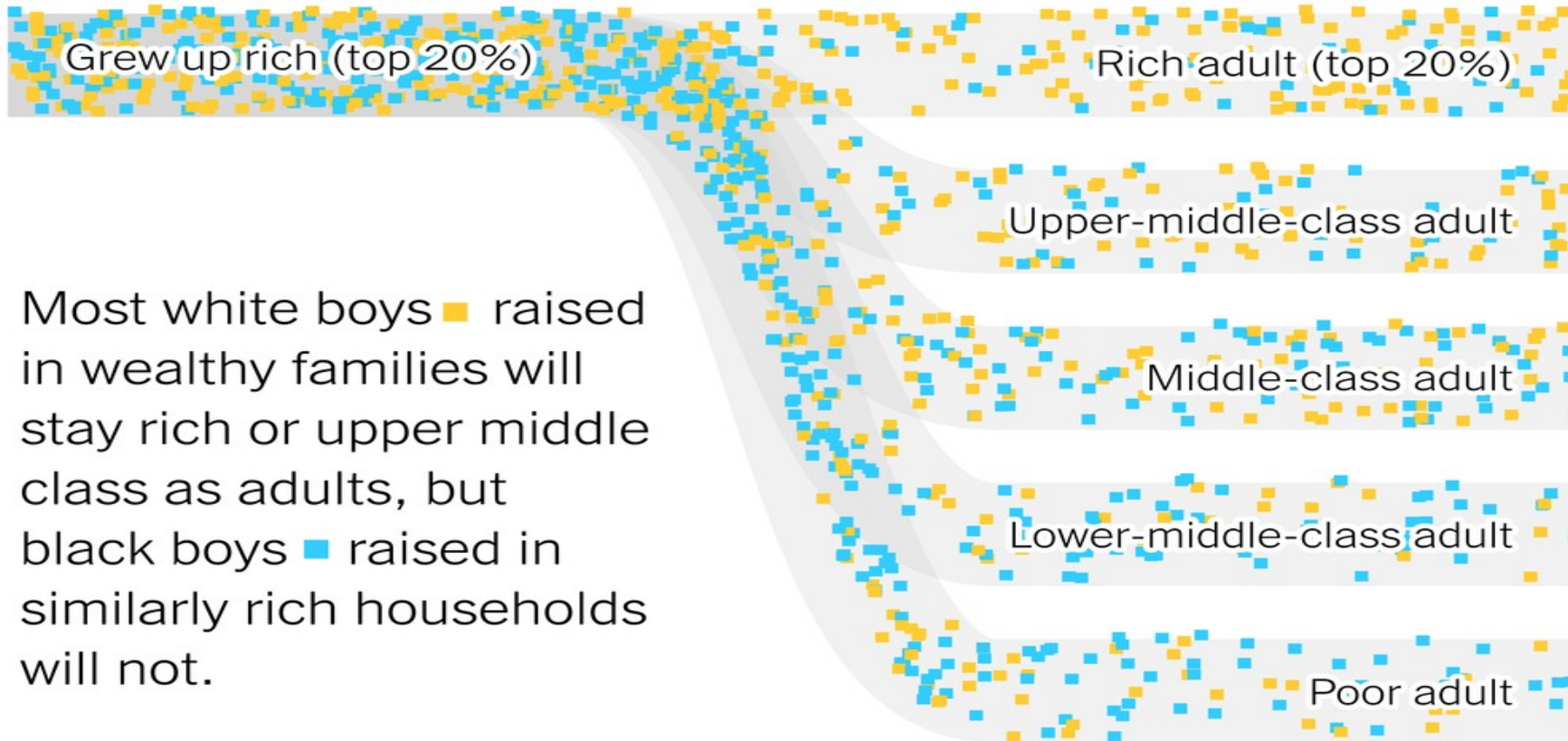
Moving to
Opportunit
y

Raj
Chetty
Revises
Findings

Black Boys and Social Mobility - Raj Chetty's Research

As kids

As adults



Most white boys ■ raised in wealthy families will stay rich or upper middle class as adults, but black boys ■ raised in similarly rich households will not.

Source - NYTimes

Geographies of Consequentiality



→ People traverse space in everyday life and space organizes everyday life

→ These spaces are not neutral but consequential.

→ The focus is on the spatial nature of social interaction and the inequalities that are produced through spatial relationships (see Soja on “spatial justice”).

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

Race, place, and access to

opportunity. **Neighborhoods & access to opportunity**

- People of color are far more likely to live in opportunity deprived neighborhoods and communities
- 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 and life itself
- High poverty is associated with high stress and allostatic load that can restructure the brain and decrease ability to learn

Opportunity is...

Racialized...

- In **1960**, African-American families in poverty were **3.8** times more likely to be concentrated in high-poverty neighborhoods than poor whites.
- In **2000**, they were **7.3** times more likely.

Spatialized...

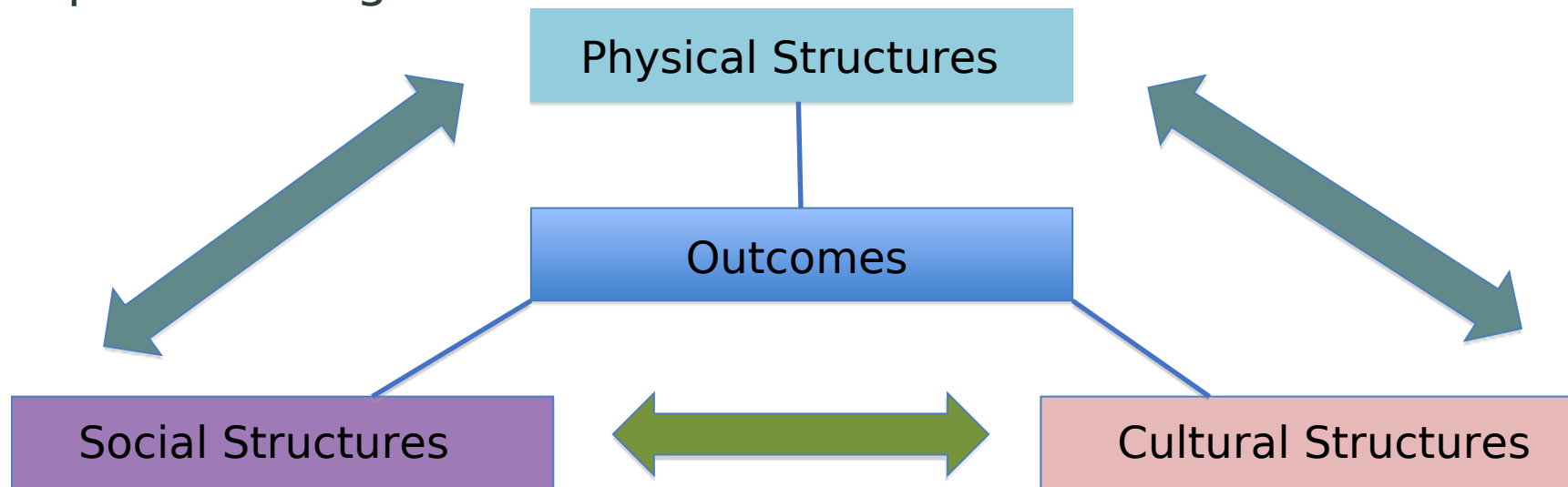
- marginalized people of color and the very poor have been spatially isolated from opportunity via reservations, Jim Crow, Appalachian mountains, ghettos, barrios, and the culture of incarceration.

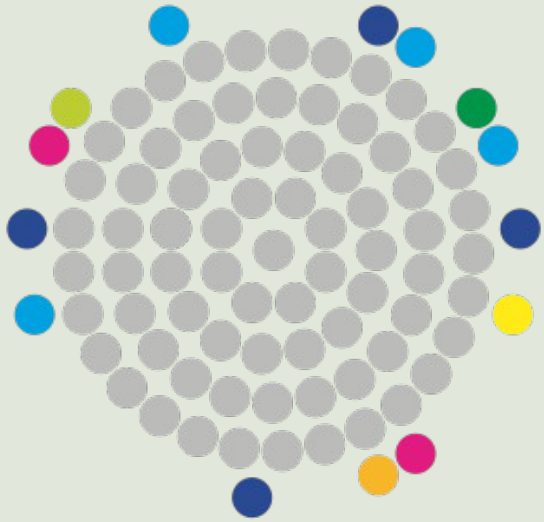
Globalized...

- Economic globalization
- Climate change
- the Credit and Foreclosure crisis

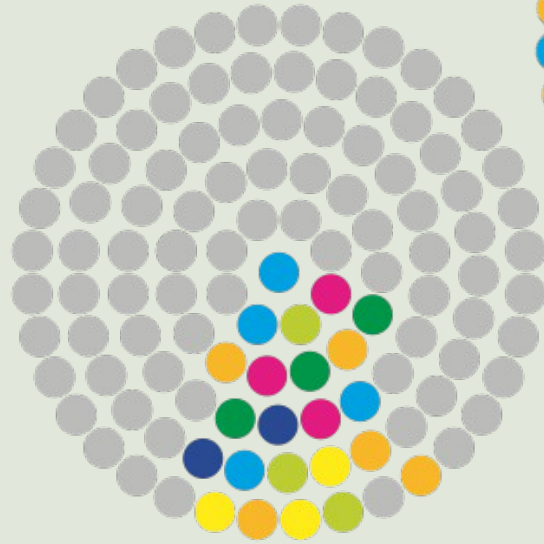
Understanding Structures as Systems

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.





Exclusion



Inclusion



Belonging

Bridge — Listen, engage, organize,
love

The Epidemic of Loneliness



United Kingdom Minister of Loneliness

New Minister
for Loneliness



GBOOMER.CO.UK

Supporting the fight against Loneliness



Belonging in Barking and Dagenham



Source – Participatory City Foundation



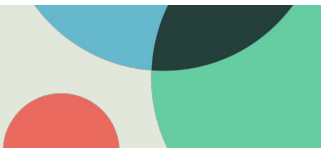
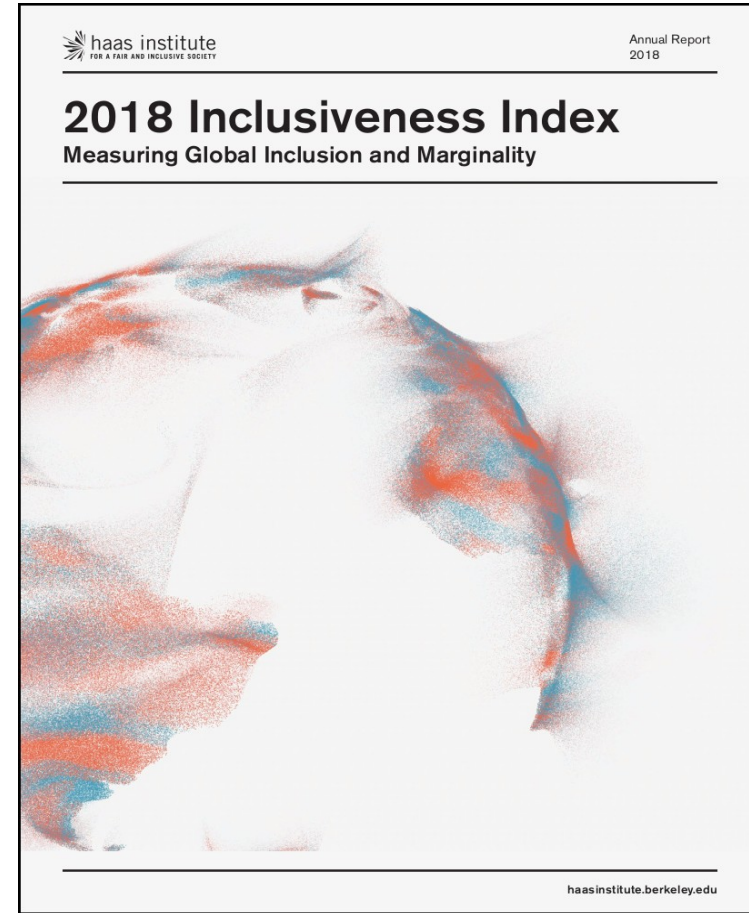
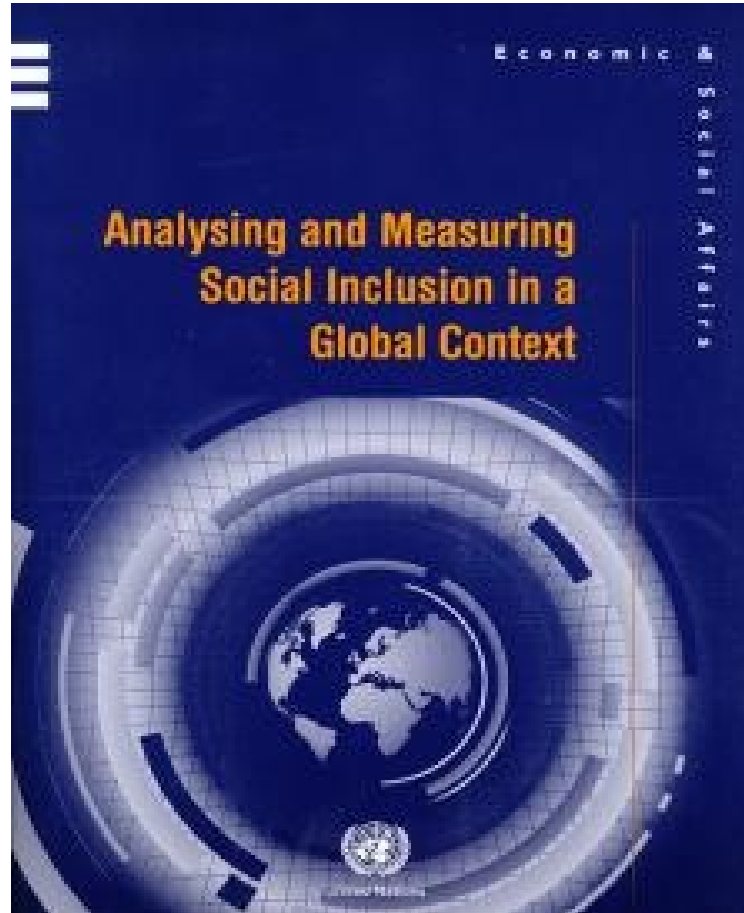
The Friendly Bench

By sitting at a friendly bench, people agree to engage in conversation or a social activity.

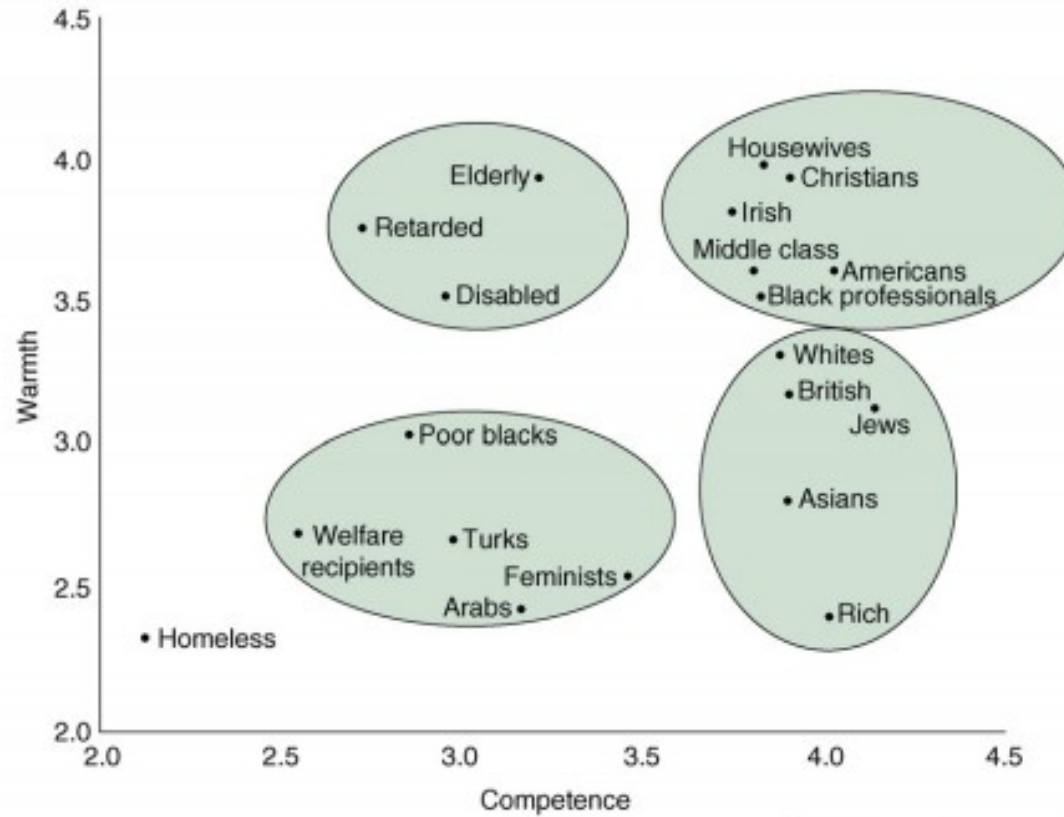
Can this be replicated in other settings?

- In restaurants
- In online forums

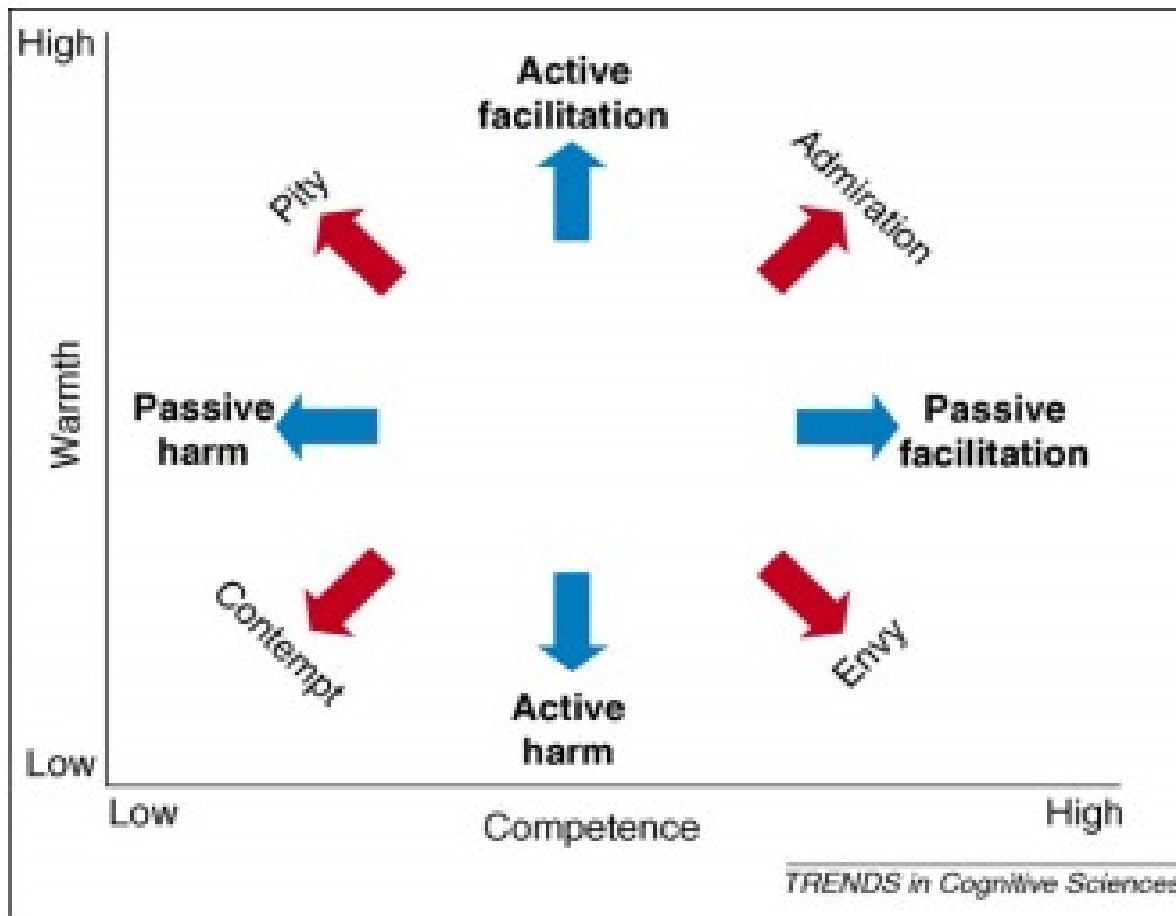
Measuring Belonging



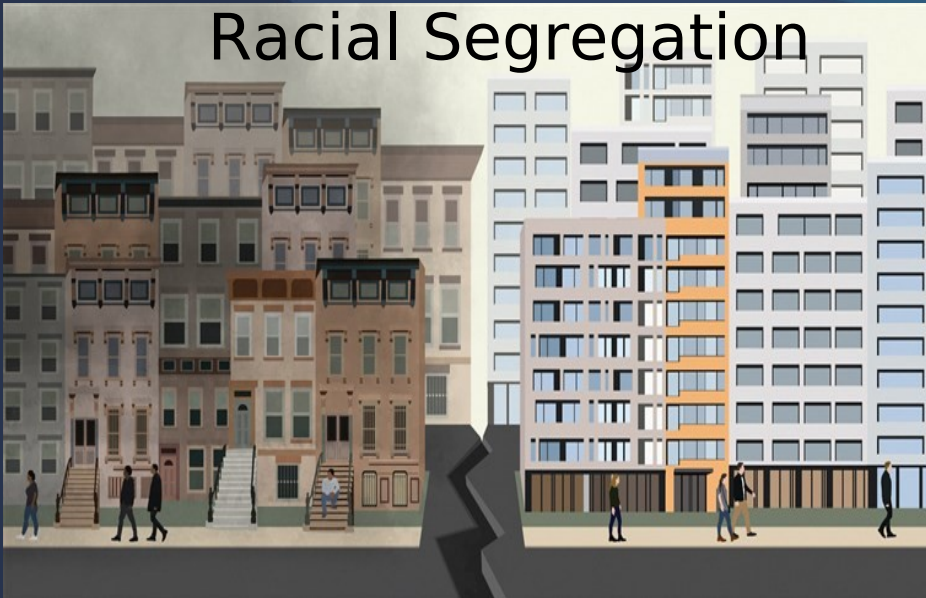
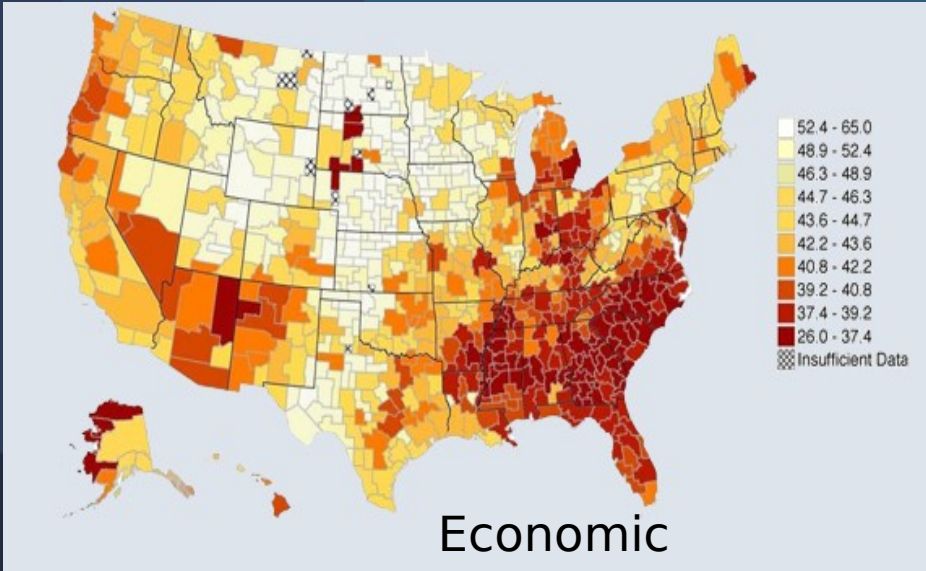
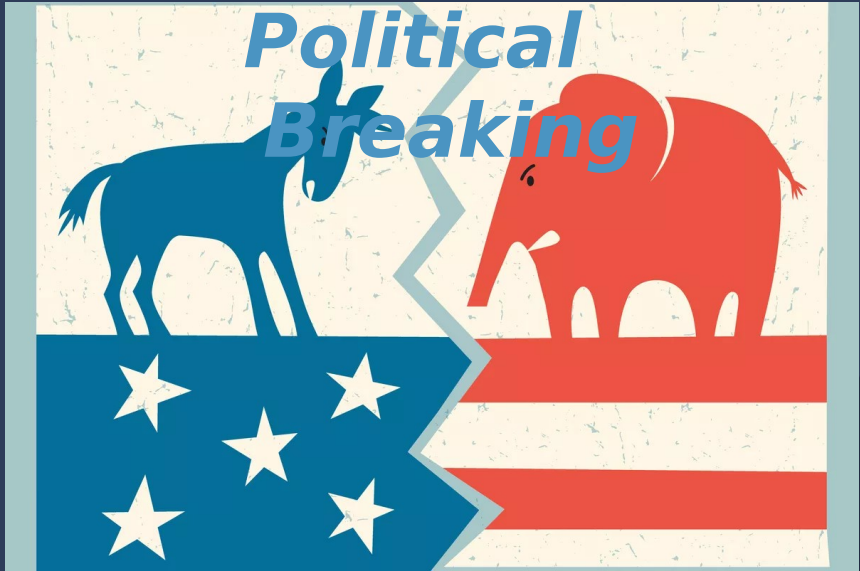
Universal Dimensions of Social Cognition (Susan Fiske et al.)

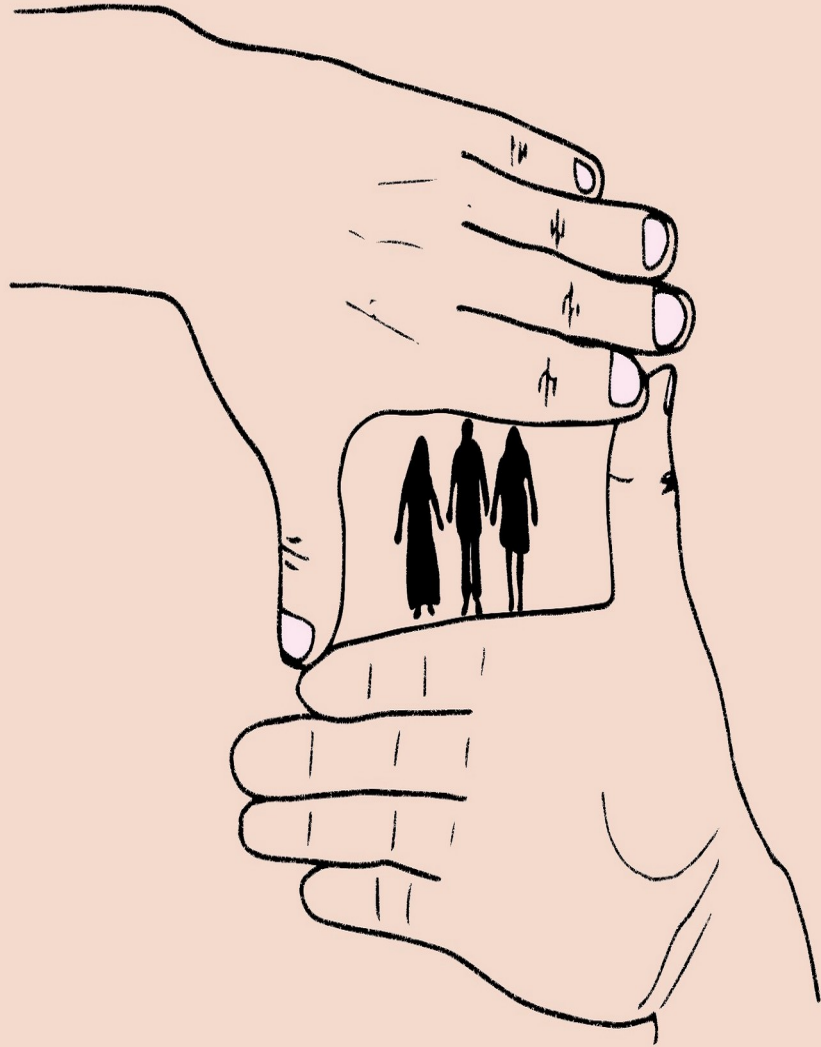


TRENDS in Cognitive Sciences



Universal Dimensions of Social Cognition (Susan Fiske et al.)

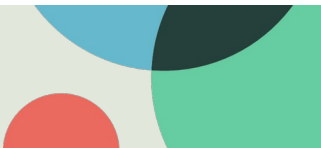




Blind Spots

We all have them

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

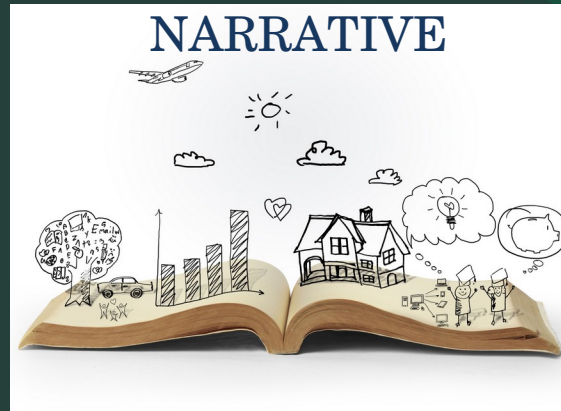




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Closing Thoughts & Remarks



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.



Q&A

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS SESSION



RACING TO JUSTICE

*transforming our conceptions of self and other
to build an inclusive society*

john a. powell



For more information, visit:

<http://www.iupress.indiana.edu/catalog/806639>



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