ANTI-RACISM POLICY JOURNAL

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2022-2023

Race, Place, Space & Policy

Editorial Policy
The *Anti-Racism Policy Journal (ARPJ)*, the first-of-its-kind across policy schools, is an annual publication at Harvard Kennedy School produced by student editors. Opinions expressed in ARPJ are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect those of the editors or Harvard Kennedy School.

INTRODUCTION

We proudly present the second edition of the Anti-Racism Policy Journal (ARPJ), a cross-genre compilation of insightful pieces that investigate the interplay between race, place, space, and policy.

Throughout this issue, we critically examine how hegemonic policies and exclusionary laws enable the spatial landscape of Indigenous, Black, and other racialized peoples, often leading to place-based inequities. Our capacity for change is heightened when we recognize structural racism and other systemic injustices that are embedded in–and manifest throughout–our everyday surroundings.

Racism persists in insidious ways and fuels social injustice through political institutions and long-standing legislation which have shaped our world and affected the contours of our communities. Race and class divisions were created by design and are continuously reinforced through harmful policies and practices such as redlining, eminent domain, urban renewal, limited access to transportation and education, and exposure to environmental toxins.

Anti-racist practices are essential to oppose inequitable systems, shift power structures, and dismantle the harmful legacies of white supremacy. The practices of anti-racism involve identifying race-based privileges, challenging discriminatory policies, and creating equitable opportunities. Ultimately, anti-racism is a relational effort that requires fostering understanding, empathy, and compassion to advance racial justice and equity.

It is in this spirit that this issue was created. Through original research, interviews, creative writing, art, and opinion pieces, the ARPJ prompts readers to scrutinize spatial injustices. Our contributors shed light on overlooked geographies and map new terrains. They engage real-world issues like health care inequities in underserved communities, gentrification, immigration, environmental racism, reparations, and the American prison industrial complex, among others. They challenge prevailing perspectives and encourage a reimagining of our fundamental social institutions. This expansive collection answers a wide range of systemic policy challenges with equally far-reaching solutions.

 Further, this issue of ARPJ traces historic systems of racial, spacial, class, and gender-based violence propagated by settler colonialism, genocide, and enslavement. Our contributors identify enduring patterns of racial subordination and exploitation faced by marginalized communities in domestic and international contexts.

Amidst these injustices, communities have created inspiring possibilities. This publication sheds light on movements dedicated to achieving spatial justice and delves into their influence on policy and legislation, unveiling avenues for systemic transformation. It highlights the need to challenge and disrupt the damage imagery ingrained in our collective consciousness due to a whitewashed history. Only then can we decenter the dominance of the white gaze and dismantle structural racism. We hold space to be intentional about how to design and build spaces and places of resistance, reparation, imagination, and liberation.

Through such examination, we can envision and advocate for more inclusive policies and environments where resources are distributed equitably to support and uplift the concerns, experiences, voices, and leadership of Black, Indigenous, and Latinx peoples, the LGBTQIA+ community, women, individuals with disabilities, and all racialized and marginalized communities. Together, we must confront the intersectional injustices faced by racialized and marginalized communities through interdisciplinary partnerships. Our journal serves as an example of these vital collaborations. We uplift this collective work toward a just, joyful, and healthy future. Join us.

ARPJ Editors-in-Chief

Ian Daniel
Courtney Howard
Dr. Paula D. Walker

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On Environmental Racism & Spatial Violence
A Conversation with Dr. Ingrid Waldron

Ian Daniel

C o-Editor-in-Chief Ian Daniel reconnected with Dr. Ingrid Waldron, a re-nowned scholar and advocate for environmental and racial justice. Their paths first crossed in 2019 during the production of their documentary film, "There's Something in the Water,"[1] which explores environmental racism and shines a light on the Canadian government's current and historical decisions to prioritize corporate profits over Indigenous and Black Nova Scotian communities. Driven by Waldron's groundbreaking research, the film engages personally and politically with women from areas plagued by toxic fallout from industrial develop-ment—women at the forefront of some of the world's most urgent environmental crises.

As the prestigious HOPE Chair in Peace and Health in the Global Peace and Social Justice Program at McMaster University, Dr. Ingrid Waldron's research revolves around the physical and mental health impacts of structural and ecological violence within Black, Indigenous, and immigrant communities. For a decade, Waldron has dedicated her research, teaching, community leadership, and advocacy efforts to raising awareness about the health effects of environmental racism, climate change inequities, mental illness, dementia, and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic on mar-ginalized communities. Her work helped inspire the theme of this issue.

This interview has been edited for brevity and clarity.

Ian Daniel: The second issue of the ARPJ is focused on the theme of race, place, space, and policy. I know you study and work at the intersections of these topics. How do you see them connecting?

Ingrid Waldron: I look to Henri Lefebvre who discussed spatial theory.[2] He empha-sizes that space is never finite, always evolving, and never fixed. Traditionally, geog-raphy views space as static, but scholars like Lefebvre understand that space is ever changing, shaped by our relationships with one another and with organizations. While Lefebvre's theory is insightful, I noticed gaps in his discussion of inequality and difference, he did not explicitly address issues of race, gender, or class.

Fortunately, contemporary geographers, especially those working in human geog-raphy like Katherine McKittrick, are actively addressing these gaps. She is a Black Canadian scholar at Queen's University examining Black geographies, Black ecol-ogies, and how the Trans-Atlantic slave trade influenced the experiences of Black individuals in spaces shaped by race, socioeconomic status, and class. McKittrick uses the term "urbicide," which refers to the death of the city, to analyze gentrifica-

Dr. Ingird Waldron in the 2019 documentary "There's Something in The Water"
a film inspired by her book that explores environmental racism in Canada. Courtesy of the Author

tion and environmental racism as forms of public infrastructure inequality and the destruction of spaces based on race.[3] I also appreciate the work of George Lipsitz, a retired professor from the University of California, Santa Barbara. His article, "The Racialization of Space and the Spatialization of Race," broadened my understanding of environmental racism by placing it within a larger framework of space.[4]

McKittrick and Lipsitz specifically examine how certain groups experience space and navigate spatial inequalities. Their work contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of spatial theory and the intricate processes occurring within our spaces and institutions. This ever-changing nature of space is a result of human interactions and our relationships with institutions. These relationships shape our experiences and determine whether we encounter advantages or disadvantages within the constructed spaces.

I realized that environmental racism is just one aspect of deteriorating public infrastructure, gentrification, and other land-based inequalities. Viewing these issues through a spatial theory lens allows us to make connections between different social issues. In other words, it allows us to understand the relationship between environmental racism, gentrification, employment, and anti-Black policing, for example.

ID: How do you view and define the concept of spatial violence?

IW: Spatial violence is primarily rooted in policy. When we use the term "violence," we are talking about harms. In cases of interpersonal violence or domestic violence, there is a clear source or perpetrator who inflicts harm upon others. When it comes to spatial violence, it's challenging to pinpoint a specific source. The source lies

in policies created by individuals in positions of power who have the authority to shape and implement these policies. The harms occur when policies disproportionately affect people on the ground to the point where we can say that certain groups suffer higher rates of unemployment, poverty, incarceration, and exposure to pollution than other groups. These conditions are a result of policy decisions.

ID: How do you differentiate between space and place?

IW: When we discuss space, I always envision the broader spatial landscape in which we are situated. On the other hand, place refers to specific locations and institutions, such as healthcare, immigration, education, and criminal justice, where we interact with one another and with the institutions. Space has a more extensive scope. What I find interesting is the concept of a spatial imaginary, particularly when it pertains to white people. White people seek to uphold notions of space that are pure, innocent, and untainted. In the case of gentrification, the policies and actions that seek to push out racial others is one example of efforts made by business owners and others to maintain spaces that are devoid of groups that are seen to taint spaces and that are perceived as degenerate and criminal.

ID: Let's talk about the term "environmental racism." Would you agree we are witnessing a broadening of its scope outside of conversations about pollutants and toxic industries to include public infrastructure inequality, the prison industrial complex, gentrification, and disability and LGBTQIA+ geographies?

IW: People are indeed expanding the term. I remember a colleague or friend mentioning that anti-Black policing is a form of environmental racism, particularly during the height of the George Floyd protests. Over the past few years, many people have been using the concept of environmental racism to describe the many other ways in which racism is imbued within our environment. My concern is that the term will become so diluted that the focus on pollution and contamination will be obscured. I think much of this has to do with the fact that people are grappling with how to capture the multiple forms of racial inequalities that are happening in our spaces and places and environmental racism becomes a convenient term for them to use. For me, spatial violence is a useful concept for capturing multiple forms of racial harms.

Your postal code is a pretty good indicator of what you have access to or don't have access to in your neighborhood or community. What you have access to or don't have access to shapes your community's health and well-being.

ID: In our documentary, you say that your postal code determines your health. How does environmental racism and spatial violence lead to poor health outcomes?

IW: When I talk about your postal code determining your health, what I'm really saying is that social determinants impact your health. Your postal code is a pretty good indicator of what you have access to or don't have access to in your neighborhood or community.

Africville, Nova Scotia, Canada, 1965
In a stark case of environmental racism, resident of Africville, predominantly African Nova Scotians, were exposed to toxic waste while denied basic services like water and sewers. For their water supply, they relied on an assortment of wells. The town was bulldozed and residents were evicted in the 1960s.
Photo: Bob Brooks. Courtesey Nova Scotia Archives

What you have access to or don't have access to shapes your community's health and well-being. For example, does your neighborhood have access to healthy food stores, green space and vegetation, reliable transportation, health clinics, good quality housing and clean air and water? The extent to which your neighborhood has access to these goods and resources will determine the health of the community.

Numerous studies have highlighted the positive impact of greenery and vegetation on health. Living in a concrete jungle without trees and vegetation can have adverse effects on health, such as increased risk of heart disease, respiratory illnesses, and other health issues. Therefore, the surrounding environment and community can either promote or negatively affect health.

In the United States and Canada, if you are Hispanic, Indigenous, or Black, you are more likely than white people to live near a dump or industrial area. This is again tied to postal code, place, and the power inequalities that contribute to these disparities. Policymakers decide where to place landfills, dumps, and other environmentally hazardous projects. It raises the question of why such projects are not predominantly located in white communities. This is all about power dynamics, who gets a say, who can resist, who has the resources to resist, and who is less likely to be heard.

ID: How important is policy to the health of people's lives?

IW: My students often get frustrated when I discuss the persistence of poor health outcomes in certain communities in Canada because they feel they don't have the power to make change. My response is often about the need to change policy and to create opportunities for diverse people to play a role in policy change. In Canada, policymakers in all our social institutions are primarily white people. White people make policies based on their life experiences and worldviews. Those life experiences and worldviews shape the policies they make and often don't capture the worldviews and experiences of people who are not white. The solution then is to open up more spaces within education, employment, environment and other social institutions for non-white people to participate in the creation of policy. People who have diverse experiences and worldviews that they can bring to the table will shape policy in different ways. We have to start looking at who has a seat at the table and who doesn't. Therefore, I tell my students who are interested in becoming health professionals or who want careers in healthcare that one of the most important contributions they can make is in policy, especially if they are a member of a "diversity" group.

We need to see a change in policymakers in terms of sexual orientation, gender identity, class, and race. This is not in every case—just because you're Black doesn't mean you understand racism. A lot of people don't. But you're creating that shift in how policy should be implemented. Because diversity brings diversity of understanding and experience—people who are navigating their worlds in very different ways. They understand issues from a different perspective and then they create policies to address those issues. We have to look at policy making within all the social structures: education, immigration, employment, labor, healthcare, public infrastructure, including housing, and transportation.

ID: So how do you think anti-racism policy or anti-racism strategies work best to address these policy harms?

IW: Anti-racism is about addressing the entrenched and embedded inequalities that have been systemically couched within our social structures. And if it's about anti-racism policy, it's about addressing and rupturing policies that sustain entrenched inequalities embedded within our social structures.

I see anti-racism as a crucial first step. Anti-racism theory views racism as the most significant type of discrimination that racialized people face. It argues that race is salient because it holds the most powerful currency in white dominant society. It also acknowledges intersectionality—the notion that race is shaped by the intersections of other social identities such as gender, sexual orientation, and class. For me, this is the piece that is important. While I acknowledge the saliency of race and its powerful currency in white dominant society, I also recognize that one's experience with race will be different depending on one's gender, sexual orientation or class. For example, the lived experiences of Black men will differ from the lived experiences of Black women precisely because of the ways in which they are differently situated at the intersection of gender and race. So, while I see anti-racism as a useful theory for highlighting the ways in which racism is systemically imbued within

all social structures, there also needs to be an emphasis on how one's experience of race will be influenced by the many social identities we hold.

ID: Regarding the historical harms of chattel slavery, settler colonialism, and their enduring impact on policy, you've expressed the importance of examining the relationship between decolonization efforts, land, and the Land Back movement. Can you discuss how this comes up in your work?

IW: In discussing settler colonialism, it is important to distinguish between colonialism and settler colonialism. Colonialism occurred in a circular fashion whereby the colonizers came to the new world for the purposes of exploitation and returned home. With settler colonialism, there is no return home and exploitation for profit continues. Environmental racism is an issue that highlights the settler colonial process. In their quest for profit, settlers (industry owners, government) engage in the exploitation of Indigenous land for key resources. Settler colonialism pinpoints how colonial policies continue today. There are those who would say that Indigenous people need to pull up their bootstraps, stop complaining about the past and need to get on with it. To those people I say it is difficult to get on with it when the policies of the past continue to prevent Indigenous communities from addressing the key issues affecting them today.

In 2015, a 400-page report called the *Truth and Reconciliation Report* was released that detailed how colonial policies and actions meted out to Indigenous people in Canada continue to impact them today.[5] It pinpoints how past policies in education, health, employment, and other issues continue to shape policy today because the Canadian government has largely failed to address these issues. In Canada, Indigenous people continue to fare worse than any other group with respect to key social indicators, such as income, employment, education and health.

The Land Back Movement is not only a call to action from Indigenous people about the urgency of returning back to them their stolen land, it also signals how deeply embedded land is in Indigenous ways of knowing, Indigenous livelihood, and Indigenous well-being. Indigenous ways of knowing or epistemology is premised on the land and its connections to water, plants, animals, and human beings. Unlike Western epistemology, Indigenous epistemology is premised on holism and harmony between the land, water, insects, humans, and other elements. Disharmony occurs when these elements are out of balance. For Indigenous people, the desecration of their land (such as through the exploitation of their land for resources) leads to the desecration of their people and their community. Therefore, on the surface, the Land Back Movement may appear to be simply about the return of their land, but it is more than that. It's about how Indigenous ways of knowing and the well-being of future generations of Indigenous people are premised on the land.

ID: In your research, what have you observed regarding the connections between spatial violence and the prison industrial complex?

IW: I teach a course that examines the prison industrial complex, gentrification, public infrastructure inequalities, environmental racism, and climate change inequities as forms of spatial violence. It is a course that asks students to not only consider these issues as forms of spatial violence, but also how these issues inter-

sect. During a discussion in class last year students discussed how they understood the link between environmental racism and the prison industrial complex. They discussed how the groups that are disproportionately living near pollution and contamination are the exact same groups that are disproportionately incarcerated: Black and Brown folks. They also observed how prisons are sites that can be environmentally hazardous, with inmates stuffed into spaces with poor air quality that can take a toll on inmates' health and well-being.

ID: Do you have any additional thoughts you'd like to share about the intersections of race, place, and space policy?

IW: Understanding health and well-being by situating it within a socio-political context is important. That's essentially what we are talking about when we refer to the structural determinants of health. We are essentially asking how health outcomes are shaped by policy actions within social structures like education, criminal justice, employment, and the environment. In thinking about health and well-being, we must also consider how our spaces are imbued with inequalities of race, gender, class, and other social factors to shape the relationships that people and communities have with one another and social institutions that are responsible for meting out policies that may protect some communities and harm others.

Notes

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From Freedom Hill to Princeville
Navigating Environmental Racism & Fostering Community in America's Oldest Black Town

LaChaun Banks

Recently, while working on the implementation of an economic development program, I visited the small town of Princeville, North Carolina. I explored the town's museum—a humble wooden building housing a few rooms dedicated to showcasing the community's history. The town was initially named Freedom Hill and was officially incorporated in 1885. It is the oldest town in America chartered by Black people.[1] Plantation owners, who considered the land too soggy to grow crops, gave it to emancipated Blacks after the passage of the 13th Amendment. The African American settlers transformed the swampy land into Freedom Hill after emancipation in 1865, creating an alternative space for the community to flourish after slavery. In 1885, The land was renamed Princeville in honor of Turner Prince, a freed African American who played a pivotal role in constructing many of the homes in the community.

Historically, African Americans have been forced into hazardous environmental spaces, and the early settlement of Princeville represents a stark example of this environmental racism. Princeville lies adjacent to the Tar River and experiences severe flooding due to its low elevation, both reasons why white inhabitants had initially deemed the land unsuitable and granted it to African Americans. The population of the town today is around 1,200 people and remains 93 percent Black.[2] Despite the dangers, the community holds strong: the residents of Princeville are bound by their shared beliefs, experiences, loyalties, and history.

In March 2023, I spoke with Princeville mayor Bobbie Jones, who expressed pride in the community's determination to survive, progress, and celebrate despite racist policies and obstacles. He said, "Our forefathers and elderly citizens, who were born and raised in Princeville, hold a deep connection to the town. They witnessed the sacrifices made by our forefathers and consider Princeville their home. It is our responsibility to ensure the town's sustainability."

Those ancestors were formerly enslaved individuals who created spaces outside the white gaze, constructing cultural havens for Black communities. Black people established "Freedom Colonies" primarily during or after the era of legal slavery in the USA, seeking autonomy and cultivating unique socio-cultural freedom for their communities.[3] Over five thousand such towns thrived across the nation, including Nicodemus, Kansas, Shankleville, Texas, and Weeksville, Brooklyn, as Black communities that defied white supremacy by establishing creative customs and expressive forms of community-building.[4] Princeville is one surviving example.

The history of Princeville, however, has been environmentally disastrous, making it difficult to live in if not inhabitable. The Tar River flooded the area seven times between 1800 and 1958 (Fig.1). In 1965, the Army Corps of Engineers built a levee along a stretch of the Tar River. And in 1999, Hurricane Floyd caused extensive devastation, completely destroying the town, spreading disease, and killing

Figure 1
Flooded Main Street, Princeville, North Carolina, 1958
Photograph by Charles S. Killebrew via North Carolina Digital Heritage Center

52 residents in North Carolina.[5] Numerous towns throughout the country have a similar story; witnessing their communities depleted and dispersed as a result of natural disasters intensified by climate change.

The aftermath of the floods revealed contradictions in government assistance. FEMA distributed grant money to rebuild homes in Princeville, but it was also funding buyouts for citizens to take a sum of money to relocate. For many, the choice to leave was difficult, as you can't put a price tag on community kinship. The familiarity of neighbors, a barter system, unspoken communications, and trust between those who have experienced the same tragedies and discrimination creates an unwavering bond. [6] During my visit, I found the community somewhat repaired and rejuvenated, with many of the original community members, including direct descendants of freed slaves from 1885, residing there.

However, In 2016, Hurricane Matthew wreaked havoc on the region, causing significant damage to areas that were not safeguarded by the levee. This resulted in the flooding of numerous homes and the submergence of approximately 80 percent of the community (Fig. 2). As a consequence, there are still individuals who remain displaced from their residences due to the destruction.[7]

In 2020, Congress allocated funds to the Army Corps to build a new levee, aiming to protect the town's central area, despite the efforts of other government agencies trying to relocate locals.[8] The residents themselves held divergent perspectives on the town's future, some desired to remain in their homeland, while others wished to relocate to higher ground. In 2022, the town received FEMA's $12

Figure 2
An aerial view of inland flooding in Princeville, North Carolina
One of the hardest-hit areas from Hurricane Matthew. 2016. Photo: James D'Ambrosio

million *Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities* grant for the development of their land. Jones said they have recently acquired 53 acres of land and another 150 acres earmarked for future development, including housing.

The population of the town is expected to double where Jones said he envisions "a self-sufficient, self-supporting, and self-sustaining Princeville within the next 20 years, with a 10-year goal of providing prosperity—both mentally, physically, spiritually, and financially—to all its citizens."

Preservation of the land is vital for the older generation to hold a deep connection to their birthplace, and efforts are being made to improve education and address the well-being of younger generations in the area.

"We also need to focus on our future generation, as recent events have shown the negative impact on our youth," Jones told me. "So, we are organizing an educational summit at the community college, inviting all stakeholders to discuss major concerns and to make positive changes for our children's education and future. Our goal is to unite and improve Edgecombe County."

Environmental racism is a continuing threat to the community of Princeville, which, despite all odds, has not wavered in the face of repeated natural disasters. It's only a matter of time before another serious flood[9] hits this small town yet again and the Mayor faces the dilemma of relocating citizens and attempting to preserve the land. As climate change leads to an increase in natural disasters, leaders must consider the impact these events have on communities' stability – especially in such freedom colonies like Princeville. The fallout from these settler colonial-induced "natural disasters" as a result of climate change fragment social connections, prosopographic relationships, and cultural heritage identities.

The narrative of Princeville serves as a powerful testament to the immense historical significance that is at stake in an era characterized by accelerating catastrophes. Mayor Jones emphasized the importance of self-reliance and preservation in healing the community and reshaping their future. "Racist policies will not destroy us," Mayor Jones said.

Displacement should not be viewed solely through a geographic lens. It also disrupts the connective tissue of these Black communities resisting settler colonizer white supremacy. To recognize the trauma and environmental racism experienced by community members, place-based cultivation must be centered in any solutions, policies and legislation. Such cultivation involves advancing relationships and rebuilding social, cultural and political connections that may have been disrupted by the disaster.

Community-driven and interdisciplinary approaches that prioritize the significance of place, particularly in marginalized communities, requires the involvement of a diverse range of stakeholders, including community leaders, educators, urban planners, environmental experts, and storytellers. Land stewardship—actively participating in the care and management of the environment—highlights a sense of ownership and pride and also advances the sustainable development of a new or reconstructed location. Initiatives such as community gardens, ecological restoration projects, and the preservation of cultural heritage sites reinforce multi-generation connections between people and their land.

Community gardens alone will not save Princeville. No matter how resilient and constructive a place is, it is essential to implement structural reforms that focus on enhancing post-disaster recovery standards and flood management. All reforms and policies must prioritize the experiences of Black communities that have historically borne the brunt of climate-related disasters. By integrating the power of place and land into post-recovery processes, communities can better foster resilience and healing. Only through these measures can towns like Princeville forge sustainable and more predictable futures in the midst of climate change.

Princeville is a beautiful example of how community strength and cultural solidarity, infused with a deep love of space can help dismantle extreme systemic obstacles and ensure a unique town's relevance to current and future generations. I hope that we continue to see Princeville thrive in the coming decades.

Notes

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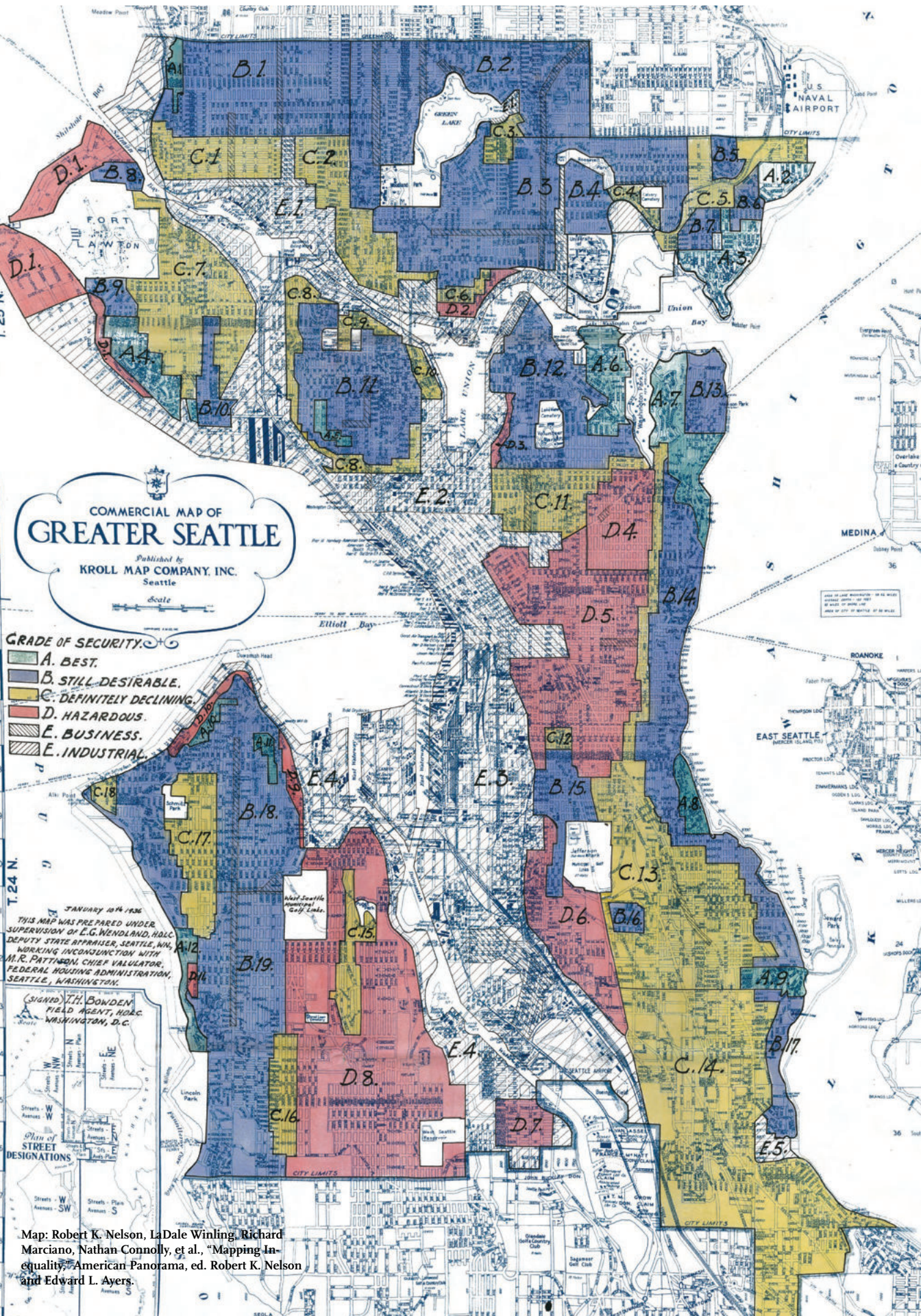
COMMERCIAL MAP OF
GREATER SEATTLE
Published by
KROLL MAP COMPANY, INC.
Seattle
Scale

GRADE OF SECURITY.
A. BEST.
B. STILL DESIRABLE.
C. DEFINITELY DECLINING.
D. HAZARDOUS.
E. BUSINESS.
E. INDUSTRIAL.

JANUARY 10th 1936.
THIS MAP WAS PREPARED UNDER
SUPERVISION OF E.G.WENDLAND, HOLC
DEPUTY STATE APPRAISER, SEATTLE, WN.
WORKING IN CONJUNCTION WITH
M.R. PATTISON, CHIEF VALUATOR,
FEDERAL HOUSING ADMINISTRATION,
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON.

SIGNED T.H. BOWDEN
FIELD AGENT, HOLC
WASHINGTON, D.C.

Plan of
STREET
DESIGNATIONS

Map: Robert K. Nelson, LaDale Winling, Richard
Marciano, Nathan Connolly, et al., "Mapping In-
equality," American Panorama, ed. Robert K. Nelson
and Edward L. Ayers.

Strategies to Build Racial Equity Into Land Use & Zoning

Nathan Bennett Fleming
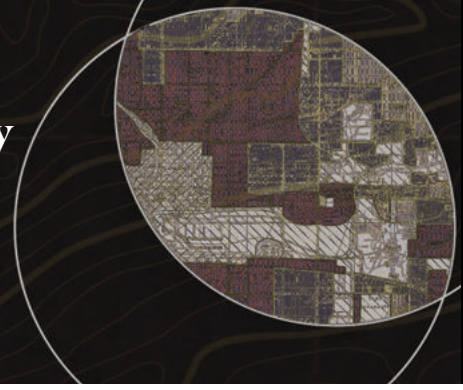
F or decades, scholars and advocates have argued that residential segregation is the direct result of explicit government policies. Local governments have enacted a wide range of policies, particularly land use and zoning policies, that have helped to create and maintain residential segregation—leading to inequities in access to opportunity. In recent years, however, there has been growing recognition of the ways that zoning and land use has expanded racial inequality. As a result, local governments have begun to make efforts to infuse racial equity into their zoning and land use decision-making processes. More substantive analysis of these approaches would benefit scholars, advocates, policymakers, and impacted parties.

In this brief essay, I build on existing scholarship by surveying and analyzing innovative approaches to build in racial equity into zoning and land use decisions that are being implemented in jurisdictions nationwide. The essay makes a set of policy recommendations for jurisdictions to strengthen their approach to racial equity in land use and zoning. Analysis of this area is limited, and, as such, this essay will contribute by critically engaging with the ongoing work to address the legacy of racial subordination and marginalization in land use policies.

Race, Inequity & Land Use

Racialized zoning practices have contributed to residential segregation by limiting housing occupancy by Black and minority residents to specified areas, often the least sought-after sections of a jurisdiction.[1] For example, zoning ordinances have disproportionately permitted locally undesirable land uses (LULUs) proximate to Black and minority communities.[2] This includes commercial, environmental, and industrial LULUs. In many ways, racialized zoning practices have had a cyclical impact, where property disinvestment and abandonment fuel declining real estate values, incentivizing further pollution and undesirable land use.[2] Similarly, disinvestment leads to fewer quality jobs and schools in neighborhoods where low-income residents and people of color reside.[3] As a result, the effect of racial zoning persists and continues to negatively impact communities to this day.

In the summer of 1910, Baltimore, Maryland passed the first racially exclusionary zoning ordinance after a Black attorney purchased a home in a prosperous white neighborhood in the city.[4] Baltimore's approach towards racial exclusion sparked similar racialized zoning activity over the next six years in New Orleans, Atlanta, Louisville, St. Louis, Oklahoma City, Dade County (Miami), Charleston, Birmingham, Dallas, and several cities in the state of Virginia.[5] Practices included designating certain blocks for certain races and barring members of different races from these blocks, allowing new residents to move onto a block only if they were
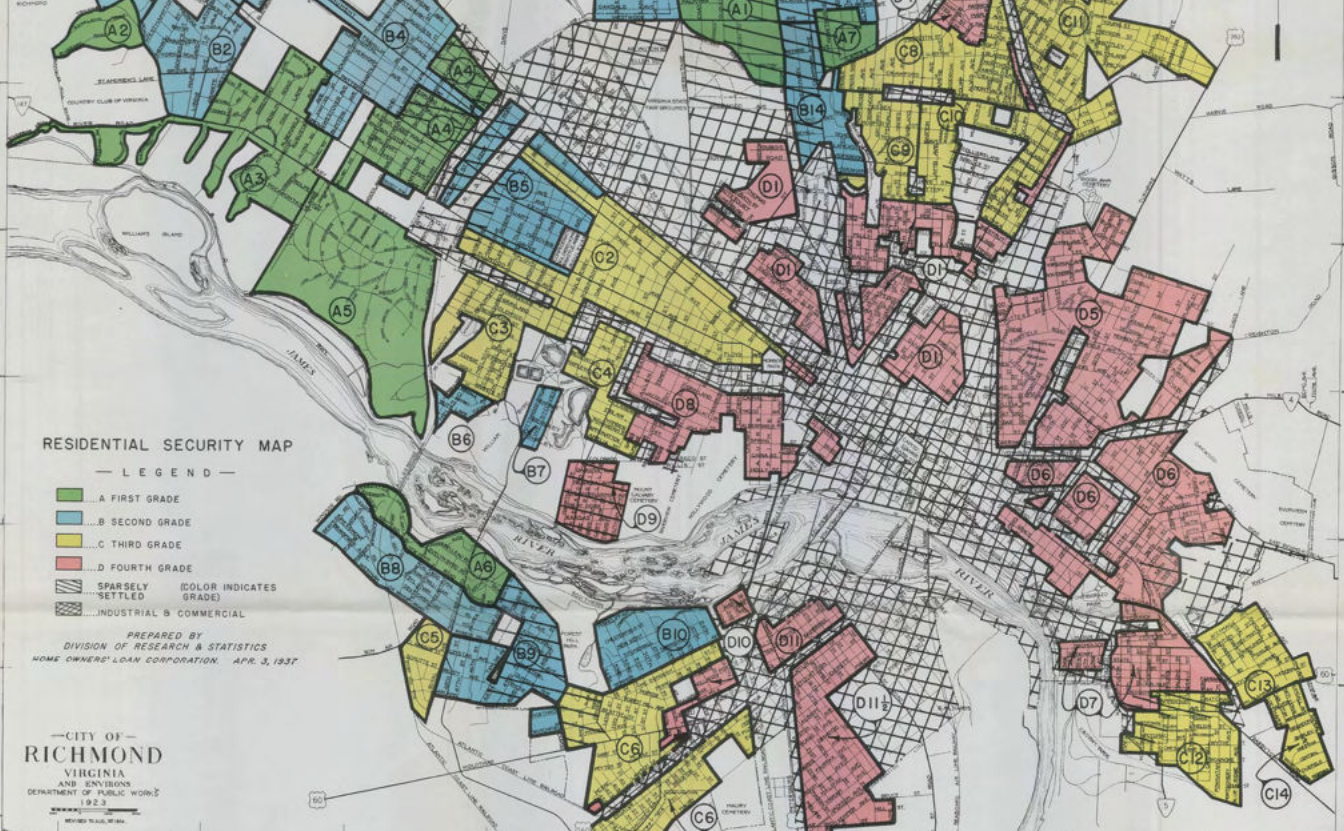
City of Richmond Residential Security Zoning Map, 1923
Map courtesy Robert K. Nelson, LaDale Winling, Richard Marciano, Nathan Connolly, et al., "Mapping Inequality," American Panorama, ed. Robert K. Nelson and Edward L. Ayers. https://dsl.richmond.edu/panorama/redlining/#loc=11/42.314/-71.238&city=boston-ma

of the same race as a majority of current residents, and requiring the consent of current residents if a new resident was of a different race.[6] At least 21 jurisdictions incorporated a racist zoning law modeled after Baltimore's.[7] This was until Louisville's ordinance was challenged in the 1917 *Buchanan v. Warley* case.[8]

In *Buchanan,* the Court relied upon the Fourteenth Amendment provisions requiring states to afford all citizens equal protection under its laws. The Black plaintiff sought to purchase property on an interracial block that contained two Black and eight white households.[9] Louisville had many interracial communities prior to the enactment of racial zoning measures, which contributed to the Court reasoning that Louisville's zoning ordinance prohibitively interfered with the contract right of property owners to sell to anyone that they wanted to.[10] The Court ruled Louisville's racial zoning ordinance unconstitutional.[11]

Following the Court's rejection of explicitly racialized zoning policies, local officials either ignored the decision, designed policies that were only slightly distinct from the policies overturned in *Buchanan,* or turned to a race-based approach to land use, planning, and zoning that was neutral on its face but discriminatory in effect.[12] Racialized zoning practices predate the development of comprehensive, citywide zoning codes in the United States. This helps to explain why some of the initial, comprehensive zoning ordinances separated races into designated districts.[13] New York created the first citywide zoning ordinance in 1916 because affluent business owners in Manhattan wanted to prevent laborers from residing in the shopping district.[14] Atlanta's 1922 zoning plan divided the city into "R1 white districts" and "R2 colored districts." The plan explicitly declared that racial zoning was essential to maintaining public order.[15] Richmond, Virginia drafted a citywide

zoning ordinance that restricted the residence of anyone who was not lawfully allowed to marry the majority of the block's current residents. Notably, the state banned interracial marriage.[16]

Other jurisdictions, like Austin, Texas, informally relied on racial designations in planning documents to guide zoning ordinances. These planning documents did not mention race explicitly yet carried out the racialized planning designations, thwarting the Buchannan decision.[17] Jurisdictions also designated middle class neighborhoods for "single-family housing use only" as a way to prevent occupation by low-income residents of any race. For example, in St. Louis, neighborhoods with existing restrictive covenants against African American occupancy were classified for single-family housing use only, preserving the white character of these neighborhoods while deterring liquor stores, bars, brothels, and other potential public nuisances.[18] African American communities became blighted by the burden of industrial and environmentally damaging land use, which justified "slum clearance" policies designed to further displace African Americans from central business districts to insulate white commerce.[19] State and local governments executed their "slum clearance" displacement policies in tandem with the federal government, as federal interstate highway routes were often designed in a manner that destroyed existing African American communities.[20] The legacy of racialized zoning persists today as many communities of color continue to lack access to quality health centers, grocery stores, employment opportunities, parks and recreation facilities, and public schools.

Local governments also worked in concert with the federal government to execute racialized land use policies that exacerbated and entrenched residential segregation. The federal government allowed local entities to develop segregated public housing projects., The Federal Housing Administration funded segregated local housing developments and subdivisions that promised not to sell to African Americans. The federal government also developed promotional campaigns designed to guide white middle class residents out of multifamily housing into single-family housing, and insured mortgages only if said mortgages were in neighborhoods with little risk of African American residential occupancy.[21] Local governments also enforced private residential contracts designed to restrict future purchase by African Americans. State supreme courts in Alabama, California, Colorado, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Michigan, Missouri, New York, North Carolina, West Virginia, and Wisconsin upheld practices such as requiring all homeowners in a new subdivision to become members in an ownership association with bylaws that restricted sales to African Americans.[22]

Historic racism in zoning has contemporary impacts. As African Americans moved to previously white neighborhoods, association with the slum conditions of the neighborhoods they previously lived in contributed in part to white flight.[23] The value of homes in previously racially restricted communities have vastly increased in value, leading to stark wealth differences between whites and African Americans and restricting those with working class incomes from purchasing homes.[24] Federal, state, and local programs such as low-income housing funded by federal tax credits often work to exacerbate existing residential segregation patterns rather than remedy them.[25] A disproportionate number of toxic waste facilities are located in African American communities. Those with more wealth and time can participate in zoning hearings and meetings, explaining why these meetings are "disproportionately white, male, elderly, homeowners, longtime residents, and frequent voters."[26] When low-income residents are shut out of the zoning process,

A crucial first step towards racially equitable land use policies is the development of mapping and narrative tools to document historic community-level inequities.

zoning outcomes are made without consideration of the voices of those who may be most impacted. Residents of marginalized neighborhoods have lowered life expectancies as these communities face more violence, health disparities, and educational dysfunction.[27] Nonetheless, many African American residents face new challenges, as many localities with legacies of racial subordination through land use policies have experienced increases in housing rental and sales prices over the past few decades, leading to the displacement of low- and moderate-income residents.[28]

Policy Recommendations

In response to the onset of recent social justice movements, local governments have sought to address issues like displacement and the lack of meaningful community engagement while remedying historical racialized land use practices. Many local jurisdictions now have the stated goal of achieving racial equity, "where race can no longer be used to predict life outcomes, and life outcomes for all groups are improved."[29] Jurisdictions are increasingly looking to deploy equitable development practices, which is a "system of policies and investments designed to mitigate displacement and inequitable access to key social, physical, and economic determinants of well-being," to achieve this goal.[30]

Many of these jurisdictions are deploying Racial Equity Action Plans (REAPs) to create comprehensive and actionable roadmaps to address the root causes of racial disparities. This includes analyzing data on racial disparities in areas such as housing, education, employment, and health, as well as identifying the social, community-based, and government factors that drive racial equity. REAPs also focus on resilience factors that can advance racial equity and mitigate the effects of systemic and historic racial disparities. In surveying approaches to achieving racial equity in the land use and zoning context throughout the country, I have identified a set of recommendations for jurisdictions looking to enhance their approach towards achieving racially equitable development. These recommendations can be used in whole or in part as necessary, as there is no one-size-fits-all solution to addressing racial equity challenges in land use. Each locality has its own unique history, demographics, and socioeconomic characteristics; therefore, these recommendations should be considered in the relevant local context.

Document Historic Segregation & Inequitable Practices

A crucial first step towards racially equitable land use policies is the development of mapping and narrative tools to document historic community-level inequities. It is vital to invest in research on a community's specific history of racism in housing and land use before taking further steps to develop policy or plans. To address issues like racial disparities in wealth and health through land-use reforms, it is important that we have a firm understanding of the past actions that produced our

present conditions. Then, cities must acknowledge this history and take informed actions to prove to the community that the government is authentically and intentionally dismantling barriers to fair housing and community equity.

In **Louisville, Kentucky,** the Office of Redevelopment Strategies has launched an interactive story map that illustrates the modern-day consequences of redlining in Louisville.[31] The story map is designed to contribute to a community discourse to highlight and address the issue of redlining.[32] By initiation of this dialogue, the city hopes to remove barriers to opportunity in areas with a history of state-designed residential segregation.

Use Data to Develop Displacement Risk Indices & Develop Community Equity Focus Areas

Localities can use neighborhood data to identify and categorize areas by their level of displacement risk. Identifying these areas can help guide equitable land use policies and can serve as a foundation for the implementation of targeted solutions to prevent displacement. Localities can also use neighborhood data to identify and categorize areas related to their level of neighborhood access to opportunity. When these areas are identified, they can be used in concert with the displacement risk areas to guide equitable land use policies. Juxtaposing the displacement risk areas with the community equity focus areas can help guide equitable land use policies by allowing for the implementation of differing strategies in differing neighborhoods that work together to advance racial equity.

Seattle, Washington has developed its own displacement risk index to identify displacement risk areas by aggregating factors that increase the risk of marginalized populations being displaced. Factors in their index include income, education, percentage of renters, and percentage of housing cost-burdened households. These factors help to identify high-risk areas in the city for displacement.[33] Seattle has also developed an access-to-opportunity that includes factors related to a neighborhood's social, economic, and physical wellbeing. Indicators include high-performing schools, the number of jobs within a two-mile radius, and access to fresh produce. These indicators help to identify areas in the city with low levels of community equity.[34] Seattle uses this data to analyze potential growth strategies (such as guiding growth near light rail or near urban villages) and predict the potential impacts on displacement. Neighborhoods are identified as: High Displacement Risk/Low Access to Opportunity, High Displacement Risk/High Access to Opportunity, Low Displacement Risk/Low Access to Opportunity, Low Displacement Risk/High Access to Opportunity. These categorizations allow for the deployment of varying planning and equity strategies according to a neighborhood's unique needs and challenges.

Use the Displacement & Community Equity Areas to Set Goals

Once a city identifies focus areas, they can set goals, targets, and metrics designed to achieve more equitable outcomes. **Chicago, Illinois** has tasked each of its agencies to submit a racial equity goal for each year.[35] Similarly, local executive agencies or local legislative bodies could be tasked with setting racial equity goals to implement in high displacement risk areas and in areas with low levels of community equity.

Develop a Citywide Equitable Development Data Tool

Beyond identifying displacement and community equity areas, a data tool could be developed to allow the public and stakeholders to access citywide, district-wide, and neighborhood-level demographic, economic security, and housing affordability data. This tool could guide and shape equitable land use policies. **New York City** has mandated the development of a publicly accessible equitable development data tool.[36]

Data is provided for six specific categories and is disaggregated by race and ethnicity, where available.[37]

Require Submission of Racial Equity Reports for Land Use Applicants

If a data tool were to be developed to allow the public and stakeholders to access citywide, district-wide, and neighborhood-level demographic, economic security, and housing affordability data, it could be instrumental in guiding and informing equitable land use decision-making. In some jurisdictions, land use applicants must proactively file reports to assess the displacement impacts of a potential project in order to propose remedial action and to discourage projects that will encourage displacement. These reports identify how the project relates to racial equity strategies, housing goals, and equitable access to opportunity.

New York City also requires a racial equity report that lists the number of units by affordable unit type, expected rents, and the annual household income necessary to afford the units without being cost burdened.[38] For commercial projects, applicants must list the number of jobs that are projected, the average income of the projected jobs, and an assessment of the demographics and educational characteristics of candidates that are typically placed in the occupational sector of the projected jobs.[39] Applicants must use the data tool to develop an assessment of the community which includes a neighborhood data summarization, and a comparison of said community with borough and citywide data that is disaggregated by race. Housing providers must clearly state the number of future units for each affordable housing category in the proposed project, with the goal of ensuring that residents are informed of the affordability implications of each proposed project.[40]

In **Boston**, proposals presented to the Planning Agency for Large Project Review must include: "1) a narrative description of how the project will further the goals of overcoming segregation and fostering inclusive communities, 2) an assessment of historical exclusion and displacement risk, which consists of a review of potential racial and economic changes in the area where the project is proposed, and a review of the proposal's potential effect on rents in the area to ensure that longtime residents will not lose their housing."[41] The Boston Planning and Development Agency is mandated to employ an assessment tool to determine

> **It is vital to invest in research on a community's specific history of racism in housing and land use before taking further steps to develop policy or plans.**

the displacement impact on current residents and neighborhood small businesses prior to plan approval.[42] Housing providers must describe their plans to implement designated housing affordability and marketing interventions. Housing providers must choose additional designated intervention to gain approval for housing developments that are located in high displacement risk areas.[43]

Invest in Building the Infrastructure for Meaningful Community Engagement

Given the disparities in participants in land use and zoning meetings, it is essential for land use applicants to use robust community engagement strategies that proactively gather input from a broad cross-section of residents. To ensure that residents are well positioned to negotiate conditions that can minimize the negative community impacts of proposed projects, it is critical to empower residents. This can be done through investment in a community engagement infrastructure to offset the power imbalance between marginalized residents and sophisticated housing development corporations.

Portland, Oregon has developed a model that drives sustained investment in community engagement. The city contracts with seven independent district coalitions, and each coalition contains up to a dozen geographically based neighborhood associations.[44] Coalition staff provide training, communications, logistical, technical and advocacy support for residents and their neighborhood associations.[45] This program is distributes $2 million directly to the district coalitions, which allows for the hiring of long-term staff.[46]

Require Applicants for Land Use Permissions in High Displacement Areas to Implement Enumerated Interventions

Applicants should be required to implement solutions from a list of interventions that have been proven to effectively mitigate displacement and advance housing equity. These interventions are often the product of hard-fought concessions made in previous community driven development negotiations. In Boston, interventions include "deepening the affordability of units beyond what would otherwise be required, providing a higher number of accessible units than otherwise required, matching or exceeding the percentage of family-sized units in the surrounding neighborhood, increasing density to accommodate a greater number of affordable units to protected classes, and partnering with nonprofit developers to assist with affordable housing production."[47]

Develop Community—Driven Accountability Mechanisms

Once a baseline of existing conditions is set, metrics must be developed and tracked to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions and to measure progress. King County, Washington began its equity initiative by creating a baseline of existing conditions with 13 categories such as early childhood development, education, food systems, transportation, and community safety with 67 preliminary indicators such as median childcare cost, reading proficiency, participation in food assistance programs, transportation cost burden, and homicide rate. These categories are used to assess progress in advancing a "fair and just community."[48]

Boston, MA has developed a non-voting committee to review proposals,

assessments, and develop a plan for ongoing monitoring. This commission makes recommendations to the Planning Development Agency. Committee includes a representative from the Boston Housing Authority, the Office of Fair Housing and Equity, the Department of Neighborhood Development, the Mayor's Commission for Persons with Disabilities, and the Boston Planning and Development Agency.

Developing a scoring system for racial equity on land use applications can also be used to create a threshold for permissible projects and to track projects over time to assess the actual impact compared to the predicted impact of a project.

Conclusion

In confronting and redressing historical racial injustice in housing, zoning, and land use policies, jurisdictions should be informed by the aforementioned promising models. Local jurisdictions should work in collaboration and in partnership with others to build a shared knowledge of impactful and concrete actions that can mitigate racial inequity in land use decisions and advance racial justice. The localities discussed in this brief essay are implementing approaches that are building momentum for scalable reform. By supporting and incorporating these best practices, local governments can build and sustain a national movement for racial equity in land use.

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Who Am I?
Nishank Motwani

I walk with shadows, anonymous in the light
Restoring winter

I am sovereign, creeping in through trickery
I make goodwill bend

I feed on cold fear, lighting fires with bodies
I imbue darkness

I rain down on hope, freeing primal animals
To burn their own kind

I lust for the night, strangling humanity
Each vein at a time

I spray my vile scent, bleeding out all morality
I re-gift silence

I punish reason, trialing equality
I grow through treason

I rise when you fall, uprooting fairness and hope
My true victory

I seed across lands, hunting bearers of justice
I slay life with my umbilical cord

I reward the blind, delivering guardians
To poison-filled camps

I prize division, arming faith, skin and gender
To break humankind

I wreak misery, vanquishing cockroaches
Through lies and vengeance

I pretend to serve, imposing man's crooked laws
I hang life with glee

I germinate hate, for their freedom to marry
I persecute love

I am perfidy, torching those who surrender
I breed cruelty

I feast on your dead, your tears mean nothing to me
I spit on spilled blood

I bear primal rage, drying rivers with my tongue
I subjugate you

I ravage the weak, worthless rags of flesh and bones
Poor slaves for the rich

I own all women, chained on my animal farm
I share them for free

I tear children apart and defend their oppressors
Their bodies lie in the gutter for dead men to eat

I am the stench of charred flesh, lighting my prayer room with vanilla incense
I torch, assault, and toss bodies into open sewers, a final resting place for pests

I am the light on the hill, burning oil with the flesh of refugees
I laugh at their pain

I rattle my sword, invoking gods and servants
I smash liberty
I am inside you; I am your intolerance
Universal? Yes.

Poetic Statement

This is a living poem of pain. It bears my struggle to find a sense of stillness following a tragedy in Kabul. I started writing this piece some years ago to reflect on the dark reality and the environment within which violence occurred. As I delved deeper into the human and social terrain, I realized the unifying theme that justifies and advances harm was intolerance. This intolerance resides within us, and when it is instrumentalized, the degree to which individuals are capable of carrying out violence is limitless. I go into the varying types of intolerance that manifest in our respective communities and societies to showcase how our differences can be weaponized and justified using policies, laws, and ideology. We create, enable, and cement universal prejudice that imprisons children, rewards fear, and denies safety to those escaping violence.

As intolerance persists, I will continue to capture its manifestations in new settings, as I have below. Here, the geography is different, but the pain is not. The stanzas below represent a dialogue of anguish, united in their grief but trapped in historical injustices, severe policy failures, and enmity. The systematic extermination of Jews by Nazi Germany is the theme of the first stanza, which I wrote while at the Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum. I penned the second one while gazing at the high concrete walls, a common feature in Kabul, that separated and imprisoned people on their own lands in Palestine.

As we are responsible for strangling humanity, it is our obligation to counter it and to recognize the weight of our actions and inaction. I will continue to build on these pieces to express the web of senses that took hold of me on that day in Kabul and persist in the form of anger, despair, and numbness. In writing "Who Am I?" and the beginnings of a new piece below, I hope to set some of these senses free and to help others see and counter the universal intolerance around us.

I am equity that cracks your sullen eyes under my feet,
I bulldoze your sickening bodies into open pits of broken arms, breasts, and mouths filled with soil entangled in death's orgy, my sweet perfume

I snicker at the faintest cry of suffering to tickle my slaughterhouse of senses,
I build dry concrete walls where children feel barbed wire against their skin, trapping generations in broken crayon camps, I play a movie on repeat where their villages burn, and graves turned into settlements, a bright summer, sipping my sea breeze tea

Kabul, Afghanistan

Policies & Healthcare Access in Black Communities

*Danielle Poulin, Sharon Attipoe-Dorcoo, Titilola Balogun,
Rigoberto Delgado*

Abstract

Racial health inequities have persisted throughout the history of the United States. Black Americans have poorer health outcomes as a result of long-standing racism in societal structures and policies. Disparities in access to healthcare significantly contribute to poor health outcomes and high cost of care. Therefore, understanding the policies, systems, structures, and social determinants that impact healthcare access is necessary for anti-racist healthcare policy development. We expand the definition of access to healthcare based on an analytical four-level framework: capacity building, reach, affordability, and outcome. This approach, considered within a historical context, allows us to describe healthcare policies and their impact on Black communities. Further, the proposed framework should provide policymakers with the basis for reviewing long-term trends in policy development for addressing healthcare access inequities comprehensively.

Disparities in health outcomes among Black and white people in the United States have existed throughout history and continue today.[1] Black Americans have a lower life expectancy, higher infant and maternal mortality rates, and a greater burden of chronic diseases as a result of long-standing racism embedded in past and current policies, as well as societal structures that impact health.[2]

Policy changes are necessary for creating equitable access to quality healthcare and improved health outcomes. This requires a critical examination of the policies that have created the conditions for the ongoing structural racism in our healthcare system, and a framework that can be used by policymakers to define future interventions comprehensively. It is through this historical perspective that we offer an expanded definition of access to healthcare.

Defining Access to Healthcare

The concept of access to healthcare has evolved as the understanding of determinants of health has expanded. We define access as an evolutionary process, using a four-level analytical framework: capacity building, which includes physical structures and clinical personnel; reach, which implies population segment coverage; affordability or financial access to services; and outcomes or effects of policies. It is through a historical lens that policymakers can define appropriate corrective actions to past policy approaches.

Early efforts to increase access to healthcare centered on building capacity

through the construction of hospitals. Throughout the Jim Crow era, "separate but equal" facilities were allowed under the 1896 Plessy v. Ferguson Supreme Court decision.[3] During this era, Black people had limited access to quality care despite the increased capacity.[4] The civil rights era and the implementation of Medicare and Medicaid, through the implementation of the Social Security Amendments of 1965,[5] aimed to address access by increasing reach to under-resourced communities through hospital desegregation by connecting federal funds to compliance with civil rights laws.[6] Federally qualified health centers (FQHCs) were also created during this period with the goal of expanding primary care services to low-income populations.[7]

Modern efforts to increase access to healthcare have focused on financial, or affordability aspects of access to healthcare, with the expansion of Medicaid through the Affordable Care Act (ACA).[8] These policies were intended to increase healthcare access, but have not achieved equity across communities in terms of population health. An expanded definition of healthcare access is critical to evaluating our healthcare policies as we reimagine and build anti-racist and equitable health systems. The inclusion of patient perception in the scope of access encompasses factors that influence a patient's ability or decision to access needed care.

Capacity & Reach

The literature demonstrates significant disparities in healthcare utilization and access to both hospital and primary care services among residents of highly segregated, lower-income neighborhoods in highly populated Black communities when compared with other communities. Jim Crow era federal housing policies which created the practice of redlining, historical and ongoing discrimination in private mortgage lending, rising income inequality, and modern municipal zoning policies that reduce access to affordable housing have created and perpetuated racial residential segregation.[9] Available data indicate that heavily segregated areas with predominantly Black and Hispanic/Latino residents have higher odds of an area hospital closure, loss of healthcare facilities, and greater risk of primary care physician shortage.[10] Rural counties with the most hospital closures in the past decade were more likely to be in the South and more likely to have higher proportions of Black and Hispanic residents.[11]

Several factors contribute to hospital closures in highly segregated Black communities. Hospitals that serve the highest shares of Black patients have lower revenues, are less profitable, and have lower capital assets compared to other hospitals.[12] Hospitals that serve a disproportionate number of Medicaid-covered patients are at higher risk for closure than those with a broader payer base.[13] Low Medicaid reimbursement rates set by individual states, a large burden of uncompensated care to uninsured patients, and inadequate financial resources contribute to hospital insolvency or deterioration in the quality of care provided, placing the hospital at risk of closing or providing substandard care.[14] Evidence shows that hospitals in the states that did not expand Medicaid under the ACA now carry a higher burden of uncompensated care than those in states that did expand Medicaid, putting hospitals in those states, which are disproportionately in the South with higher Black populations, at higher risk for closure.[15] Hospital closures often result in the loss of primary care and specialty services in the area, due to the dependent relationship between the hospital and physician practices.[16] The low availability of primary care and other outpatient services contributes to the overuse of emergency departments

for conditions that could be prevented or treated by primary care services at a lower cost and often with better outcomes.[17]

Affordability

Historically, the federal government upheld racial disparities in employment and employer-sponsored health insurance coverage. Labor unions could discriminate against racial and ethnically marginalized workers either outright or by excluding service, domestic, and agricultural workers from labor protections and health insurance benefits under the Labor Relations Act of 1935.[18] Black Americans remain much less likely to be covered by employer-sponsored health insurance than white Americans and are overrepresented in the services industries, agricultural, and domestic jobs that often do not provide health insurance benefits.[19] Low-income workers who are covered by employer-sponsored insurance pay a greater share of their income for health insurance premiums and out-of-pocket healthcare costs, which have increased at a much higher rate than earnings over the past decade.[20]

The enactment of Medicare and Medicaid was a turning point in addressing racial disparities in insurance coverage; however, equal access to Medicaid has not yet been achieved.[21] Historically, many southern states that resisted civil rights legislation opposed federal healthcare programs. These states also underfunded health programs that preceded Medicaid.[22] The opposition of these states resulted in compromises that allowed states the freedom to underfund and limit eligibility for Medicaid programs, eliminating the opportunity for equal access among all states, consequently leaving a disproportionate number of marginalized racial and ethnic groups ineligible.[23] This pattern continues under the ACA.

Recent data indicate pervasive personal discrimination and implicit bias in healthcare settings resulting in avoidance of seeking care among many Black Americans.

The enactment of the ACA in 2010 resulted in increased health insurance coverage for all racial and ethnic groups and significant gains in coverage were made for those who were previously uninsured Although this progress has improved financial access, racial disparities persist.[24] Under the ACA, states had the option to opt out of expanding their Medicaid programs, again perpetuating racial disparities in coverage. 10 states still have not expanded Medicaid coverage under the ACA, most of which are in the South.Non-expansion of Medicaid limits the eligibility for coverage in those states, leaving many in the coverage gap, disproportionately Black, Brown, and Indigenous people.[25] States that expanded Medicaid experienced markedly larger drops in uninsured rates among Black residents than those that did not participate in expansion.[26] The American Rescue Plan of 2021 made further progress in narrowing the racial coverage gap nationally, however state-by-state variations continue to hinder progress, with 37% of the remaining uninsured Black Americans residing in three states, Texas, Florida, and Georgia, which have not expanded Medicaid.[27]

Under the current system, significant improvements in health insurance coverage numbers do not eliminate income-based disparities and cost-related barriers

to care. Higher percentages of Black Americans report difficulties affording medical care or prescriptions compared with white Americans.[28] Out-of-pocket costs, such as co-pays, deductibles, and co-insurance, as well as insurance premiums, continue to be problematic for many people who have insurance but have lower incomes.[29]

Outcome

Equal access to healthcare depends on patient confidence in and connection with sources of care, as well as knowledge of how to access care. Recent data indicate pervasive personal discrimination and implicit bias in healthcare settings resulting in avoidance of seeking care among many Black Americans. It is well documented within the past two decades that Black Americans have received substandard medical care in comparison to white Americans.[30] For example, mortality in Black infants is more than twice that of white infants in the United States.[31] A study by Greenwood et al. found that the mortality risk for hospital-born Black newborns was halved when treated by Black physicians.[32]

Medical mistrust refers to a population's lack of trust in medical organizations, approaches, and medical professions.[33] Medical mistrust in historically marginalized populations cannot be attributed to a single policy, event, or cultural factor, but as a response to ubiquitous structural racism and social injustice.[34] The many well-known historical racist medical atrocities in the United States provide ample explanation for medical and institutional mistrust. Nuriddin et al.[35] describe this history and provide perspectives on events such as the 40-year US Public Health Service Syphilis Study at the Tuskegee Institute,[36] beginning in 1932, in which Black men were not informed of their condition of syphilis and were not given treatment when one was available. Other documented examples of medical racism include inhumane gynecological experimentation on enslaved women by Dr. James Marion Sims, large-scale sterilizations by the North Carolina Eugenics Board until 1977, and the use of the cells of Henrietta Lacks in medical research without permission or compensation.[37]

Medical mistrust is associated with the underutilization of health services and the delay of needed medical care.[38] Perception of racial bias in primary care settings has been identified as a key contributor to higher use of an emergency department as a usual source of care among Black Americans compared to white Americans.[39]

Health literacy, the capacity to obtain and use basic health information to make health decisions,[40] is hindered by low access to services, low participation in the healthcare system, and lack of culturally appropriate delivery of health information.[41] Residential segregation also contributes to low health literacy.[42] Lack of knowledge of healthcare options and systems factors into patients' decisions to use the emergency department as a primary source of care.[43] Patients who may have health insurance and live within close proximity to facilities may have poor access due to a lack of knowledge of how to navigate the complicated medical system.[43]

Discussion of Policy Solutions

Capacity and Reach-Policy actions to improve access to health care will require both innovative models of care and attention to maintaining and expanding upon existing systems. Action is needed to support hospitals that serve under-resourced communities at risk of closing due to market conditions, as this also impacts the landscape of other available health services in these areas.[44] Eberth et al. recom

Figure 1
The Family Van mobile health clinic brings no-cost culturally-competent care to Boston's under-served communities. Mim Adkins Photography

mend state-level oversight of hospital system mergers and closures specifically to ensure maintenance of services in underserved areas.[45] Holdout Medicaid expansion states can follow the evidence and take action to improve the survival of hospitals by adopting expansion, as was recently done in North Carolina.[46]

Continued funding for FQHCs is an important strategy to increase access to healthcare in underserved racially segregated communities. FQHCs have been found to decrease the gap in primary care services in health professional shortage areas.[47] Expanded funding for FQHCs under the ACA's Community Health Center Fund resulted in an increase in centers in areas with greater proportions of Black and uninsured residents, and was associated with a reduction in non-emergent ED visits in Massachusetts.[48] Policies should also incentivize primary care and specialty providers to reside in historically segregated or under-resourced communities and increase participation in Medicaid.

Spatial access to healthcare can be improved by bringing the services to the patient. Incentivizing high-quality home health agencies to serve patients in underserved areas should be prioritized.[49] The use of telehealth can also expand the reach of some services; however, several issues of equity exist in access to telehealth such as broadband and device access, digital literacy, and insurance status.[50] The Digital Equity Act investment of $2.75 billion presents an opportunity to ensure that telehealth services expand to the most disconnected populations, as recommended by Eberth et al.[51]

Mobile health clinic programs are a promising but underutilized intervention

model (Fig.1). Successful mobile health clinic programs have improved spatial access to healthcare in both urban and rural underserved communities, reduced emergency department visits, and built patient trust within communities that have historically lacked access to or participation in the healthcare system.[52] Congress has recently passed legislation that will remove some barriers to establishing mobile clinic programs with the Maximizing Outcomes through Better Investments in Lifesaving Equipment for (MOBILE) Health Care Act, however, more comprehensive policy actions at the federal and state levels could facilitate a more expansive movement of mobile health clinic programs.[53]

Affordability- State-by-state variations in the implementation of healthcare reforms and health insurance policies are largely responsible for coverage disparities.[54] A federally implemented public health insurance option would help ensure equal access to insurance across states.[55] State and local health departments could support expanded options for no-cost and low-cost services for both uninsured and insured people whose out-of-pocket healthcare costs make up a large share of their income.

Outcome- Defining racism as a structure, and acknowledging racism as a public health crisis at all levels of government is an important step toward addressing racism in policies that impact health.[56] Federal legislation has been introduced in Congress, the Anti-Racism in Public Health Act of 2021, which aims to address structural racism in public health by detailing the mechanisms by which racism results in health disparities, allocating funding for health equity research, and creating structures for ongoing anti-racism efforts.[57] The enactment of this legislation would be a step toward dismantling structural racism. Collaboration with residents of marginalized communities through their involvement in policy-making processes is another important action that can yield positive effects on health and facilitate progress toward health equity.[58] Methods such as community-based participatory action research and culturally-responsive research equalize power relationships between communities and researchers and focus on community priorities to facilitate true collaborative problem-solving for policy change.[59]

Residents in segregated neighborhoods disproportionately lack the ability to access appropriate healthcare services when needed.[60] Increasing sustainable funding for patient navigators and community-based delivery models, such as the aforementioned mobile health clinic programs that focus on building trust and partnering with the community, would facilitate increased healthcare utilization and equitable access.[61] Higher educational institutions, funders, and governments should adopt a broader vision for educating a culturally responsive healthcare workforce, as recommended by the Institute of Medicine,[62] with the goal of ending racism in medicine.

Conclusion

Achievement of equitable healthcare access requires policy-level approaches that center on racial justice. All levels of government can support this goal through policies that increase spatial access to services, improve the affordability of healthcare, and dismantle racism in healthcare to build trusting partnerships between communities and clinical services. Our proposed analytical framework defining healthcare access should serve as a baseline for defining long-term strategies to reduce healthcare inequities.

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Geography of Incarceration in America

Josh Begley

America incarcerates more of its population than any other nation. American artist Josh Begley approaches mass incarceration and the prison-industrial complex from a different perspective to bring awareness to its abuses and prejudices.

It is estimated that there are more than 6,000 jails and prisons nationwide. In 2020, there were an estimated 1.8 million people incarcerated in America. The national prison population is disproportionately composed of people experiencing poverty and Black, Indigenous, and Latinx people. In response, Begley asks, "What does it mean to have 5,000 or 6,000 people locked up in the same place? What do these carceral spaces look like? How do they transform (or get transformed by) the landscape around them?" In order to begin answering some of these questions, Begley started playing with satellite imagery. "I think it's important to sketch the contours of what that means," he argues.

"When discussing the idea of mass incarceration, we often trot out numbers, dates, and charts to explain the growth of imprisonment as both a historical phenomenon and a present-day reality," Begley says. "But what does the geography of incarceration in the US actually look like? *Prison Map* is my attempt to answer that question."

Prison Map is not a map—it's a snapshot of the earth's surface, taken at various points throughout the United States, one that orders and exposes the expansion of jails and prisons in America. By aggregating and reassembling 5,393 satellite images of American prisons, jails, and detention centers, this work attempts to bring into view hidden landscapes.

To see more of this project visit: prisonmap.com

Race & Racism at the US-Mexico Border
A Conversation with Beto O'Rourke

Amy Eisenstein

A policy adopted by the Trump Administration in 2020, Title 42, allowed border agents to expel migrants on public health grounds, leaving many without a chance to seek asylum. The rule had been used to expel migrants 2.6 million times since March 2020.[1] The Biden Administration ended the COVID-19 public health order on May 11, 2023, thus suspending Title 42. However, the Biden Administration recently published a new, similarly harmful rule that presumes asylum ineligibility for people who enter the United States between ports of entry.[2]

El Paso has faced a historic migration crisis that has recently peaked, with nearly 2,500 people attempting border crossing between ports of entry per day in December 2022.[3] In January 2023, Zuckerman Fellows at the Harvard Kennedy School's Center for Public Leadership visited El Paso. In a follow-up meeting, Zuckerman Fellow and Managing Editor Amy Eisenstein interviewed Beto O'Rourke, who served as the U.S. Representative for Texas's 16th congressional district from 2013 to 2019, about race and racism at the border and how the Biden Administration's new rule will exacerbate harm to migrants.

This interview took place on March 3, 2023, before Title 42 ended and after the Biden Administration announced its intent to continue an "asylum ban."

This interview has been edited for brevity and clarity.

Amy Eisenstein: Beto, thank you so much for meeting with me today. The theme for the Spring Issue of Harvard Kennedy School's Anti-Racism Policy Journal is race and geography. It would be great to have a conversation with you about how race intersects with immigration and border community issues. Can you tell me what the border looks like right now and if you see race coming up in any of your exchanges?

Beto O'Rourke: The border is in one of its more stressful periods historically. The... level of crossing attempts between ports of entry has really stressed the system and people who are responsible for border security, immigration—dealing with the welfare of vulnerable people... I'm 50 years old, I've lived in El Paso most of my life, and I haven't seen this level of people sleeping on the street, the overwhelming of the social service agencies, not to mention the federal government...

But I think it's very important in as close to the next breath as I can get that I say El Paso is safe; El Paso is really this beautiful community that has chosen to respond to this unprecedented level of need with extraordinary generosity and kindness and compassion. I think that's very much characteristic of this community. [For the

Beto O'Rourke during his 2022 gubernatorial campaign. Photo courtesy of Beto O'Rourke

sake of]...all involved, especially those migrants and asylum seekers who find themselves crossing in between these ports of entry and then navigate into a system of either detention or deportation or in some cases, separation. We've got to fix this. No one, I guess, beyond the migrant, understands that better than those who live in the border community.

AE: That's really helpful. I'm curious if you can speak at all about how you see race and racism at play in national policies related to the border.

BO: That is more clear than it has ever been in my life...The very open racism that is a core part of the hostility toward immigration and immigrants is very visible right now. So, I'll give you an example, Amy, you have a year before last, 14 or 15,000 Haitian asylum seekers who crossed near Del Rio and are huddled underneath a bridge in a town of I'm guessing 35,000, 40,000 people? So that's a lot of people, especially given the population they are meeting and the size of that town. When that's happening, Dan Patrick...our Lieutenant Governor—very very powerful position in the state of Texas—goes on Fox television and says, "Look, if we let these Haitians in, they are going to start having kids, those kids will be U.S. citizens, they'll grow up, they'll vote for Democrats. And they will replace us." And I think he may have literally said, "replace us." Which, obviously, is part of [the]... "replacement theory" that animates mass murders and political violence like the one we saw in El Paso in 2019 and in Buffalo New York just a few years later. This is not stuff that's at the fringe of political thought and conversation, this isn't in the dark corners of the internet, this is prime time on the most watched cable television news program by arguably one of, if not the most powerful man in the state of Texas. So, race and racism, in particular, are very much animating the conversation. Therefore, the policies that flow and follow from the conversation.

AE: Right, it is terrible to see. I want to ask you about the Biden Administration's new rule, which is set to come into effect on May 11, that bars from asylum all non-Mexican migrants who arrive at the southern U.S. border without having first sought and been denied asylum from another country they pass through on their journey. To my understanding, you have previously criticized the Biden administration for ending Title 42 without a plan for handling the influx of migrants. With both of those things said, I'm curious what you think about the new rule.

BO: It is unnecessarily punitive, perhaps even cruel towards those, who, if we humbly remind ourselves, are doing what we would do in the same situation—for not first requesting asylum in Mexico. A country that, depending on their circumstances and their location, may not be a whole [lot] safer than where they fled from. Again, if you are penniless and a stranger in a strange land and you don't have relatives or friends... that to me would be more dangerous than going to America where you may have relatives and friends and a job lined up: *This is where I intended to go when I left and I'm not going to apply in Mexico...*

What I think is being proposed is a transit ban which is very similar to the one imposed by the Trump Administration and then later canceled as the courts weighed in...I'm not actually sure this is smart politically. I understand the political motive and the political problem that you are trying to solve in terms of demonstrating strength on the border. I just don't think that this is going to appease people who want to see a wall and even greater cruelty,

The very open racism that is a core part of the hostility toward immigration and immigrants is very visible right now.

nor is [it] going to endear you to people who understand that this system is really broken and this is not the answer to it.

So I think both of those things can be true, right? That this is a bad idea, and as Title 42 comes to a close, we've got to have a plan and probably more importantly, the capacity in border communities to be able to process those who are coming to claim asylum in this country who, as you know from Title 42, have essentially been arbitrarily turned around before being able to begin that asylum application process. So, I don't think the answer is a transit ban. I think the answer is building out that capacity and meeting some of the fundamental problems that are driving the problem in the first place.

AE: I would like to move on to ask you about messaging about immigration, which I think has always been difficult for Democrats. It always feels like Dems are playing defense against tough Republican arguments. I'm curious if you can lend some insight into how Democrats can and should talk about immigration and how race might play into that messaging.

BO: ...I've come to the conclusion that if you want to do the right thing, there is no universally appealing message or even a broadly popular message. You think about some of the things we were talking about when I mentioned that it would have

been preferable if the Biden Administration would have invested in infrastructure and capacity around the number of people who are going to claim asylum when Title 42 ends, and also the need to address the fundamental issues that are causing this. Like, why does somebody leave Guatemala? Is it related to climate change related food scarcity? Why does someone leave Venezuela? Is it related to political instability? Saying all of that doesn't fit on a bumper sticker. I mean, people don't cheer for "yes, take responsibility for our involvement in Central America over the last 70 years." So you can maybe traffic in things like "comprehensive immigration reform," because it says so much but it also says so little because it's way overused, but it's kind of that phrase when you wave that flag it's like, okay, I know where this person is on this stuff. But...because it has been so overused and has been promised for so long and has been so unrealized, I think it has lost all of its political potency...

Otherwise we can talk about our values and [say], "We are America. We are a nation of immigrants. We are so lucky that people are coming here and are doing amazing things." I kind of talk within that language just to talk about what it means to us. But again, I don't know that this is politically compelling enough to overcome messages about fear, and "folks that are coming to get us," invasions that we must repel, and very simple solutions. You know, "build a wall, that should fix it." Or "send them all back." That language is cleaner, simpler—and as unrealistic and terrible as those ideas are, they really resonate. So here's my theory: you'll need a president that deeply believes in [immigration] as their primary priority. Because it will entail not just a huge legislative push, but if you're going to really get this done, it means that Latin America and the Western hemisphere become your number one policy priority. It's a whole reorientation of what a presidential administration would look like. That person can't necessarily run on that.

Again, all of that stuff I just described doesn't fit on a bumper sticker. It may flow from a larger message about getting back to our values, or, let's be bold, let's do big things. Here's my analogy: I didn't vote for Senator Barack Obama in 2008 because I wanted him to usher through the Affordable Care Act. I mean, I'm glad he did, but that just wasn't why I voted for him. I was just inspired by him, and the general message and theme of that campaign and his character as a candidate, I was like "...I want that guy in the White House. He should be our president. He will make good decisions." And so [his] decision was, I'm going to use all possible political capital on this to the exclusion of everything else, necessarily, it's just the way life works and the choices that you make, and therefore we got the Affordable Care Act. And it's saved countless lives. But you would need a president to do that on immigration. Because if you had run on the Affordable Care Act, if you had been trying to explain how, and people were at town halls, and reporters were like, "Wait a second, do I lose my insurance? Is it gonna be universal?" He doesn't want to get bogged down in that shit and he wouldn't have won. Once he had that position to work from, he chose this. I think you will need something like that from a president in the future.

And that's me just cutting to the quick on your question because I don't think there's a messaging answer to this. I don't think you can concoct some stupid superficial thing that suddenly makes this very exciting to people. It's gotta be an exercise in leadership or the only other option is something cataclysmic that happens.

You know, John Lewis almost loses his life crossing the Edmund Pettus Bridge in 65, LBJ is able to get the Voting Rights Act through. There have been other moments in American history where the conscience of the country is so engaged that they force change. Either that, or you need an Obama Affordable Care Act moment. Those are the only two ways that I see this happening.

AE: You mentioned fear in your response and then you also spoke about Haitian immigrants. We know that a lot of anti-immigrant policies and practices are rooted in people's fears, and you kind of alluded to this, but do you think that race plays a part in these fears? Where? Is somebody who is, for example, a Black Central American immigrant experiencing different types of challenges and discrimination at the border compared to somebody who looks stereotypically El Pasoan?

BO: ...Somebody mentioned this to me this week who is herself an immigrant from Latin America. She said that the way in which those fleeing war and suffering in Ukraine are treated seems to be very different from those who are fleeing violence and suffering in our hemisphere. I just don't know if that's true. It sounds right, and maybe feels right, based on experiences that I've heard. But I think that would require some real investigation and facts to demonstrate that that's the case.

Then there's just—I think this probably goes without saying but bears repeating—the 2019 shooting in El Paso where 23 people were murdered. It is someone who has been fueled by the kind of political speech used by Donald Trump. You know, calling people animals, and at the same time that he's calling people coming from this hemisphere animals, referring to them as an infestation, describing them as a mortal danger to Americans here, "they're rapists, they're criminals, they're killers," at the same time he's doing that, we learn that he says something to the effect of, "I want more immigrants from Sweden or Scandinavia." You know, the brown part of our hemisphere versus the whitest place on the planet. That helps us understand how you can get a policy like family separation that treats people as less than human. The most fundamental human connection is between a child and their mother. And to forcibly separate children who are already traumatized from a 2000 mile journey, and whatever the shit they were going through back in El Salvador or Honduras or Guatemala or Haiti, now the most unimaginable trauma of being forcibly taken from the person you love most in the world, and upon who you are depending because you don't speak the language, you don't know anybody, you're in a cell right now, how the fuck could we do that to somebody! Well: "they're just not human in the way that we are; they're just not *us*." I think that's the only way that that can happen.

So, whether it's that treatment of migrants and asylum seekers, the Walmart shooting that was predicated on this white replacement theory, and the killer in that case had posted online that he had come to El Paso to repel the Hispanics that were taking over the state of Texas politically. I mean that stuff is just part of us, and part of how we are responding to this now, and how we have historically treated people from this hemisphere and Black and Brown people in America.

AE: I think you've teased out a lot that we don't often say out loud, and I really appreciate you for being so candid. Lastly, do you have anything in mind for what a comprehensive anti-racist immigration policy agenda might look like?

BO: The first thing, especially from the federal perspective, is to make the Western hemisphere our number one policy priority. It does not mean that Ukraine is not important, or our relationship with China, or our involvement in the Middle East, or pick a place on the planet, it just means that this is the most important place because these are the people with whom we are connected by land...We're locked into this relationship forever, until the plates shift, and we're connected now more than ever culturally and linguistically...As more and more people immigrate and seek asylum and find it here in America, they're related to more and more people in other parts of this hemisphere. And I happen to think that's a beautiful, wonderful thing, in addition to being a real competitive advantage for the United States versus almost any other part of the world. 15% of those who live in America were born somewhere else. Only .07% of those who live in China were born somewhere else. So we get the benefit of folks who are bringing perspective, expertise, experience from around the planet and making us so much stronger for it...

I don't know how you, through policy, address this real racism that exists in our immigration system right now. But I would say, "This part of the world, these people...the vast majority of whom happen to be of Mestizo heritage—they're the most important relationship that we have. We're going to lift the per-country-cap so that you're not waiting 22 years to come here from India, from the Philippines, from Mexico; why are we treating these parts of the planet in this way?"

... Asylum seekers, when they reach our borders, they have been through a real trauma... I feel like we are all too comfortable with treating them less than we would treat...our fellow Americans...People...are killed crossing into this country in some

Asylum seekers, when they reach our borders, they have been through a real trauma... I feel like we are all too comfortable with treating them less than we would treat...our fellow Americans.

of the most inhospitable parts of the hemisphere. So, you know, all of those problems that we have I think are evidence of the double standard that we employ on immigration and all of those things would need to be fixed but then you've gotta do some things that are forward looking, ambitious and bold. For me, the boldest thing that America could do would be to orient itself towards the Americas and really develop these relationships and work on a much larger level of prosperity, stability, and positive opportunities in these home countries throughout the Americas. That to me...would fundamentally change the way that we treat and look at people in Latin America.

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$ame Storm Different Boats

The Disproportionate Impact of Climate Change on Vulnerable Communities

Paula D. Walker, MD, MPH

Nine years ago, Eric Garner died in a chokehold, held down by police on a sidewalk in New York City, uttering his last words, "I can't breathe." Today, the city of New York is in a chokehold. It leads the United States in hospitalizations and deaths due to asthma, "a chronic inflammatory respiratory condition that causes a person to have difficulty breathing"[1]

As a physician and health educator, I am deeply concerned about preventable deaths that increasingly occur annually without remission. I am an advocate for compassionate and considerate care for all mankind, especially those who often find themselves on the periphery of our healthcare system. For more than the last decade, heart disease, cancer, and chronic respiratory diseases, like asthma, have been the leading causes of death for Americans according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).[2]

The common denominator shared by these health conditions is that they have risk factors that can be mitigated causing the trajectory of such diseases to be improved. For example, "Black and Latino/a New Yorkers have limited access to quality housing and higher rates of asthma compared with Asian and white New Yorkers."[3]

The prosperous city of New York is the epicenter of the Black experience–with nearly 4 million Black Americans. It has more Black residents than any other metropolitan area in the United States of America.[4]

What is allowed to occur casually in New York has a tremendous impact on the health and well-being of the members of the African diaspora living in the U.S. Other states with large minority populations are taking note of what New York allows; what it chooses to do or not do about preventable public health conditions that lead to premature deaths in a large demographic of people that have been historically stripped of advantage, opportunities, and resources through structural racism and systemic oppression.

According to Columbia University's Center for Children's Environmental Health, "New York City has one of the country's highest rates of hospitalizations and deaths due to asthma among children and young adults, and African American and Latino patients account for more than 80% of the cases."[5]

> **New York City has one of the country's highest rates of hospitalizations and deaths due to asthma among children and young adults, and African American and Latino patients account for more than 80% of the cases.**[5]

This increased prevalence of asthma is due to various environmental factors. "Poor quality housing with persistent problems like cracks, holes, and water leaks can lead to pest infestations and mold. These conditions contribute to the development or worsening of asthma symptoms."[6]

Other environmental factors that exacerbate asthma include climate change and the resulting humidity; air pollution; exposure to tobacco smoke and other allergens that compromise air quality. Of these environmental determinants, climate change is one that is of particular global significance. Climate change exacerbates the high incidence and prevalence of asthma already faced by low-income and marginalized communities by increasing humidity. According to the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, "humidity can make air quality worse", and "can increase levels of mold, dust mites, and ground-level ozone."[7]

Moreover, under-resourced communities often lack the necessary tools to adequately prepare for and to combat climate change induced environmental threats such as poor air quality, extreme heat, vector borne diseases, and dire weather events including wildfires and flooding.

For example, in July 2022, as a result of climate change, low-income residents in Kentucky and central Appalachia were flooded out of their homes and businesses due to historic torrential rain falls that occurred over several days.[8] Of special note, "people living in east Kentucky and the surrounding areas are in the poorest counties of the entire state" according to the U.S. Census Bureau.[9] As a result of this climate change induced flooding, residents lost all of their possessions, e.g., cars, homes, and family memorabilia, and because many of them did not have home insurance are now facing destabilized housing and food insecurity.

New Yorkers and Appalachians are not the only ones that are experiencing traumatic impacts as a result of climate change. Indigenous communities "have a special connection to the natural environment. Climate change is threatening natural resources and ecosystems that are essential to people's livelihoods, food sources, and cultural practices."[10]

The evidence is clear. Low-income communities that already disproportionately experience public health challenges, including a higher prevalence of asthma and COVID-19, will also continue to disproportionately bear the brunt of climate change. The most impacted communities include people experiencing poverty, people of color, people living with disabilities and underlying chronic illnesses, the elderly, and unhoused persons.

The epidemiology of asthma in New York City is a microcosm of the pervasive health disparities seen throughout the United States of America. Asthma and its uneven impact on minority populations, in the face of climate change, presents an environmental justice issue. It must be addressed through a socio-ecological approach to more fully understand and to comprehensively tackle the complete range of factors that heighten the risk and net effect of climate change on historically marginalized communities.

Several state, national, and global policies and initiatives are already underway to counter climate change. The question that needs to be asked is how many of these policies are aimed at achieving health equity?

Almost two years ago, in August 2021, the Department of Health and Human Services launched the first of its kind, the Office of Climate Change and Health Equity (OCCHE).[11] With this initiative, the United States has started its work reckoning climate change and health equity with an established clearinghouse for resources and translational research dedicated to examining health and

social disparities within the context of climate change. The true potential of this landmark office has yet to be revealed since the OCCHE is in its infancy and currently has no full-time staff or funding. The work of the OCCHE will need to be expanded to include larger scale conversations that will help shape future policies and solutions on climate change. Effective solutions will require the consideration of marginalized people and communities. Only then, will we truly be in the same boat.

To begin the healing process and facilitate equitable solutions, the OCCHE can serve as a platform to work to find ways to collaborate with Indigenous communities and their knowledge and wisdom to bridge their work on their climate change management plans, with frontline Western scientific expertise. The OCCHE can also provide capital investments such as flood management infrastructure in vulnerable communities like east Kentucky and Princeville, NC.[12]

The OCCHE can spearhead radical change by strengthening and fiscally supporting a struggling public health system that was pummeled by the COVID-19 pandemic. The U.S. public health system and its workforce have been chronically underfunded in New York and other states across the nation since its inception. "Although funds for local public health services come from various sources, each state typically receives federal funds through block grants that are paid to the state and then distributed by the state to local agencies."[13]

The OCCHE could take up the slack in public health infrastructure and funding by creating pipelines of capital and resources where all states benefit from increased funding, especially New York state and its local agencies that are serving communities of people that are low-resourced and living with asthma and other chronic health conditions and in neighborhoods with significant disinvestment. Combating climate change and all its impacts will require full engagement of stakeholders, at the local and state levels, through forums and other strategic conversations that include people that are usually not invited to the table where collective decision making about community living occurs.

At the federal and international levels, slowing global warming will require a multi-sectoral approach with a social justice emphasis that will ease the climate change burden that is disproportionately experienced by the most marginalized populations in the world. Now that the United States has reentered the Paris Agreement, the topic of health equity and climate change must be expanded on this global platform. America can emerge and establish itself as a climate leader by leveraging the lessons learned from the operations of its OCCHE serving at-risk communities to inform a collective way forward for all nations as we march toward net-zero carbon emissions while protecting all the world's citizens. This may be the resuscitative breath–into asthma prone environments where the survivors of Eric Garner live–all New Yorkers deserve to breathe again once more.

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Climate Change Challenges & Solutions

Anti-Racist Perspectives from a Bangladeshi-Canadian Immigrant Researcher from & within the Racialized Community

Ranjan Datta

Canada has refuted climate change as a socio-ecological and health threat.[1] As a racialized immigrant researcher who also experienced minoritization in Bangladesh almost all my life, I was well-positioned to query how racialized—or, in Canada, "visible minority"—immigrant communities faced the impact of climate change. I found a shocking paucity of research on this community (Bangladeshi–Canadian immigrant); this underrepresentation in climate change research was due to mistrust of research institutions, language barriers, and systemic limitations. I highlight the impact of underrepresentation on research findings and advocate for cross-cultural research to understand the experiences of those affected by climate change in Alberta and Saskatchewan.

By infusing anti-racist principles, this paper challenges current paradigms of addressing climate change and provides guidelines for policymakers to respond to the issue in an anti-racist manner. Collaborating with the Bangladeshi-Canadian immigrant community, this study identifies the structures of power at play when racialized communities' perspectives are centered on climate change challenges and solutions.

Anti-Racist Research Frameworks & Research Methods

Following anti-racist research framework, I tried to learn how Bangladeshi–Canadian immigrant people relate differently to climate change based on our situatedness in the context of racialized immigrants in this new country.[2] I chose an anti-racist framework as my research framework as it creates pathways that avoid traps of essentialization, enabling solidarity and agency across and beyond received social categories.[3]

In my research, I focused on building trusting relationships with members of the community (including Elders and Knowledge-keepers), taking responsibility to learn from the community, and challenging the system. Community members, particularly our known Elders and Knowledge-keepers, shared their climate change stories that they have been experiencing for the last 30 years in Canada. Elders and Knowledge-keepers have been a significant part of my research as they are the most respected in the community for holding important knowledge about climate change from their long experience in both countries: the home country (i.e., Bangladesh) and the new country (i.e., Canada). From Bangladesh, they know how to build strong community support during disasters and how to grow and share food in a community-engaged manner. Therefore, I considered community Elders and Knowledge-keepers as significant sources of knowledge and practice. I asked Elders if they could share their observations about recent climate change impacts on them in an immigrant country (i.e., Canada) and challenges in relation to their previous

experiences in their home country (i.e., Bangladesh).

I have developed strong relationships with my community over the last 13 years in anti-racist settings such as youth workshops, educational workshops, a community garden, and a radio show which hosts anti-racist conversations. Speaking in my mother tongue with community members on Indigenous land helped me build trust with them and understand the complexity of the climate change crisis. We conversed with community members almost every week during various cultural and spiritual events, including land-based sessional events, food events, and spiritual events. The main themes I have discussed are the following; most of the community members suggested and/or agreed on these themes. As this research is based on relationships, I considered the community co-researchers for this research. I co-presented research findings in academic and community settings with community members. As an anti-racist researcher, I consider myself a learner, community member, and co-researcher.[4]

Since COVID hit the community in 2020, through ongoing conversations in English and Bangla, I conducted what I call in-depth learning stories through "deep listening" with 35 community members with 20-30 years of lived experience as a visible minority in Western Canada—the Western cities of Saskatoon and Calgary. Some of the main themes include: community meanings of climate change, community meanings of adaptations, community-led support systems, growing food together in a community garden, needs for an ongoing climate change community

Nose Hill Siksikaitsitapi Medicine Wheel, Calgary, Alberta, Canada, during land-based story learning from a Kainai First Nation Elder. Photo by Author

conversation, learnings from others, and community-engaged climate change education, community-engaged climate change policy guidelines, and climate change. Using thematic analysis, we have a regular informal 60-90-minute-long conversation in both languages (Bangla as my mother tongue and English).

To ensure that the research was conducted in a culturally sensitive and respectful manner, in addition to following institutional research ethics, I cultivated relationships and followed community cultural research protocols, and provided honorariums to community members.

Anti-Racist Perspectives on Climate Change Challenges & Solutions

I will now highlight some of the significant findings on climate change challenges and solutions as per my conversations with the Bangladeshi-Canadian community. The community members expressed that recent climate change events, compounded by COVID-19, created fears of economic freefall, lack of food access, continual damage to their homes and vehicles, growing mental health crises, and — lack of support for community togetherness.

The Bangladeshi-Canadian community experience inadequate access to education, lack of sufficient food, significantly higher rates of communicable diseases (such as tuberculosis, COVID-19, and measles) and non-communicable diseases (such as cardiovascular diseases, cancers, and diabetes), and lack of access to medical care and essential services. As many community members expressed, they immigrated to Canada for a more "secure life," away from the frequent floods, cyclones, and ongoing food crisis that plagues Bangladesh.[5] However, now they are re-experiencing the same fear they felt in Bangladesh as heat waves, hailstorms, forest fires, food crises, and floods have arrived at their Canadian doorstep.

Many Bangladeshi-Canadian community members asserted that COVID-19 has become a disaster for the community as they have faced a crisis in getting access to healthcare services during COVID-19.

> If we see a broader picture of climate change, COVID-19 is just one of the outcomes of climate change as we also no longer have control of our food. We do not know where our food is coming from. Many people in the younger generation do not know how to grow their own food as they do not learn these practices at school or at home. Since our children do not learn the importance of growing their own food, we need to teach them this value. —Anonymous community member

Many agreed with this sentiment:

> After we came to Canada, we have not had cultural stories about our foods, like the way every family used to grow foods in their backyard and the spiritual stories behind growing our own foods. We are not connected to the land because we do not know the stories of the land. We have become more isolated and lonely.—Anonymous Elder

This Elder also said, "If we had land for growing our own food, we might not have been so scared during COVID-19 pandemic since we would not have needed to depend on the supermarket. We would have been stronger as a community." I learned that the urgent individual and community-based measures implemented by the government of Canada to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in the country did not extend to Bangladeshi-Canadians. As mentioned above, the community was unable to access health care services and food due to lack of government support, exponentially increasing adverse effects including death. Many Bangladeshi-Canadian immigrants see the effects of COVID-19 and climate change as interconnected

and thus mutually reinforcing.

The community argued that governments should build a bridge to community-based mitigation strategies during the climate change disaster events. The government can achieve this through forums for community-engaged decision-making, especially among visible minority immigrants and refugee communities. Community members suggested that climate change adaptation strategies should adopt an intersectional lens to include racism, migration, and gender, since visibly minority immigrant women are among those most impacted during this pandemic. For instance, new immigrants and single mothers expressed that they were "left out from everything," when it came to information-gathering and influencing policy.[6] Moreover, COVID-induced health issues, social isolation, and the effects of the Ukraine-and-Russia war—including the osmotic stresses of the significant Ukrainian immigrant population—add another layer of stressors, while exclusion from discussions around climate change and its policy interventions has increased the community's feeling of vulnerability.[7]

The community expressed the direct (food crisis, displacements, physical health) and indirect (mental, emotional, and others) impacts of climate change and associated policy interventions on immigrants' lives and livelihoods. While reflecting on the issue of anti-racist climate change policy, a vast majority of the community members have no idea whether any such policies and programs exist. Many community members expressed that climate change policies have been "closed-door." "Climate change policy for whom? If we are not part of it, how do we know we can practice those policies?" asked an Elder. Similarly, another community member expressed that "community-led climate change policies may be beneficial for all [governments, climate change industries, and communities] to deal with the climate crisis," making their contributions relevant for the world.

As community members explained, Bangladeshi-Canadian immigrants' adaptation to climate change challenges varies according to generation, and from place to place. All these diverse perspectives from various generations and places are equally important for other immigrant-based countries such as Canada and the USA. According to community members, climate change adaptation solutions should be diverse and community-engaged so that the community can implement them in their everyday practice. Community members also explained, with sadness, that they were upset that no level of government (local, provincial, or federal), few industries, and few other climate change agencies have considered community perspectives as an important source of impactful climate change policy. Crucially, many Bangladeshi-Canadian immigrants feel that they are not connected to their new country. According to community members, these forms of isolation may be dangerous for many immigrants. Many community members expressed that all these forms of isolation in climate change policies are similar to other immigrant communities, particularly South Asian and Black communities, as far as they know.

I have learned from the community's climate change stories that apart from exposure to direct climatic events, policy interventions or discussions around climate change have completely left out the Bangladeshi-Canadian constituents and increased their vulnerability. This issue was also highlighted by as a systemic barrier to an inclusive climate change adaptation strategy.[8] For Bangladeshi-Canadians, community-led policies and practices are essential, and can be achieved by strengthening community-led initiatives such as having regular conversations with relevant stakeholders, creating communal gardens for growing food, and supporting initiatives for youth.[9] All agencies, including all governments, climate change

policy-makers, and industries, need to do more community-engaged policy discussion (such as discussions with community Elders, adults, and youths) and consultation for integrating meaningful changes.

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Unveiling Disparities

Culturally-Responsive Prevention Strategies to Address the Increasing Rates of Black & Indigenous Youth Suicide

Madeline Shiley

S uicide is the third leading cause of death amongst young Americans ages 10-19.[1] Young people are experiencing depression, anxiety, and suicidal thoughts at unprecedented rates and conventional efforts to prevent future losses are stunted by an inability to address a key issue: race.

Suicide rates decreased for white youth between 2019 and 2020 while they increased for Black youth during the same period.[2] This trend is consistent with recent increases in Black youth suicides, which increased by 89% between 2007-2017.[3] Current data shows Black youth under 13 are twice as likely to die by suicide as their white peers.[4] For youth, a sense of "mattering" in the community is a protective factor that promotes mental wellbeing. Is it any wonder that Black youth are being robbed of their sense of worth while the public debates the merits of the Black Lives Matter movement?

The impact of racism on youth mental health is a critical component of understanding the youth mental health crisis. An apology issued by the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) acknowledges the racist history of social work in America. For example, throughout the Progressive Era, social workers ran segregated settlement houses and participated in the eugenics movement. Social workers also aided in the removal of Native American children from their homes to abusive "boarding schools".[5] Today, bias among social workers contributes to disparities in who receives mental health services. Dr. Janelle Goodwill, a professor at the University of Chicago Crown Family School of Social Work, Policy and Practice, writes that "when comparing the experiences of young Black children who died by suicide to children of other races, we've seen that Black children have been less likely to actually have received mental health treatment before their death".[6] Unequal access to treatment opportunities likely contributes to this phenomenon. Dr. Goodwill and others have suggested that culturally-relevant treatment plans which prioritize the lived experiences of Black people are necessary to prevent future harm. Arielle Sheftall, principal investigator at the Center for Suicide Prevention and Research at Nationwide Children's Hospital in Columbus, Ohio, argues, "You have to bring culture into this, you have to talk about racism, you have to talk about discrimination. It is something Black youth experience every single day."[7] However, despite recent research on the effectiveness of culturally-relevant mental health resources, these programs are not available at scale for Black and Indigenous children.[8]

Black and Indigenous leaders have led the call to restructure suicide prevention programs in a way that meets their communities' needs. The Congressional Black Caucus united public health experts, medical professionals, and community organizations to deliver recommendations on the topic that included a demand for funding of Black researchers so that evidence-based practices in suicide prevention may be developed for Black youth.[9] Similarly, Indigenous leaders and youth activ-

ists at the Johns Hopkins Center for Indigenous Health came together to develop Culture Forward, a strengths and culture-based youth suicide prevention toolkit, to center traditional knowledge and cultural belonging in the practice of native suicide prevention.[10] These are examples of programs that would improve access to effective mental health support for Black and Indigenous youth. Expansion of these programs at the federal, state, and local levels would contribute to an expeditious rollout to solve this urgent problem. Specifically, federal support of these programs would allow state and local jurisdictions to implement this work through Mental Health Block Grant funding, which is a significant source of funds for youth with serious emotional disturbances. There must continue to be a shift away from the imposition of policies developed by white people to support white youth to policies designed by community leaders to meet community needs.

Native American leaders have been grappling with this issue for years, and in fact Native American communities experienced a slight decrease in suicide rates among young people from 2019 to 2020. However, Native peoples are at the highest risk of suicide among any ethnic group, and suicide is still the second leading cause of death among Native youth.[11] Still, tribes have had success with programs like Culture Forward that center cultural identity in suicide prevention efforts. Native people are healing by passing down traditional knowledge, speaking their language, eating native food, and sharing the origin story of Turtle Island, or the land currently known as the United States. Each of these acts has been criminalized and punished by the U.S. government as recently as 1935.[12] These efforts are supported by recent research asserting the "centrality of culture permeating throughout a protective factor framework" in understanding effective protective factors against youth suicides.[13] This act of righteous reclamation is proof that a truthful origin story has the power to save lives, not just for native people, but for Black people as well.

Native peoples are at the highest risk of suicide among any ethnic group, and suicide is still the second leading cause of death among native youth.

One Native mother described the death of her son as a sign of "collective suffering and the powerlessness of a person to rise above it".[14] Collective suffering is the result of centuries of efforts to exclude Black and Indigenous people from economic, political, and social power. To save Black and Indigenous lives, and to validate that they matter, suicide prevention efforts must address the lived experiences of Black and Indigenous youth through culturally-relevant treatment.

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BLACK MEN
at Harvard
David Jonathan Lewis

Photography Credits: Corban Swain Photography

Through photos, we show Black men studying at Harvard standing in unity. We have built a brotherhood—studying in different fields across Harvard's campuses.

Being a Black man at Harvard in the present day means that we are pillars of light, inspiring generations of young Black leaders to join us in carrying a legacy our ancestors so diligently fought for into the future. Personally, as a Black Harvard student, I know that I am part of a greater community of brotherhood creating spaces for cross-sector collaboration, advocating for institutional support of Black students, and developing opportunities for community and mentorship. I aimed to visually capture this experience with powerful and joyful images.

Due to lack of representation, and racecraft perpetuated by the media, and a whitewashed history, it can be difficult for some to imagine a world where Black men excel. Through photography, we disrupt the status quo of institutional exclusion and bring the tension between oppression, Harvard's entanglements with slavery, and Black excellence to life.

The group photo taken on the stairs of Widener Library is significant because the original architect of the building, Julian Francis Abele, did not receive public recognition of his work because he was a Black man in an essentially all-white profession. Abele's mark on Widener Library is unique to his training and studies at Beaux Arts Style in Europe. His work, like so many, has been erased from Harvard's narrative for too long. We stand together not just to say that we are here, but that where we stand publicly showcases Abele's ability to create something this monumental in the face of racism and systemic barriers.

(From left to right) Kenneth Asher, Harvard Graduate School of Education; Aaron Magezi, Harvard Kennedy School; Joseph Wilson, Harvard Kenneth C. Griffin Graduate School of Arts & Sciences; Marc Alain Boucicault, Harvard Kennedy School; Jordan Biggers, Harvard Kennedy School; Aundrey Page, Harvard Graduate School of Education; Michael Johnson, Harvard Graduate School of Design; Bryan Womack, Harvard Law School; David Lewis, Harvard Kennedy School

Although Harvard University is considered one of the most prestigious higher educational institutions in the world, its history is fraught with racism, inequity, exclusionary practices, and promotion of harmful theories of race science-all of which have influenced systemic racist policies beyond its walls. While Harvard has begun to take steps to address these issues in recent years, there is still so much work to do to promote racial equality and justice for all members of the Black community.

These photos center the lives and experiences of men who have been traditionally silenced and excluded.

In the wake of the April 2023 swatting attack against four Black Harvard College students by Harvard campus police, we stand together against the racist harassment which still takes place, and we stand with *all* members of Harvard's Black community.

We persist in shining against oppression, finding strength in community, and challenging norms through our interconnectedness, solidarity, and creativity. We are the faces of Harvard.

Harvard College
Ludovic Ottou Fouda,
Jonathan Haileselassie, Joel Crawford, (front steps)
Will Anyinon, Kylan Benson, (back steps)
Tory Ruffin

Deconstructing the Global Coded Gaze on Digital Transformation

Nai Lee Kalema

Abstract

Expanding upon Buolamwini's concept of the "coded gaze," this article explores the ways in which global governance practices and processes encode structural harm, global social inequality, and coloniality into digital transformations and governments. The coded gaze becomes the global coded gaze. Building upon Buolamwini's concept of the coded gaze, I introduce the concept of the global coded gaze to explore how structural violence becomes encoded into digital transformation policies and processes and into global political-economic systems more broadly; this article discusses the structurally violent implications of that process. This article describes the global coded gaze, discusses its mechanisms and harms, and concludes with an argument as to why the global coded gaze matters for global policy and data governance. The global coded gaze illuminates global governance's influence on the orientation of public-sector digital transformations and the reasons why decolonial, intersectional, and antiracist approaches to public-sector digital transformations are crucial for creating safer, more trustworthy, and more equity-centered digital states and futures.

In her work, Joy Buolamwini defines the "coded gaze" as the way digital technologies encode bias through the preferences, priorities, and prejudices of those who have the power to shape algorithmic systems, resulting in algorithmic harm and perpetuating structural and social inequities.[1] Algorithmic bias, discrimination, injustice, and violence are four ways in which the coded gaze is operationalized. Buolamwini's research on AI-powered facial analysis technology exemplifies how algorithmic bias can affect access to opportunities, economic participation, and personal freedoms. Ilona Kickbusch et al. introduced the concept of "digital transformations as determinants of health" to demonstrate the need for a values-based approach to digital transformation processes and policies and to highlight how algorithmic bias and data injustice translates into human suffering.[2] Overall, even where there is no intention, the dismissal of marginalized perspectives and concerns or the assumption that such needs not be prioritized around the development of algorithmic systems can manifest as structural violence. It is crucial for researchers and policy actors to move beyond simply "debiasing" AI and towards mitigating algorithmic harms through inclusive, participatory, human-rights-based, and equity-centered digital policy and governance. While no one is immune to algorithmic harm, decisions regarding the allowable levels of algorithmic harm and where those harms are concentrated in a digital society are public policy matters. Such policies must prioritize public value over shareholder value.[3] This research extends the coded gaze's reach to global political-economic systems and governance, which is referred to as the global coded gaze.

What is the Global Coded Gaze?

The global coded gaze is a framework that examines how powerful global governance actors and networks embed their strategic interests, priorities, and ideological biases into public systems through global digital transformation policies and processes. This framework investigates the implications of this orientation with respect to structural violence and global social inequality, focusing on global development, technophilanthropy, and techno-solutionism as the primary mechanisms of influence. However, the primary harm caused by this orientation is structural violence. This paper specifically looks at the issues of data necropolitics and digital racial capitalism within the context of the global coded gaze.

Currently, global governance institutions and networks, such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), function as strategic influencers and gatekeepers of government digital transformation processes through digital identity projects in the Global South. For example, in 2014, the World Bank launched its Identity for Development Initiative (ID4D) to facilitate sustainable development, boost economic progress, and alleviate poverty in the Global South, particularly in sub-Saharan African countries.[4] Yet national digital identity-based systems have also facilitated some of the most egregious forms of human rights abuses known today.[5] The uncritical implementation of digital transformation policy through digital identity systems has led to the digital enclosure of key public services and marginalized and excluded minorities, causing structural harm across vulnerable populations.

Digital identity systems are also used to facilitate invasive data surveillance practices to serve governments' strategic needs and global digital capitalism. Countries' governments have begun to view data as a "factor of production," as the Chinese government did in 2020, and data extraction as a tool for algorithmic governance and geopolitical power.[6] While national digital identity systems are promoted as tools that enable governments to deliver services and reduce corruption, these tools can also enable massive amounts of data extraction where protections are inadequate.

The structural vulnerability of sub-Saharan African countries to global neoliberal predation and extractivism makes their experiences with implementing national digital identity systems especially informative for the world. In the Global South, these national digital identity systems are primarily used to re-determine who counts as a person worth protecting through social policies and who does not, which can lead to harm and even death. James Ferguson explains that Africa's current state of resource extractivism and weak governance is "not a lamentably immature form of globalization, but a quite 'advanced' and sophisticated mutation of it."[7] Thus, as public sector digital transformations are shaped through the technosolutionist lenses of the powerful, there is an increasing chance that this takes place at the expense and well-being of some of the most vulnerable communities and people in the world.

Digital Racial Capitalism

Racialization is used to legitimize the oppression of some groups of people over others in service of global capitalism. Racial capitalism recognizes the mutually constitutive natures of capitalism, imperialism, and racialism under the modern capitalist world system.[8] Across global and local political-economic systems, multi-

ple systems of racialization form hierarchical relations that operate according to the needs of global capital.[9] Financialized capitalism globally relies on racialized expropriation for neoliberal capitalist expansion and growth.[10] As a result, 'race' provides a means of coding and managing the material boundaries between different forms of labor under neoliberalism: citizen and migrant, waged and 'unexploitable', bearers of entitlements and bare life.[11] Though everyone is vulnerable to global racial capitalism, historical and localized patterns of oppression, imperialism, and exploitation make racialized and minoritized people disproportionately represented at the expropriative end of the global capitalism continuum.[12]

Today, scholars view coloniality and racial capitalism's modern incarnations under digital capitalism.[13] Global racial capitalism and digital transformation processes are creating new hierarchies of vulnerability to structural violence through digital dispossession and algorithmic violence—called digital racial capitalism—and sustaining existing hierarchies. The global coded gaze facilitates digital racial capitalism by re/producing new forms of racialization and sorting of populations along hierarchies of disposability—as marked by their level of actual risk or subjugation to data necropolitics. Fundamentally, digital racial capitalism's core principle is that some lives are fundamentally less valuable and worthy of protection than others, justifying the exposure of racialized groups to algorithmic violence, harmful digital labor exploitation, and data injustice under digital capitalism.

Racialized and gendered people are structurally more vulnerable to data colonialism through digital hyper-surveillance and digital labor exploitation for several reasons. First, due to structural inequity, minoritized people are disproportionately represented in state systems and thus are consistently subjected to more digital surveillance.[14] Second, digital capitalism relies on classist, patriarchal, and racist ideologies to justify its exclusionary, discriminatory, and exploitative digital labor practices.[15] Digital racial capitalism is exemplified through the racialized stratification of digital-labor exploitation under the global economic system. For instance, wealthy technology companies from the Global North and China rely on ghost workers, low-paid data workers from the Global South, to test and develop their AI technologies through colonial power dynamics.[16] OpenAI, valued at $29 billion USD, paid Kenyan workers less than $2 USD per hour to make ChatGPT less toxic, exposing them to traumatic content graphically detailing "child sexual abuse, bestiality, murder, suicide, torture, self-harm, and incest," with almost no meaningful mental health support offered to workers due to productivity demands.[17] In another example, Cambridge Analytica beta-tested its harmful technologies in many postcolonial countries, such as India, Kenya, and Nigeria, prior to its use of election-manipulation technology in the US and UK.[18]

> **Digital racial capitalism's core principle is that some lives are fundamentally less valuable and worthy of protection than others, justifying the exposure of racialized groups to algorithmic violence, harmful digital labor exploitation, and data injustice.**

Technophilanthropy & Technosolutionism

The global coded gaze influences through technosolutionism, the idea that technology can solve all complex real-world problems and is the best approach for doing so.[19] Technosolutionism is primarily operationalized through technophilanthropy, a subset of philanthrocapitalism, which involves wealthy capitalists using their resources to shape global policy and leverage the political legitimacy of international organizations to achieve their strategic interests.[20] Philanthrocapitalism poses a risk to democratic forms of governance as it enables private actors to engage in state institutional capture, direct public choice, and divert public resources for their own purposes rather than public value.[21] Technophilanthropy specifically focuses on data extractivism, which poses risks to vulnerable populations in low-rights environments by allowing companies to engage in invasive forms of data extractivism and digital experimentation.[22]

The 1990s and 2000s saw a rise in the ideology of globalization, which urged states to reduce trade barriers, privatize public resources and services, and integrate into global value chains. This practice, however, resulted in public cuts and austerity measures that decreased states' ability to provide public services and led to a loss of legitimacy.[23] These New Public Management (NPM) reforms—championed by the IMF and World Bank via structural adjustment policies, consisting of the privatization of state-owned enterprises, deregulation of markets, and defunding or restructuring stipulations that hollowed out state capacity.[24] Philanthrocapitalism's influence grew in the Global South under these conditions, undermining state legitimacy.[25]

Technophilanthropy discourse legitimates Big Data companies' involvement in global public policy through strategic partnerships with intergovernmental and international economic institutions (e.g., the United Nations, the World Bank, the IMF, and the World Trade Organization) and digital transformation projects that promote dataism, technosolutionism, and techno-optimism.

Technophilanthropy's entanglement with governments can lead to funding and financing conditionalities that distort the recipient government's budget and create misalignments between funding objectives and observed country needs.[26] Governments' access to core digital technologies can affect their willingness to comply with corporate actors' political agendas (e.g., reductions in tariffs, removal of data localization requirements, e-commerce tax moratorium, etc.). Furthermore, it can lead to the premature liberalization of digital economies in low- and middle-income countries (e.g., removal of data localization and processing requirements, non-disclosure of source codes, and the elimination of customs on cross-border data flows), rendering them more vulnerable to digital domination. While data extractivism is global, it does not unfold everywhere with the same intensity or geopolitical implications as in most countries of the Global South.

Big Data companies exploit countries' weak data protection laws and nascent digital ecosystems to create digital dependencies in government.[27] The United ations High Commissioner for Refugees Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights, Phillip Alston, argues that governments play a critical role in ensuring that digitalization of the state does not function as a Trojan horse for integrating neoliberal policies that are hostile to the welfare state and adverse to the common good.[28]

The technosolutionist promise at the end of this exploitative process is a digital utopic future that enhances global social equality. Utopian futures are

presented as constituting an inevitable process (and promise) of modernity—the flipside of which is coloniality.[29] Today, global institutions and private sector actors use countries in the Global South, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, as testbeds for digital innovation and digital governments, with promises of development for their populaces in return, because these places are low-rights environments.[30] Similar to missionary efforts that facilitated historical colonialism and frontierism in the name of civilization through scientific rationalism, technophilanthropic capitalism facilitates data colonialism and digital frontierism in the name of a utopic digital future.[31] Jim Thatcher emphasizes this point, saying, "[s]ituating the promises of 'big data' within the utopian imaginaries of digital frontierism, we suggest process-es of data colonialism are actually unfolding behind these utopic promises."[32]

The implicit promise of digital transformation discourse is a contemporary incarnation of modernity. Decoloniality is conceptually adept at interrogating the aims, promises, and implications of modernity by calling into question its assump-tions and investigating its silences.[33] Thus, decolonial thought has been invoked to mobilize digital rights activism against data colonialism practices around the world, especially in the Global South where these ideas continue to carry significant political currency.[34]

Data Necropolitics

As the digital state emerges, necropolitical violence takes on a new form in the digital realm. The social-political formation of daily life under digital surveillance has emerged through the diminution of people's rights, autonomy, and privacy, creating bare life in Giorgio Agamben's sense.[35] Achille Mbembe's concept of necro-politics looks at states' subjugation of vast populations' social existence to the point of creating forms of social existence that render some to a sort of living death and, at its most extreme, literal death.[36] Extending this concept, Antonio Pele introduces the concept of 'data necropolitics' to look at how necropolitical violence is medi-ated through data and digital infrastructures.[37] Paola Ricaurte points out that the increasing dominance of hegemonic AI perpetuates material violence and deepens global inequality, creating a bio-necro-techno-political machine that reproduces op-pressive structures on a macro-scale.[38] In this context, the concept of data necropol-itics becomes particularly useful for understanding how public-sector digital trans-formation processes intersect with existing forms of structural violence, exposing vulnerable populations to exploitation and even death.[39] However, the experimental use of digital technologies in low-rights environments or for subalternized popula-tions is often disguised as technophilanthropy, allowing technology companies to dominate emergent digital markets and obtain massive amounts of personal data. Pele argues that this trend turns the Global South into open laboratories for the experimentations of AI, facial recognition, and mass data surveillance, perpetuat-ing data necropolitics and converting these populations into "digital guinea pigs."[40] This approach also enables the deployment of novel forms of racism and sexism, which are deeply intertwined with profit and power in political-economic systems. In this sense, data necropolitics not only examines individual experiences of harm but also sheds light on emergent patterns of structural violence in the digital realm.

Why the Global Coded Gaze Framework Matters for Policy

The global coded gaze offers a framework to analyze the historical and sociopolit-

ical connections between global racial capitalism, imperialism, and contemporary digital capitalism. To diminish the global coded gaze through policy, an equity-centered, anti-racist, public-value-maximizing approach is needed for public-sector digital transformation. Data justice movement networks, such as The Algorithmic Justice League, Tierra Común, and Pollicy, are working to shift public sector digital transformations away from the global coded gaze. Several international projects are critically examining the political economies of state digital identification regimes emerging in Africa (e.g., The CERTIZENS project (University of Copenhagen) and ResilientAfrica Network (Makerere University). Finally, public-sector digital transformation is just as important as ensuring that public-sector innovation is not oriented in a way that enables systemic racism, coloniality, and inequity. These efforts advocate for an explicitly equity-centered, anti-racist, human rights, and public-value maximizing approach to public-sector digital transformation.[41]

Global human rights campaigns against harmful national digital identity system types have also been launched, including efforts to ensure that public-sector digital transformation processes protect people from algorithmic harms and preserve their rights.[42] For example, in 2022, a global community of academics, practitioners, and civil society organizations urged the World Bank and global donors to perform human rights-based assessments of their digital identity system projects.[43] These efforts represent global solidarity in shifting public-sector digital transformations away from the global coded gaze through global governance.

Conclusion

The global coded gaze is a valuable analytical framework that illuminates the interplay between algorithmic harms and coloniality within global political-economic systems. This paper has explored the relevance of the global coded gaze in areas of digital racial capitalism, technophilanthropy, and data necropolitics. By understanding the historical power structures that shape power asymmetries and global social inequality, the global coded gaze offers a critical lens for examining digital transformation.

It is crucial to investigate the implications of digital transformation for contemporary global political, social, and economic challenges.[44] The market-led, shareholder-centric orientation of public sector digital transformations has the potential to reify coloniality through digital imperialism, data extractivism, and digital racial capitalism. Anticolonial praxis, data justice, and transnational digital rights movements are essential to resist the global coded gaze and diminish its impact on public-sector digital transformation. Further research is needed to explore how to engage the public and data-justice movements more effectively in digital transformation processes, especially across digital-era governments. Ultimately, it is yet to be seen if public-sector digital transformations will create equity-centered, democratic-power-enhancing, and data-justice-promoting digital futures.

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Yurok Fisherman
Photo by Edward S. Curtis. Gift of Edwin and Irene Weinrot.
Courtesy of Museum of Photographic Arts

Improving Native American Health
A Conversation with Melissa Eidman

Paula D. Walker, MD, MPH

Melissa Eidman is a member of the Yurok Tribe of Northern California. She is a 4th year medical student at Stanford University and a Master in Public Health (MPH) student at Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. She is also a Knight-Hennessey Scholar at Stanford and a Zuckerman Fellow at the Harvard Kennedy School's Center for Public Leadership. Melissa's passion and scholarship center on Native American community health and Native American health policy.

Eidman's public health community service includes work on decreasing the number of opioid overdose deaths in Indian country through the California Consortium for Urban Indian Health. She worked toward opioid use disorder prevention, improving access to medication-assisted therapeutic treatment, and overdose reversal medication.

Co-Editor-in-Chief Dr. Paula Walker, a medical doctor and a student in the Mid-Career Master in Public Administration program at Harvard Kennedy School of Government, interviewed Melissa about her work and career goals to mitigate health disparities amongst Native Americans and to improve the Indian Health Service.

This interview has been edited for brevity and clarity.

Paula Walker: Given your previous work with opioid use disorder prevention, I'm curious about your thoughts on the connection between the impacts of settler colonialism on the health of your community?

Melissa Eidman: …I would say that impact is incalculable. The removal of land is one thing—removing people from lands. Our tribe, I come from the Yurok tribe. We are very lucky in that we were not removed. A lot of our land was taken from us, but we were just pushed onto a small portion of our land. So, we still have access to those traditional lands.

One of the big challenges though is white people…made practicing a lot of the ways that we care for our land illegal. Things like doing controlled burns, we weren't allowed to do them. Every year, California's on fire. Those impacts on health are not only impacting our food sources, but also impacting our breathing and air quality. That's a really big challenge. Now finally, California is realizing that our traditional ways actually make sense and they should do those things, like controlled burns, as well.
Another big challenge for the Yurok tribe, specifically, was getting access to fishing and hunting rights. The Klamath River runs through our reservation. Actually, part

of what defines our reservation is the Klamath River. For many years, it was illegal for us to fish in the way that we traditionally fish there.

And, perhaps off topic, but another really big challenge to health that's resulted in increased cancer rates, and things like that, is there are dams along the Klamath River that have been there for a few decades that result in low water flow and warm water and huge fish kills. We have huge amounts of salmon coming up on shore dying because of these factors which impact our health because this is how we feed our people. It's how we feed our families and our elders. It's very sad.

It's also impacting our economic development. A lot of our people fund their families through being a fisherman. The way that these things are impacting health, it's like it comes from all directions. Specifically, around opioid use, and substance use more broadly, I think there's a really big challenge with alcohol. Of note, Native Americans also have the highest rates of abstinence from substances, but that's less talked about because we have some of the highest rates of disordered substance use as well.

PW: What systemic concerns would you consider substance abuse disorder a symptom of?

ME: With opioids, it's a different challenge that comes directly from the medical field. Opioid prescribing specifically was kind of a big joke in our community. You could go to the doctor for anything and they'd prescribed opioids for many years. When it was recognized

Native Americans also have the highest rates of abstinence from substances, but that's less talked about because we have some of the highest rates of disordered substance use as well.

in 2017 as a public health emergency, and the CDC changed its recommendations on prescribing opioids, it exacerbated the issue a little bit because there was this sudden change to what was allowed without making sure that the treatment was available for people who had been relying on this legal form of substance. And so, it increased rates of disordered substance use with illicit substances. That's challenging.

...One of the things that comes from settler colonialism that's impacting health in a multitude of ways, and specifically substance use, that I see in our community is generational traumas. I mean that to say, that these traumas are not (just) historical. They are consistently ongoing, and they're perpetuated through policies and through the way that we are providing health care in a less than equitable way... Currently, there's a lot of work being done to break those cycles and it's really good to see.

PW: In terms of healthcare access, would you say that it is adequate in Indian country? Or, where are the gaps and what needs to be done in order to make the healthcare system meet the needs of the people?
ME: I would definitely not use 'adequate' to describe Indian healthcare. The Indian

Health Service itself has been historically and is currently extremely underfunded, which I can talk about a little bit. Another challenge is our workforce. That is one of the biggest challenges I think of providing care where people are, is that there's not enough doctors who want to work in Indian country. Loan repayment options have the problems that loan repayment options come with. My grandpa growing up, he hated—he refused to go to the doctor and referred to the doctors who were at our clinics up north, in northern California, as 'reject doctors,' because they're doctors who couldn't get jobs elsewhere. Or, they are doctors fresh out of their residencies and trying to do loan repayment. They aren't actually invested in our community... so they come and they prescribe opioids and they leave. Fortunately, the prescribing of opioids has decreased a lot, and actually some of the doctors that are working in my area are fabulous. Nevertheless, the workforce is a big challenge.

As far as the funding goes, the last time I looked at the funding per person for the Indian Health Service, it is the lowest of the low—lower than any other healthcare in the United States. That is a big challenge that we have. This is one of my biggest complaints about the Indian Health Service (IHS) is that our funding has been below what is needed for our people since the IHS began and we complain a lot about it. Instead of leveraging that money that we know is not enough for things that are going to be very impactful, there's still a lot of waste that's happening, administrative waste and waste on programs that people aren't participating in, instead of programs that are really community specific.

I'm one native from a very small group of tribes. The Native American experience is so diverse across the United States. We have 574 federally recognized tribes, and that doesn't include the tribes that have lost their federal recognition and are fighting for federal recognition. The experience and needs of each of those communities differ. Having one healthcare system, that is, one healthcare organization that is dictating what happens is a challenge. They've implemented things to change that, but tribes can do compacting and contracting to manage their own healthcare and ensure that they're using their funds in a way that is supporting what their communities need. But that process is really hard, and you have to have a really good, strong government and administration to be able to make that work. It can be really difficult to go through that process. There are also some native folks who argue against that process, so it's really challenging.

PW: What are the major barriers to healthcare access faced by Native American patients, and how does the Land Back movement impact native health?

ME: When I was an undergrad, I did my research project on barriers and contributors to Native health specifically focusing on my tribe, the Yurok tribe...I was really surprised that transportation was...one of the biggest challenges that came up...Our reservation and many reservations, across the country, are very rural. Just getting to a clinic, getting to a hospital, and if you need specialty care, like how far you have to travel to do that is extreme. A lot of people don't have cars. If you do have a car, can you afford the gas to get an hour and a half drive away? Transportation, I think, is something that, as an urban Indian, I just really took for granted. I will also say that there are even urban Indians who I've talked to who have an equally difficult time with transportation, depending on what city they live in. Sacramento has horrible public transit...Fortunately, the urban clinics there for Indians, they've got a great

social services team that can organize transportation. But transportation is one of the biggest problems.

Another big problem that came up is distrust of the healthcare system—the Western healthcare system. That stems from a lot of things including all of these traumas that come with colonialism and also things like the opioid epidemic, where people are still really struggling because of their involvement with the healthcare system.

There is also a terrible research history that comes from the medical field with Indigenous communities. There's a lot of distrust. Building that trust is something that's really difficult when you have doctors who are coming in and out of the community and no one who's staying and invested. One of the great things that's happening right now with my generation is Native youth, like myself, are being empowered to go into medicine. I'm planning on becoming a doctor and working for my tribe. I see it happening more and more and it's really exciting because I think that is going to be one of the ways that we are more impactful and supportive of Native health—having people who understand us, treat us.

The Land Back movement is focused on growing Native sovereignty and battling erasure in our communities. It is also specifically about reclaiming our land, particularly important our sacred spaces, which is where we're growing medicine, where we go for healing ceremonies, and things like that. In those ways, I think the Land Back movement is really important to improving Native American health.

My project I mentioned earlier also focused on contributors to health, not just barriers. One of the biggest contributors to health is our culture. The ways that our culture is protective are incredible, like participating in ceremonies for instance. It is not okay to participate in a ceremony if you're actively using substances. Culture serves as a support and a reason not to use substances. If we would transfer that thinking process into Western medicine, like thinking about the social support and mental health support that these communities bring, it would be hugely important.

The Land Back movement is supporting these aspects of our health in addition to actual physical things like gathering medicine...it's helpful just talking about making it legal to be on our lands, and at least making it safe for us to do what we need to do to be healthy.

PW: I was looking at some of your research where you partnered with the Indian Health Center of Santa Clara Valley to improve health services and outcomes for Native American patients with diabetes. From a policy perspective, what would need to take place to achieve more equitable health outcomes in chronic disease management e.g., diabetes?

ME: I think a lot of that gets back to funding. It sounds like a little bit of a broken record, but funding is a really big challenge. Research is also a very important challenge for a lot of reasons. I will say that the special Diabetes program for Indians which is the program at the Santa Clara Valley Indian Health Center that I was working on—I was doing an evaluation of that program—is incredible. I think one of the biggest successes of the Indian Health Service, is the development and sustaining of

One thing for Indian country that would be really wonderful to see is to recognize traditional ways of healing as valid ways of healing— traditional ways that have worked for our communities for centuries.

this Diabetes program.

The program is a grant that goes directly to Indian Health Services, and it does what I was talking about earlier—gives the health program power and direct control over what health services they can give to their community with regard to diabetes and whatever that looks like for them. If it's a group for people to come and talk about nutrition, then that's what it is. If it's funding a gym, if it's directly providing funding for food, like all of those things are possible if that's what your community needs…

PW: I love how you emphasize qualitative research and an approach to empower members of Indian country to conduct their own research to gather data on evidence-based interventions versus trying to do a forced fit with randomized clinical trials (RCTs). Are there any other reformations or policy changes that you think would be pertinent at this inflection point in the history of our U.S. healthcare system?

ME: One thing for Indian country that would be really wonderful to see, that would do a lot for bridging these gaps around distrust and around engagement with the healthcare system, is to recognize traditional ways of healing as valid ways of healing—traditional ways that have worked for our communities for centuries, since time immemorial.

There has been some movement in that direction. I was fortunate when I worked for the Sacramento Native American Health Center to be part of their Healing Ways Grant, where they received funding to implement a traditional herbalist into their primary care setting. It was amazing…I got to see our traditional herbalist in action. Her name is Sage, which is a fabulous name for a traditional herbalist by the way! Getting to see Sage in action and seeing all of the ways that she contributes to health with the medicines that she provides but also the community that she provides and the people that she's bringing to our healthcare system just by being a part of it. People want to come. I think that is almost as important as the actual service that she was providing.

In addition to the amazing services that Sage has to offer, Native Americans felt seen. Including an herbalist as a member of the healthcare delivery team, you are recognizing that this is us. This is how we want to heal. By bringing that in, you're bringing in Native Americans into the room, into this healthcare system—where they're also going to talk about diabetes and all of the other things—but you get them through the door by recognizing that their ways are important too. I think that is a way that we can change healthcare policy and healthcare funding, which is a challenge. How do you bill for a visit with an herbalist? Right now, it's a challenge.

PW: I look forward to the day when we can have healthcare that you've described

fully implemented for members of Indian country because it's so needed and necessary. Are there any last thoughts?

ME: Yes. One thing that I've been actually thinking about that is also contributing to these generations of trauma is actively being battled in the Supreme Court right now which is the Indian Child Welfare Act. Native Americans have a very traumatic history with our children being taken from us, being enslaved in missions, and being taken to boarding schools to basically have the culture beat out of them. It was recognized that 'hey it's not cool to do that to Native American kids anymore'. The Social Services system was taking our children and giving them to white families. It was in 1978 when the Indian Child Welfare Act went into effect which requires that Social Services look to tribal members before anyone else to place our kids. The Indian Child Welfare Act is incredibly important because culture is such an important part of our health, both our mental health and our physical health, at least I know it is for me. My research also showed that it was important for the people back home. It's an important policy to protect our kids in a multitude of ways.

I want to highlight for your policy audience that this legislation is being actively battled in [the] Court....I encourage your readership to look at this court case and support the Indian Child Welfare Act.

"Aliens in Our Own Land"

Enacting Sovereignty at Australia's Aboriginal Tent Embassy

Alyssa Van Groningen

"The essential work of politics is the configuration of its own space." - Jacques Rancière

In Canberra, the capital city of Australia, the key institutions of the Constitution are contained in the 'Parliamentary Triangle.'[1] New Parliament House, the seat of state power, sits on 'Capital Hill.' 'Kings Avenue' connects New Parliament House with the Defence Headquarters at Russell. 'Commonwealth Avenue' connects Parliament House with 'City Hill', the symbolic civic center of Canberra, on the opposite side of Capital Hill. The two lower points are connected by 'Constitution Avenue.' Within these three points sit the High Court, the National Library, the National Science and Technology Centre, and the National Gallery. Spatially and symbolically, the centers of state, military and civic power in Australia are shored up by law, art, science, and history, and kept within their symbolic bounds by the monarchy, the Commonwealth, and the Constitution (Fig. 1).

This configuration tells a particular story about politics, constitutionalism, and state power. Order is reflected in the symmetrical arrangement of the Parliamentary Triangle, which sets out the institutions of the Australian state according to a democratic division of power. This power is imbued with symbolic legitimacy through its claims to inclusivity. The flag display along Lake Burley Griffin sings a hymn to the success of multiculturalism; a hymn restrained only by the Australian flag situated in the center of the display—at least double the size of the others—to signify that all cultures are united under the authority of the Australian state. In the forecourt of New Parliament House, a mosaic by Michael Nelson Tjakamarra—an Aboriginal painter from the remote Central Desert community of Papunya—integrates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures into Australia's national heritage. Historical wrongs have been righted through the widening of democracy and the 'inclusion' of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within the nation.

Within the Parliamentary Triangle, a ramshackle collection of semi-permanent structures sits before Old Parliament House. An old shipping container, painted red and black, reads 'Aboriginal Embassy' in yellow lettering. It is situated opposite an enormous sandstone monument of King George V. Walking down the steps spray-painted with the Torres Strait flag, the Aboriginal flag, and the 1972 Aboriginal protest flag, one encounters a collection of dilapidated tents surrounded by cars and tarpaulins. Letters spelling out 'SOVEREIGNTY' are attached to poles and driven into the grass behind a ceremonial fire pit. Surrounded by the grandiose architecture of the Parliamentary Triangle, the Aboriginal Tent Embassy unsettles.

This article uses Jacques Rancière's conception of *dissensus* to examine the significance of the Aboriginal Tent Embassy in the Parliamentary Triangle. According to Rancière, dissensus is not merely a disagreement over interests, opinions, or values, but rather a division that is "inserted in 'common sense': a dispute over

Figure 1
The Parliamentary Triangle, with New Parliament House at the apex. Courtesy Australian Government

what is given and about the frame within which we see something as given."[2] In other words, dissensus creates a fissure within the framework within which we perceive something as natural or self-evident. Dissensus is closely linked to Rancière's conception of *le partage du sensible,* or "the distribution of the sensible" which refers to the "delimitation of spaces and times, of the visible and the invisible, of speech and noise, that simultaneously determines the place and the stakes of politics as a form of experience."[3] The Parliamentary Triangle is a distribution of the sensible that attempts to establish the sovereignty of the Australian state as self-evident. This article explores how the Aboriginal Tent Embassy disrupts this distribution, looking at dissensus both from the perspective of the state's attempts to remove the protest, and the perspective of the protest itself.

The Aboriginal Tent Embassy was established on 27 January 1972 in response

to former Prime Minister William McMahon's rejection of land rights for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in his Australia Day speech (Fig. 2). McMahon had announced the introduction of fifty-year 'general purpose leases' to groups who could make "reasonable economic and social use of the land."[4] After listening to McMahon's speech from Redfern, an Aboriginal urban center in Sydney, a group of Aboriginal activists held consultations on how to respond.[5] It was agreed that Michael Anderson, Billy Craigie, Tony Coorey and Bert Williams would drive to Canberra to stage a protest outside Parliament House. It was Coorey's idea to call the protest 'the Aboriginal Embassy.' Recalling Coorey's thought process, Gary Foley explains that McMahon's speech "had declared us aliens in our own land and so we need an Embassy just like all the other aliens. But our Embassy won't be a flash one like the others up on Mugga Way, ours will be a tent, to symbolize the material conditions in which Aboriginal people are living."[6] The protestors set up a beach umbrella and placards opposite Parliament House in the early hours of the morning (Fig. 3).

While the activists had been planning on being arrested, there was no law to prevent them from camping on the lawns of Parliament House, provided they had fewer than twelve tents.[7] Significantly, this right to camp on Crown land was premised on their specific history of dispossession. Roberta Sykes recalls:

> The government had framed a law that there was to be no camping on Crown land. However, because Crown land in the Northern Territory was home to dispossessed Aboriginal people who had nowhere else to live, this law specifically excluded Aborigines [sic]. The expanse of land in front of Parliament House was also Crown land, but it had obviously never entered the minds of the politicians that Aborigines [sic] would set up camp there.[8]

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Figure 2
"We want land not handouts." Alan Sharpley (holding the sign) and John Newfong (far right) at the Aboriginal Tent Embassy. National Museum of Australia
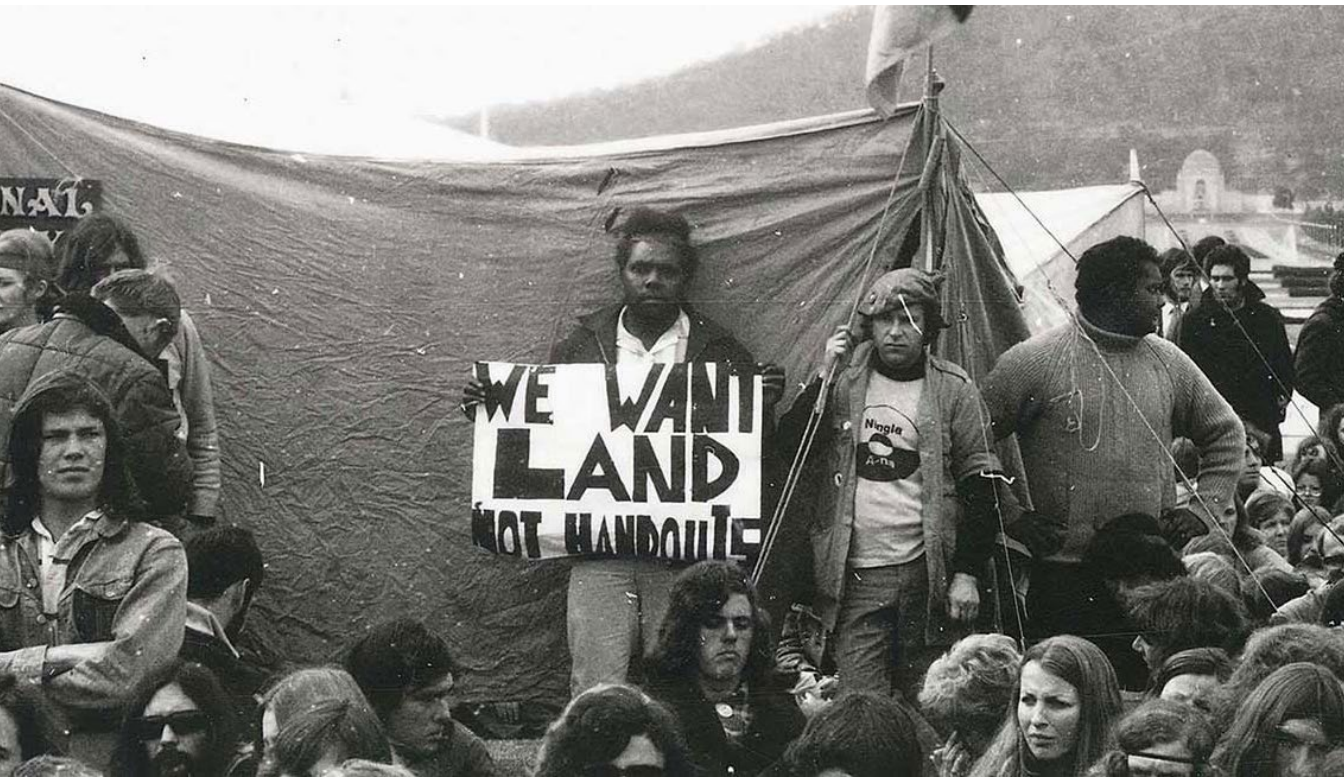
This loophole highlights sovereign violence at the same time as it contests the locus of sovereignty itself. In Carl Schmitt's classical formulation, the "sovereign is he who decides on the exception."[9] This idea—which has been seminal in legal, philosophical and political theories of state power—suggests that the sovereign determines where the law does *not* apply; the spaces in which and the subjects for whom it may be suspended. The Aboriginal Tent Embassy calls this formulation into question, because the exception was not decided by the sovereign but discovered by Aboriginal activists, who stumbled upon it quite by accident. Further, because the exception was premised on the historical situation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dispossession by the state, it also exposed the groundlessness of sovereign authority. Thus, the exception did not exemplify the sovereign's power so much as it called the locus of sovereignty itself into question and exposed what Walter Benjamin calls it 'lawmaking violence.'

In his celebrated essay *Critique of Violence,* Benjamin makes a distinction between 'lawmaking' and 'law preserving' violence.[10] Lawmaking violence refers to the original act of violence which establishes the possibility of all future law. It has no prior foundation for its legitimacy—rather, as Judith Butler explains in her reading of Benjamin, "the making of law creates the conditions for justificatory procedures and deliberations to take place [...] the *violence* of law-instating violence is summarized in the claim that 'this will be the law' or, more emphatically, 'this is now the law.'"[11] The Constitution exemplifies this conception of lawmaking violence, because it had no prior grounds for its legitimacy. 'Law-preserving violence', on the other hand, extends the violence of the founding act by ensuring that law continues to bind its subjects. As Benjamin notes, the distinction between lawmaking and law-preserving violence is a fine one. The institution of the police highlights how they may exist together, as police both use violence to preserve the

Figure 3
The establishment of the Aboriginal Tent Embassy on Australia Day, 26 January 1972
Left to right- Michael Anderson, Billy Craigie, Bert Williams and Tony Coorey.
Courtesy State Library of New South Wales from Australia, Wikimedia Commons

legal order, and—insofar as they possess the power of 'decree' or discretion—also can create law.[12]

Benjamin's theory of legal violence brings the *dissensual* significance of the Embassy into relief. If the legal exception that enabled Aboriginal camping on Crown land exposed the illegitimacy of the 'sovereign' and its lawmaking violence, the government's attempts to close this loophole exemplified law-preserving violence, denaturalising the distribution of the sensible by exposing the mythic dimensions of its authority. In July 1972, the government amended the *Trespass on Commonwealth Lands Ordinance Act* (the Act) to make the Embassy illegal.[13] Attempts to enforce the Act led to a series of violent clashes between police and protestors that resulted in multiple arrests and hospitalisations. Schaap and Muldoon note that "the scenes of violence shown on television as the police attempted to dismantle the Embassy were clearly too reminiscent of a history of dispossession to persuade a shocked public."[14] To say nothing of the irony of using the charge of 'trespass' against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, images of police forcibly removing tents and bodies recalled something of Australia's originary dispossession. In this sense, the legal exception that enabled the establishment of the Embassy exposed the lawmaking violence of the Australian state, and the state's attempt to remove this exception constituted an act of law-preserving violence that recalled and repeated the violence of 'founding.'

Dissensus takes on interesting and unexpected dimensions here. The amendment and enforcement of the Act presumably intended to reinstate the distribution of the sensible that buttresses the state's narrative of legitimacy. However, by dismantling the Embassy and re-staging its own history of dispossession, the state inadvertently ruptured its own narrative. In this process, the avenues and architecture of the Parliamentary Triangle take on a different meaning. As Schaap and Muldoon suggest, they appear as "an anxious attempt to supply the Australian state with the weight of presence that it lacks."[15] Thus, as Butler writes in the context of public assemblies, "the bodies on the street redeploy the space of appearance in order to contest and negate the existing forms of political legitimacy,"[16] and in the process, re-signify and redeploy the space of appearance against itself. Having considered the significance of the state's response to the Embassy, it is necessary to consider the significance of the protest itself.

A key dimension of dissensus is the idea of 'putting two worlds in one and the same world.'[17] How are we to understand this formulation? Writing about women's exclusion from the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen, Rancière points out that, through their public action, women enacted the rights of which they had been deprived. "They demonstrated that they were deprived of the rights that they had thanks to the Declaration of Rights and that through their public action that they *had* the rights denied to them by the constitution [...] they acted as subjects that did not have the rights that they had and that had the rights that they had not."[18] In doing so, Rancière says, they put "two worlds in one and the same world."[19] The remainder of this article turns to consider how the Aboriginal Tent Embassy embodied this paradox to rupture the distribution of the sensible.

Perhaps the most prominent means through which Aboriginal activists have acted as subjects that 'did not have the rights that they had' is through their use of tents to occupy Crown land. Tents evoke a sensate body that requires shelter and protection; a body that is rendered precarious when the conditions of livability are denied or withheld. This symbolism was deliberately evoked by protestors – recall Coorey's thought process that the Embassy would be a tent, "to symbolize the

material conditions in which Aboriginal people are living."[20] The shabbiness of the Embassy recalled the impoverished conditions endured by many on missions and reserves. Tents also recall something of the refugee camp; temporary fringe spaces inhabited by those that have been displaced and forced to seek protection in a foreign land. However, the Embassy simultaneously evokes and confounds this symbolism – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have been made 'aliens in their own land' through the state's denial of land rights. Further, while refugee camps are places of transience, the Embassy has maintained a near continuous presence opposite Old Parliament House since 1972 and was permanently established on its twentieth anniversary in 1992.[21] Thus, while the use of tents evokes transience and displacement, the temporality of the Embassy also engenders a sense of semi-permanence that reflects the ongoing structure of settler-colonial dispossession.

This staging of sensate vulnerability and dispossession ruptures the distribution of the sensible embodied by the Parliamentary Triangle. This acknowledged, it would be a mistake to reduce the Embassy to a performative statement. Having established how the Aboriginal activists 'did not have the rights that they had,' it becomes necessary to consider how the activists 'had the rights that they did not.' Iveson notes that, when the beach umbrella was pitched on the lawns of Parliament House, "permission was neither sought nor granted, in an act that presumed the authority of a sovereign people to use their land as they saw fit, even as that sovereignty was denied by the laws of the settler society."[22] This enactment of land rights has continued throughout the Embassy's history. For example, in November 2017, a group of activists staged an occupation in the vacant 'Lobby' restaurant on the lawns of Old Parliament House. The group addressed an eviction notice to the National Capital Authority, on the grounds of "failure to seek permission, sign a Treaty or Lease the land from Ngunnawal Original Custodians."[23] This demonstrates how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people enact the rights that they lack, contesting the distribution of the sensible which would either ignore their sovereignty or relegate it to a distant past.

This article has engaged Rancière's notion of dissensus to explore the significance of the Aboriginal Tent Embassy. While the mosaic in the forecourt of New Parliament House speaks to an integrated nation and a victorious multiculturalism, the Aboriginal Tent Embassy sits as an unassimilable reminder of the violence of the constitutional order. While the layout of the Parliamentary Triangle attempts to situate state power at the peak of the *demos* and subordinate civic power to a lower corner, the Aboriginal Tent Embassy refuses placement within any existing regime and demands a process of reconstitution. And, while the concrete and marble of the Parliamentary Triangle attempts to engender a sense of a completed democratic project, the confounding symbolism of the Aboriginal Tent Embassy speaks to the truth that it is never too late to intervene in the order of things, that narratives, meanings, and spaces are up for grabs; that the job is never done once and for all.

Notes

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14. Ibid.

15. Ibid, 227.

16. Butler, Judith. *Notes toward a Performative Theory of Assembly,* 86. Cambridge, London: Harvard University Press, 2015.

17. Rancière, J. (2010). Dissensus: On Politics and Aesthetics (S. Concoran, Trans. & Ed.). London and New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 69.

18. Ibid.

19. Ibid.

20. Howell, Edwina. 'Black Power - by Any Means Necessary.' In *The Aboriginal Tent Embassy: Sovereignty, Black Power, Land Rights and the State*, edited by Andrew Schaap, Edwina Howell and Gary Foley, 76. Oxon and New York: Routledge, 2014.

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23. 'Aboriginal Activists Refuse to Leave Empty Restaurant on Lawns of Old Parliament House in Canberra', ABC News, 9 November 2017.

Shifting the Paradigm

Embracing Harm Reduction as an Anti-Racist Approach to Address Systemic Racism in Drug Policy

Liz Singh

A nti-racist policy efforts tend to focus on explicit discrimination, for example, banning the use of racist language or symbols and implementing hiring quotas to create more inclusive workplaces. While these are important steps, they are not sufficient to address systemic racism. Implicit bias and institutional participation in systemic discrimination must also be addressed. Research has shown that the 'War on Drugs' Is an example of systemic racism,[1] as BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People Of Color) are disproportionately impacted by drug prohibition policies.[2]

The term 'War on Drugs' was first used by conservative, Republican President Richard Nixon and popularized by his ideological successor several years later, President Ronald Reagan. Reagan made the 'War on Drugs' a priority for his administration and used propaganda campaigns and harsh legal penalties for the possession or sale of psychoactive substances.[3]

Reagan's infamous ad campaigns, "Just Say No" and "This is your brain on drugs" reduced complex relationships with substance use and health to simple slogans. The catchy campaigns contributed significantly to mass incarceration and created lasting stigma around the use of psychoactive substances.[4]

Banning the possession and sale of psychoactive substances dates back to the temperance movement and Christian beliefs about the evils of substance use, as well as xenophobia.[5] Early drug laws in the United States targeted ethnic and racial communities by focusing on substances popular within them. For example, the prohibition of opium was used as a pretext to deport Chinese Americans and Canadians, as it was popular within those communities.[6] Interestingly, a similar approach to alcohol, which was popular with white Americans and Europeans, was short-lived (1920-1933) and generally considered a failure on every front.[7]

The Prohibition of alcohol serves as a prime example of how banning substance use can affect the overall consumption of that substance. Despite being in place for a considerable amount of time, Prohibition had no lasting effect on overall rates of alcohol consumption. Instead, it created a lucrative opportunity for criminal organizations to get involved in bootlegging, which made the alcohol market more dangerous and unpredictable. As the quality of alcohol sold illegally could not be regulated, this primarily affected the poorer segments of American society who were most likely to consume poorly made, highly potent forms of alcohol such as moonshine. Conversely, wealthier consumers could continue to access a high-quality supply through illegal purchases or abroad.[8]

The ongoing prohibition of psychoactive substances, excluding alcohol, has had a disproportionate impact on BIPOC in the United States for several reasons. BIPOC who use or sell drugs are more likely than their white counterparts to be arrested, incarcerated, and serve longer prison terms.[9] This is especially troubling

as many illegal drugs are traditional medicines in non-Western medical practices[10] and play an integral role in non-Western spiritual practices,[11] such as marijuana and opium. Additionally, BIPOC have reduced access to medical care[12] and are subject to high rates of PTSD and racial trauma,[13] which could increase the need to self-medicate. This is significant as trauma is a key predictor of the development of a substance use disorder.[14]

The impact of the 'War on Drugs' is not limited to the US and has global implications. Many popular psychoactive substances are made from plants that grow best or are native to specific climates such as coca in South America or poppy flowers (opium) in the Middle East. US efforts to end the trade, therefore, not only have an impact on people of color within the United States but around the world.[15]

It is important to recognize that the definition of drugs is a legal and cultural one, meaning that the definition of a drug has changed over time and varies between different societies. There is no biological or scientific definition of a drug that separates drugs from substances that might, in a different context, be considered either food or medicine. Many of the substances which are banned in the United States are a part of religious or traditional recreational practices in non-Western cultures such as ayahuasca and peyote.[16, 17] For example, opium has been used in non-Western systems of medicine such as Ayurveda or traditional Chinese medicine for thousands of years to treat chronic pain as well as diseases such as Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS).[18]

Instead of criminalizing substance use, policies need to direct people who use drugs towards support and community, such as needle exchange programs, supervised consumption sites, and crisis lines.

Marxist theorist Louis Althusser coined the term "Ideological State Apparatus" (ISA) to refer to institutions such as schools, religious organizations or media outlets that transmit the values of the State and help maintain the social order.[19] In the context of the 'War on Drugs', education institutions, workplaces and the media act as ISAs by reproducing drug war logic. For example, the media perpetuates stigma around drug use, while schools and workplaces often have prohibitive or punitive policies around drug use.

These ISAs play a role in perpetuating the systemic racism of the 'War on Drugs', as the war disproportionately affects BIPOC communities. Even though ISAs are not formally associated with law enforcement, they contribute to the harms caused by the 'War on Drugs'.

An alternative approach is to reimagine institutional policies through the lens of harm reduction. Harm reduction originally emerged from the community of people who use drugs as a way of mitigating the risks of drug consumption without assuming the goal is sobriety.[20] Harm reduction advocates believe that substance use should not be prohibited and believe that well-being and health must be defined by the individual.[21]

Harm reduction practices such as free condom distribution and syringe exchange programs emerged from the queer community and those who injected drugs during the early period of the AIDS crisis.[22] In response to the recent drug

toxicity crisis, supervised consumption sites have been created to prevent fatal overdoses. Since the mid-2010s, the United States has seen a spike in the number of fatal overdoses related to an opioid called fentanyl.[23] Since the majority of fatal overdoses occur when an individual uses indoors and alone,[24] the community of people who use drugs began the practice of encouraging each other to use in spaces where someone could provide medical support should an individual begin to overdose.[25] Initially an underground practice, supporters are seeking to offer it legally in the United States.[26] In Canada, where supervised consumption services have been legal since 2001, they have prevented thousands of fatal overdoses.[27]

Policies that focus on behavior and support for the individual, rather than punishing or prohibiting substance use, can challenge drug war reasoning. For example, a harm reduction policy in schools could ensure students struggling with substance use can disclose their struggle to mental health staff without fear of reprisal. Such policies focus on the well-being of students and their ability to participate and learn effectively, rather than on enforcing sobriety.

Harm reduction policies can also be applied in workplaces, healthcare institutions and beyond. Instead of criminalizing substance use, policies need to direct people who use drugs towards support and community, such as needle exchange programs, supervised consumption sites, and crisis lines.

By implementing harm reduction policies, organizations can decrease their participation in systemic racism and reduce the negative impact of ISAs on BIPOC individuals and communities. Harm reduction policies benefit everyone who uses drugs and promote a more just and equitable society.

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From American-Hunted Pulahans to Philippine Baptists

Acong Parreño

The Pacification of Pulahan Insurgents in Western Visayas by American Baptists

This paper puts forward the thesis that many early Philippine Baptists were actually "pacified Pulahan[1] peasant rebels." While formerly resisting the invading American forces during the 1900s, they became pacified. This paper seeks to answer the question, "Where did the Pulahan go?" Philippine Baptists were thought to be a conservative, law-abiding, and nation-building people, whereas the Pulahan were Indigenous, shaman-led mountain people with a grassroots orientation. Contrary to expectation, this paper shows the Philippine Baptists actually originated from the Pulahans. This finding turns the popular belief on its head that the Americans brought the Baptist faith with them upon invasion, when in fact the Baptist faith was initiated by a Filipino who converted the Pulahans.

The Pulahan resistance in Western Visayas, Philippines (Fig. 1) was derived from a "grassroots democratic community" of thousands of farmers, peasants, and laborers. The resistance fighters burned the haciendas and openly revolted against both the local landlords and the American occupying forces.

Unlike the elite-centric[2] American government approach to the insurgency that wooed the Western Visayas leaders, the Baptist missionaries focused on the socially and economically displaced Pulahans. Initiated by Filipino missionary Brauilio Manikan, the Baptists spoke to the "spiritual and commercial" needs of the Pulahan "insurgency" (using Stephen Metz's insurgency framework, detailed below).[3] While Baptist preachers unwittingly promoted submissiveness and non-violence that benefited the state, American Baptists like business magnate and philanthropist John D. Rockefeller launched massive economic endeavors focused on Pulahan reeducation, health, and housing.

This paper applies the frameworks of Michael Kaufman,[4] Eduardo Tadem,[5] and James Scott[6] to understand the Pulahan community both before and after conversion. Two Baptist groups resulted from this conversion. One group climbed the mountain, maintaining its grassroots orientation. The bigger part remained in the lowlands and blended with state-allied institutions.

Objective, Framework & Methodology

Objective

This paper makes the case that contrary to the assumption that Philippine Indigenous communities were swallowed up by aggressive state forces, some communities actually adopted the grassroots resistance tactic of legitimizing themselves by

adapting to state-accepted institutions like Western religion, language, and educational system.[7] The paper aims to explain how during the 1900 war in Western Visayas, the American-hunted Pulahans evolved into the American-accepted Baptists.

Key Finding

The grassroot Pulahans joined the accepted American Baptist faith for a variety of reasons, resulting in survival of the Pulahan purge.[8] After the conversion/pacification, two outcomes arose. Some of the first Baptists escaped to the mountains, returning to their grassroots orientation while creating their own secluded Baptist community called Calvario. Many of the second group, however, assimilated into the American Baptist institution.

Framework

To support the key finding, the author first seeks to define who the Pulahans were. American observers described the Pulahans as ignorant and their organization wild. The author however presents their community structure as that of a "grassroots democratic community" as defined by Kaufman's theoretical framework,[9] James Scott's analysis of mountain societies separating from state encroachment,[10] and Eduardo Tadem's[11] explanation of non-state-centric approaches. Secondly, the author explains how the militant Pulahans were pacified, using Steven Metz's approach to countering insurgency and compares this with the questioned US Army's Counter Insurgency (COIN) Framework.

Methodology

To demonstrate the findings on the Pulahans, their subsequent conversion, and a splinter group's escape to the mountains, the author refers to reports by various local and foreign historians, war documents, missionary reports, and other research materials. The author visited the Calvario sites and interviewed Baptist leaders and security officials.

Who the Western Visayan Pulahans Were the Pulahans as Resistance to American Occupation

When Filipino Evangelist Braulio Manikan and Swedish pastor Eric Lund arrived, they found the Philippine Western Visayas in the midst of active war, with the insurgents controlling the whole area.[12] Filipino Historian Renato Constantino described the Pulahans as "anti-foreign and anti-elite resistance fighters engaged in a class war."[13] Formerly allied with the hacendero-ilustrado forces against the Spaniards in the Philippine Revolution, the Pulahans were left to fight for themselves shortly after the Philippine American War, when the elite hacendero-ilustrado sided with the Americans.[14]

The Pulahans as Resistance to Hacienda System

Angered primarily by the oppressive hacienda system,[15] local peasants found life untenable when the landlords converted their source of sustenance—rice lands—into sugar to satisfy global demand.[16] The Pulahans reacted by burning sugar plan-
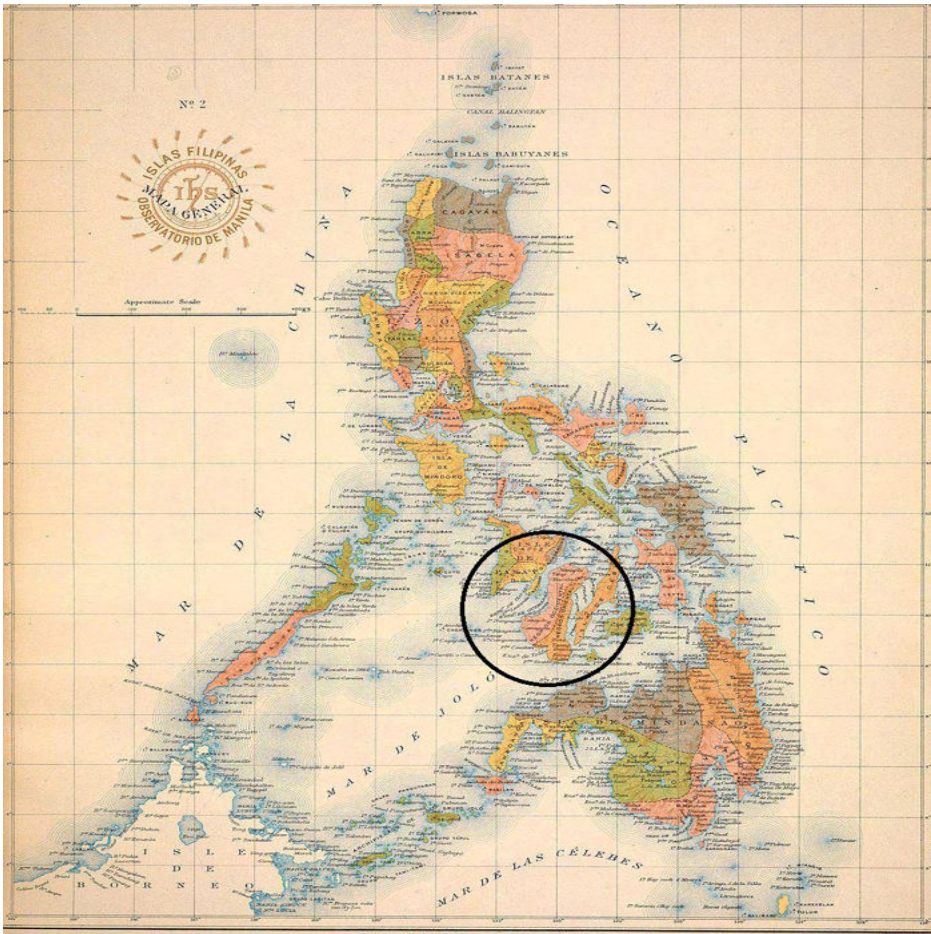
Figure 1
Map of Western Visayas. Public Domain. Jose P. Algue, S Coast and Geodetic Survey (1900)

tations while they fought the American invasion.[17] Big landlords like the church and rich families owned up to 1000 hectares of land in Western Visayas.[18] For Constantino, the landlords' shift to sugar deprived the tenants of rice – their main source of sustainable food source.[19]

From the American Perspective—Pulahans as "Wild Religious Ignoramus"

American Baptist Missionary Charles W. Briggs described the Pulahans as wild and dangerous Babaylanes "soul gatherers"[20] who "live[d] in essentially the same way that they did before the first Spaniards came to the Philippines."[21] The American Governor General George Curry saw them as "ignorant, superstitious persons" that can easily be influenced for good or for evil."[22]

Who the American Baptists Were

White American Baptist churches sent missions to the Philippines at the height of the Pulahan resistance in the 1900s. During the Philippine-American War, Baptist groups like the American Baptist Missionary Union (ABMU) received huge donations for global evangelism. The ABMU received approximately $700 thousand

dollars (approximately $25 million dollars today) for both 1902 and 1903.[23] Global Baptist missions[24] targeted the Philippines[25] and other Asian countries like India, Japan, Africa, China, and Burma.[26]

Rich Baptist members were also involved in global outreach. Baptist industrialists, like John D. Rockefeller, contributed to the building of civic institutions globally,[27] including in the Philippines.[28] Rockefeller funded the creation of the Central Philippine University in Western Visayas, which was instrumental in educating Pulahan converts.[29] He and his son also gave nearly $1 million (approximately $36 million dollars today) to create Guidestone Financial Resources, now a $15 billion fund, which provided financial services to pastors and the evangelical community.[30]

Dionisio Magbuelas, known as 'Papa Isio', (center) is a religious leader who led anti-colonial uprisings on the island of Negros in 1896-1907. Here with with two followers in a prison in Bacolod after his surrender to American authorities in 1907. Harry H. Bandholtz, Public domain, Wikimedia Commons

The American Missionary Strategy

In the 1900s, the Schurman Civil Commission—tasked to determine what to do with America's new territory—sought absolute control. Through a published report, the commission declared, "those who resist...can accomplish no end other than their own ruin."[31]

Towards this goal, Americans used military, legal,[32] economic, diplomatic, and even cultural approaches against the Pulahans in Western Visayas. As they declared martial law,[33] the U.S. military hunted and purged the Pulahans.[34] Some government officials recognized the importance of Christian missionaries and supported their endeavors. The army secretary of the International Committee of the YMCA met Lund and Manikan as soon as they arrived in Iloilo, Western Visayas,[35] and when the Baptists needed a Bible translator, the Secretary procured the incarcerated "captain of the insurgent army Fernando Salas" to help translate the Bible into the local language, Hiligaynon.[36]

The Protestant leaders gathered together to engage the American government. One leader, Kreshner of the Disciples Mission, saw the power of missionary work as a tool for reconciliation and conservatism that could be used by the government.[37] William Howard Taft, then governor-general of the Philippines, developed strong relationships with missionaries and brought Episcopalian Bishop Brent with him as he surveyed the Philippines in 1902.[38] Taft likewise worked with Methodist Reverend Homer C. Stuntz to allow missionary-nominated officials into the Philippine-American government.[39] Provincial Governor George Curry recognized the need for missionaries to pacify the "ignorant" Pulahans as he battled them in a nearby province.[40]

The Protestant leaders stressed the "providential" nature of America's victory and praised the government's role in bringing Christianity to the islands.[41] "God has given into our hands, that is, into the hands of the American Christians, the Philippine Islands," declared the Presbyterian General Assembly.[42] In this context of state and missionary intertwinement, American Baptist missionaries like Charles Briggs and Henry Munger might have, as noted by Philippine Baptist historian Jalando-on, intentionally taken an active role in pacifying Pulahans.[43]

Conversion of Pulahans to Protestant Baptists Manikan's Unplanned Entry

The Presbyterians declared that according to an earlier Protestant Agreement, the American Baptists were not supposed to go to the Philippines due to lack of funds. Manikan, a Filipino student in Barcelona eager to return to his native country, changed the American Baptist timetable.

Strengthened by President Mckinley's religious justification of the American invasion,[44] the American Presbyterians quickly began evangelizing in Iloilo, Western Visayas.[45] They wanted an organized segregation of the Philippine areas to avoid conflict among Protestant sects. So, on November 17, 1898, in a New York meeting, the Presbyterians asked the Baptists to join them. But the Baptists kept to the Protestant Agreement, saying that "for financial reasons, they could not enter the Philippines at present."[46]

Manikan, who didn't know or didn't care about the Presbyterian and Baptist discussion, "conceived of the idea of carrying back the message to his own people."[47] Quickly, he translated some gospels and tracts into his local language.[48]

Furious, a Presbyterian leader drew upon the earlier Protestant Agreement when he admonished the American Baptists for not keeping to their original assurance.[49] It is unclear in what capacity or whether the American Baptist Missions supported Manikan or his return to the Philippines. Whether supported or not, on March 24, 1900,[50] Braulio Manikan left Spain with Lund. He carried the first Hiligaynon translation[51] of the Gospel of Mark and Hiligaynon tracts.[52]

After a long travel by sea, they arrived in Iloilo in May, 1900.[53]

Manikan's Successful Conversion of Pulahans in the Jaro Marketplace

Targeting the Western Visayan peasants who converged in the main trading area, Jaro, Manikan converted thousands into the Baptist movement in only a few months.[54] Many who heard his sermons were Pulahan leaders from far-off places. Manikan welcomed traveling traders to eat and sleep in his house.[55]

Manikan's street-level approach worked well with the Pulahans. The 1902 Baptist Mission reported that thousands of Pulahans regularly visited Manikan's place.[56] Lund, the Swedish minister who accompanied Manikan, narrated the Pulahan conversion:

> I wrote you recently of the despised 'Pulahan' whom we found in the Jaro market. These are the people who fill our Jaro chapel. On Sunday, they continue coming to Iloilo where we as yet have our home. From sixty to eighty men and women used to stay with us over Sunday nights sleeping as they could on bare floors. A few of these 'Pulahans' are, no doubt, really converted. They have given up their idols, they pray in our meetings, they speak to others of their new faith, and they suffer persecution.[57]

The most dedicated leaders of the Pulahan "rebel" movement became Baptist preachers who returned home to spread their new faith to their followers.[58]

Formal Entry of American Baptist Missionaries

After Manikan's early work on converting the ordinary masses, the American Baptist Missionary Union funded Briggs first and then up to 17 other missionaries from late 1900 to 1906 to lead the booming Baptist movement.[59] While almost all Philippine Baptist Mission early accounts described Manikan's work, Briggs' subsequent reports removed Manikan's founding role. When Briggs wrote Progressing Philippines, a historical book that included Philippine Baptist missions, he erased Manikan's participation. In the book, Briggs posted his picture with Manikan but did not name Manikan and simply called him an "Upper Visayan helper."[60] According to Kenton Clymer, Briggs justified Manikan's separation in this manner: "Satan has possessed his (Manikan's) heart and his interest in our work has been lost."[61] As with the Pulahan, historical records show very little in the way of what happened to Manikan: both seem to have disappeared.

The Mainstreaming of the Pulahans in the Baptist Lowlands

Despite the Baptist early conflicts and removal of local leadership, the White Baptists continued the strong Baptist movement in Western Visayas. Their churches flourished[62] which supported numerous civic works. [63] Many Baptist churches eventually became active partners in "nation-building."

On January 17, 2020, Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte "recognized the contributions of the Baptist Churches."[64] In 2022, the Philippine Congress passed the National Baptist Day (Republic Act 11897) which recognized the Philippine church's contribution to nation-building."[65]

The Segregation of the Pulahans in the Baptist Highlands

Unbeknownst to the American Missionaries, a small group of Manikan's Pulahan converts escaped back to the mountains proclaiming their new faith. These former Pulahans established their own Baptist community called Calvario (Calvary) in Janiuay, Iloilo.[66] Ranging from 7,934 to 13,000, the "rebels" initially sent a petition dated June 15, 1901 to Manikan and Lund asking that they be allowed to build their own community,[67] a request that the American Baptist leaders rejected.[68]

Restituto Ortigas (secretary of the Convention of Philippine Baptist Churches) reported that the signatories' bulk were members of the "Bolo Battalion," who fought thWe Americans using only bolo, or, big knives.[69] In disagreement, Frank Laubach, a Protestant missionary, argued that those who signed the petition were actually farmers who paid exorbitantly to their friar landlords and were kicked off the land once they converted to Protestantism.[70] The American missionary Peter Lerrigo described the former rebels' journey to the mountain where they built their own Baptist community:

> Many of them were driven from their homes, and they finally solved the problem by withdrawing from the communities in which they had lived and establishing a Protestant village which they appropriately named Calvario. Their leader was a boyish-looking young Filipino by the name of Zamorra. His brother had been executed in Manila in 1874 for advocating liberal education." (Emphasis added)[71]

> The 1902 Baptist Missionary reported that without the Americans' knowledge, people from six towns settled in Calvario.[72] It was described as a Baptist community where they shared amongst themselves and amongst the poor in nearby areas. One of the Indigenous leaders, Pimentel, was reportedly seen in the lowlands "carrying a large bundle of copper pennies ... in order to have [a] piece for each of his own people," a testament to the grassroots orientation of the new community.[73]

In Janiuay, the Calvario Baptists maintained their own humble community, where the Calvario Evangelical Church still stands. They built a small school with parents posting their children's successes in passing local exams. They named their street Golgota, after the hill where their Christ was crucified. They provided health care to their community. Their children engaged in simple sports activities. For special occasions, they feasted and celebrated together as a community.

In July 2012, Calvario Evangelical Church celebrated "11 decades of God's faithfulness" since their "Foundation Day", coinciding with the 1902 time period, which

reinforced the historical accounts of the Pulahans' establishment of their Baptist community in Janiuay.[74]

Why the Pulahans Stopped Fighting

While Philippine Historian Constantino highlighted the commercial reason for Pulahan belligerence, the American Baptists also recognized the spiritual nature of their militancy.[75] Steven Metz offers a framework that encompasses both "spiritual" and "commercial" reasons for insurgencies.[76]

Baptists Did Not Primarily Intend to Pacify Pulahans

Unlike Briggs and Munger,[77] early Baptist leaders zealously evangelized and preached their interpretation of Baptist values. To the benefit of the occupying forces, these sermons aligned with state pacification interests. Manikan, early Filipino pastors, and some American missionaries were intensely committed to converting locals. One Presbyterian missionary unflatteringly called Manikan a "dogmatic zealot."[78] The early pastors were unpaid; these "Briggs helpers" (as they were called) were not supported.[79] Yet they evangelized everywhere.

Other early American missionaries were likewise more concerned with evangelism than pacification. American Missionary Dr. William Valentine brought his family with him and by all accounts focused more on evangelization through education rather than on stopping Pulahan militancy.[80] While some American missionaries like Briggs and Munger might have attempted active pacification,[81] there are no accounts of Manikan or other American missionaries working to "stop the rebellion."

Observed Pacification & Old Comrade Reaction

Numerous sources including contemporary Baptist leaders narrated the story of the Pulahan embracing the American version of Baptist faith. Foreign observers reported the Pulahan's "new way of life," in which rebels went to areas of conflict not to fight, but to start Sunday Schools.[82] Historian Leslie Bauzon reported hearing similar stories of "Negro Pulahans becoming Baptists."[83]

"Insurgents" felt dismayed by the conversion of their former comrades to the Baptist faith.[84] They physically threatened Manikan and the new converts. Many converted insurgents visiting Baptist churches were unable to go home. [85] Lund believed Pulahan insurgents killed Matta, a converted schoolteacher who was translating the Bible into Hiligaynon.[86]

Explaining the End of Hostilities Among Pulahan Converts Baptist Focus on the Grassroots Population

Actions by the American Baptists fit the two sides of the American Counter-Insurgency (COIN) framework (although this model wasn't articulated until later). The COIN war doctrine propounded two programs to quell insurgency: one strategy that focused on the masses (hearts and minds) and one that focused on elites.[87]

To pacify Western Visayas, Philippines, the American occupying forces used an elite-centric strategy. Western Visayas elites benefited from economic incentives such as the global sugar trade, so they embraced American occupation. But this left

out the Pulahan peasants who resisted the Americans. The Filipino Manikan took a hearts-and-minds approach, which focused on winning over the grassroots.

Manikan invited the "dangerous" Pulahans to sleep in his house and engaged with them through the night.[88] The succeeding American Baptists then supplemented this mass-based approach by building dormitories, schools, and hospitals. With this grassroots focus, early on, "90 of Philippine Baptist churches were founded in rural areas."[89]

Baptists Solving the Spiritual & Commercial Reasons for Insurgency

Steven Metz[90] identifies two forms of insurgency: spiritual and commercial. The spiritual, according to Metz, highlights the "search for meaning and the pursuit of justice."[91] Commercial insurgency highlights the "desire for wealth" or material gain.[92] The early Baptists addressed both.

Interpreting Baptist Doctrine as State Submission

Baptist doctrine could be convincingly presented as either espousing state submission or open rebellion. Baptist Martin Luther King Jr., like many Black Baptist civil rights leaders, advocated a nonviolent resistance to oppression.[93] Most American former Baptist slaves were non-violent despite their centuries of oppression.

But on the other hand, Baptist preachers also preached freedom through armed rebellion. On December 1831 in Jamaica, after a Baptist prayer meeting, Baptist leader Samuel Sharpe led a group of slaves to fight their oppression.[94] Called the "Baptist War,"[95] thousands of mostly Baptist slaves who, like the Pulahans, burned sugar cane fields and plantation homes.[96]

Baptist Address of Commercial Demands

Along with the message of peace and submission, the early Philippine Baptists also launched economically beneficial projects which partially addressed Pulahan economic grievances. Early on, Baptist missionaries focused on practical and useful education. On October 1, 1905, the Baptists trained students on agriculture and related industries in the Jaro Industrial School under Missionary Valentine.[97] Over the next two years, the school grew from 20 to 300 students.[98] Courses grew to include carpentry, bookkeeping, teaching, architecture, agriculture,[99] and public speaking. [100] Years later, in 1924, it became the Central Philippine College. Many of their students became the first Filipinos to study in the US like Diamonon who earned a Ph.D. at the University of Iowa and orphaned Lorenzo Parras who earned degrees both in law and medicine in the United States.[101]

Baptists in the Philippines also focused on health and housing. In 1909, the Baptist Missions bought half of the Presbyterian Hospital in Iloilo. [102] In 1910, they treated 2,352 patients with 15,115 treatments.[103] They ran the Mission Hospital in Iloilo City, the Iloilo Training School for Nurses, the Emmanuel Hospital, and the Emmanuel Hospital Training School for Nurses at Roxas.[104] They also started a Woman's Bible Training School to train women. They provided housing for young men and women like the Dunwood Dormitory, the Girl's Dormitory, and Doane Hall.

The author at Calvario Evangelical Church
Calvario is the first Protestant community in the Philippines. Image from the Author

Did the New Baptists Maintain the Pulahan Grassroot Orientation?

Applying Kaufman's framework, we can observe how the Baptist Calvario community in the highlands exhibits the cardinal features of the Pulahan's grassroots orientation. They changed their religion and dropped their militancy. But they maintained the grassroots, self-sustaining nature of the Pulahan movement. However, most of the lowlands Baptists—the majority of the converted—were completely incorporated into the white American Baptist practice and state structure.

Defining a Democratic, Grassroots Community

Kaufman defines grassroots democracies as "organizations at the community level" where the members are empowered. These organizations recognize their community's holistic needs and match available resources to address them; they advance practical innovative solutions; they maintain non-hierarchical governance structures and use expansive decision-making processes that embrace a deeper form of democracy.

James Scott talks about the ungoverned who choose to retreat or stay in the mountains to avoid state control. Professor Tadem provides yet another paradigm for analyzing grassroots democracy as a community structure lying outside of state and formal institutions. Using the above theoretical framework, we see that the early Calvario Baptist movement maintained the Pulahan grassroots orientation by veering away from institutionalized state submission.

Satisfying the Elements of Kauffman, Tadem & Scott for the Pulahan Movement (Before Conversion)

The Pulahan Movement in Western Visayas met Kaufman's criteria for grassroots democracy. They operated at the community level. They articulated a holistic concept of their needs that embraced the political, cultural, and economic. They lived in the mountains. They had their own culture that preexisted Western influence. Their strong resistance against the Spaniards and then the Americans demonstrated their collective political will. Finally, they pursued a return to their self-sufficient lifestyle independent of the Western Visayas elites.

As remote people who wanted to have their own political, cultural, and economic demands, they clearly satisfied Scott's framework of being ungoverned. Analyzed from a non-state-centric approach, they wanted to be left alone though forced to engage with state subjugating forces. As an American missionary described them, they were "mountain savages" with their own beliefs.

Satisfying the Elements of Kauffman, Tadem & Scott for the Baptist Calvario Movement (After Conversion)

The Calvario Baptist movement maintained the key elements of a grassroots organization. They rebuilt a community in January. Their holistic approach transcended simple political demands and had cultural and economic dimensions. When kicked out of their lands, they adjusted and adapted by using a nearby mountain land for their own use. Their hierarchy was different from other religious structures. They did not report to anyone in Manila nor to the US. Using Scott's framework, we saw them creating their own barrio in the mountains of Januiay, Iloilo away from state intervention.

Conclusion—Grassroot Adaptation

The study here presents an example of grassroots adaptability. The Western Visayas Pulahan movement was a grassroots organization that belligerently challenged state control. The elites and their allies belittled their Indigenous lifestyle. In this context, we saw Manikan embracing and converting the Pulahans and in the process his alignment with the American Baptists pacified them. The little-known existence of the Baptist Calvario evangelical community demonstrates how a hunted militant organization adapted to the American Baptist faith while sustaining its original grassroots orientation and refusing to assimilate to the state-aligned lowland Baptist Church. Their existence also provides a possible answer to the question of what happened to the Pulahans.

Notes

1. Alternately referred to as "Babaylanes" or "Pulahanes" but will be referred to as Pulahans collectively in the paper. Pulahan means Red in the Philippine language.

2. Based on the Counter Insurgency US Military Doctrine.

3. Steven Metz Dr., *The Future of Insurgency* (US Army War College Press, 1993), https://press.armywarcollege.edu/monographs/275

4. Michael Kaufman, "Community power, grassroots democracy, and the transformation of social life," in *Community Power, Grassroots Democracy: The Transformation of Social Life,* eds. Michael Kaufman and Harold Dilla Alfonso (London and New Jersey: Zed Books, 1997).

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The World Was My Garden

Christopher Joshua Benton

"Welcome to Mecca, California" 12-minute documentary film. Used date boxes, wood

Artist Christopher Joshua Benton shares research, poetry, and installation images for his exhibition "The World Was My Garden," presented at the Venice Biennale and Abu Dhabi Art.

The date in the Arab world has important cultural, social, and religious history. During Ramadan, one breaks their fast with dates and water. In the Quran, the date is a holy fruit, ordained by Muhammad himself. There's a Mesopotamian proverb that comes to mind too: 'A house with a date palm will never starve.'

A global frenzy for dates created an international supply chain that extended from the shores of East Africa where Black people were kidnapped; to Zanzibar, where Africans were transported to the world's last major slave port; to the Trucial States where slaves did the arduous work of hand-pollinating, cultivating, and watering dates; to Western markets, where Orientalist narratives and sexualized imagery were used to sell dates en masse.

The exhibition "The World Was My Garden," centers these labor histories, using the palm tree as a metaphor for migration, labor economies, and the history of slavery in the Arabian Gulf. Charting a path from Zanzibar, to the UAE, and finally to the United States, the show takes as a point of departure the coercion of the the date palm as it probes into issues of the archive, lost genealogies, and American identity politics.

Combining film, installation, and sculpture, the show juxtaposes two stories: how the date palm led to the height of the Indian Ocean slave trade around the turn of the 20th century—and how that same palm tree ended up in California, which today is one of the largest producers of dates.

To think about the buried Blackness of the body politic of the Emirati body is also a way to think of the labor of the South Asian immigrants who grow dates in the UAE today and the people who help run the city at large.

The centerpiece of the exhibition is "Our Plant Immigrants," named after a *National Geographic* essay by David Fairchild, who was the first man to successfully bring the date palm to America. Starring a 5-meter tall medjoul date tree that's suspended in the air, the staging begs for a reconsideration of the date tree as a manifestation of capital: to see the date as an agricultural product that has the agency to move bodies and enforce ideas.
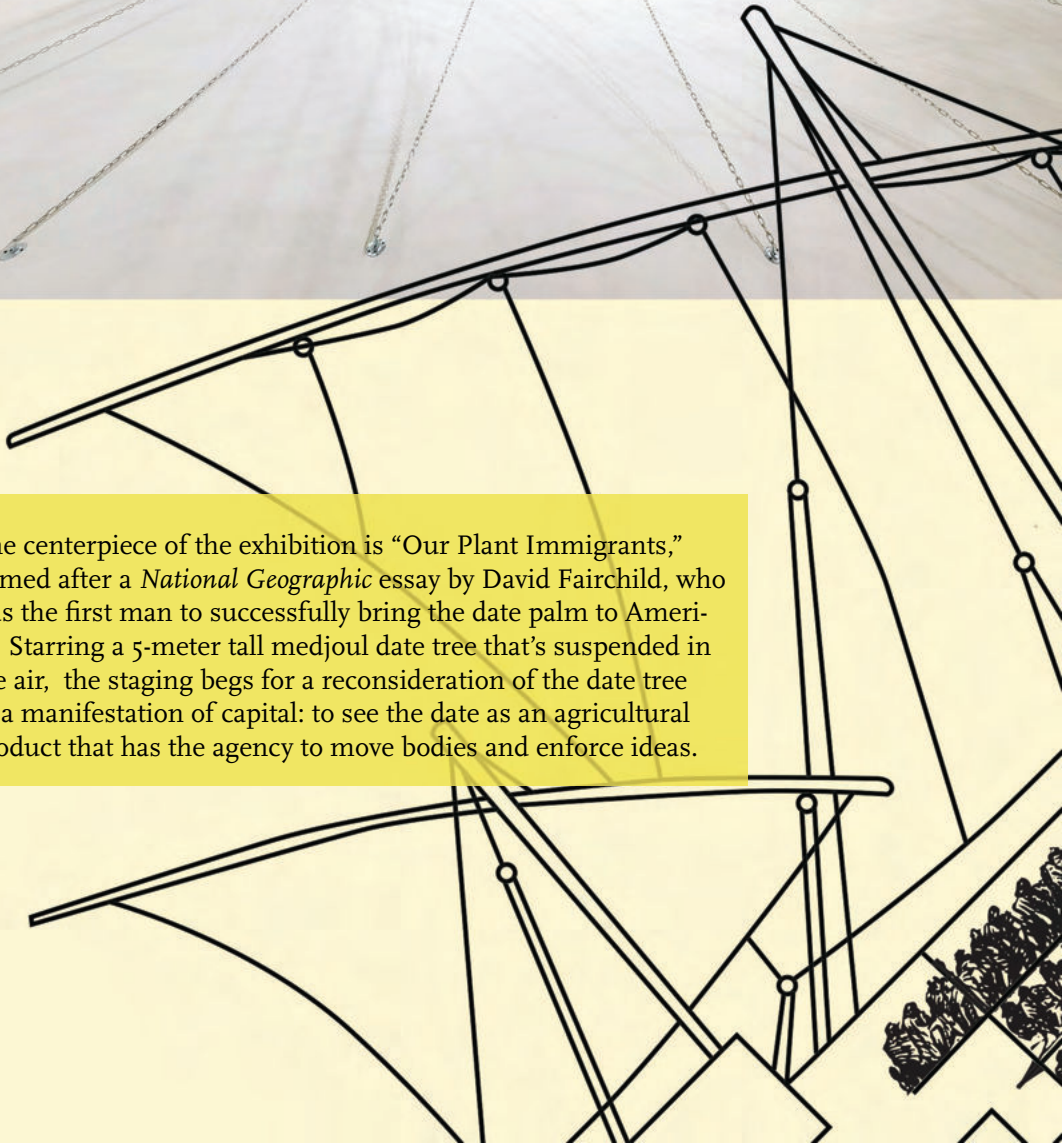
ROMANCE *Theatre*
Free CONTINUOUS
ROMANCE AND SEX LIFE
OF THE DATE
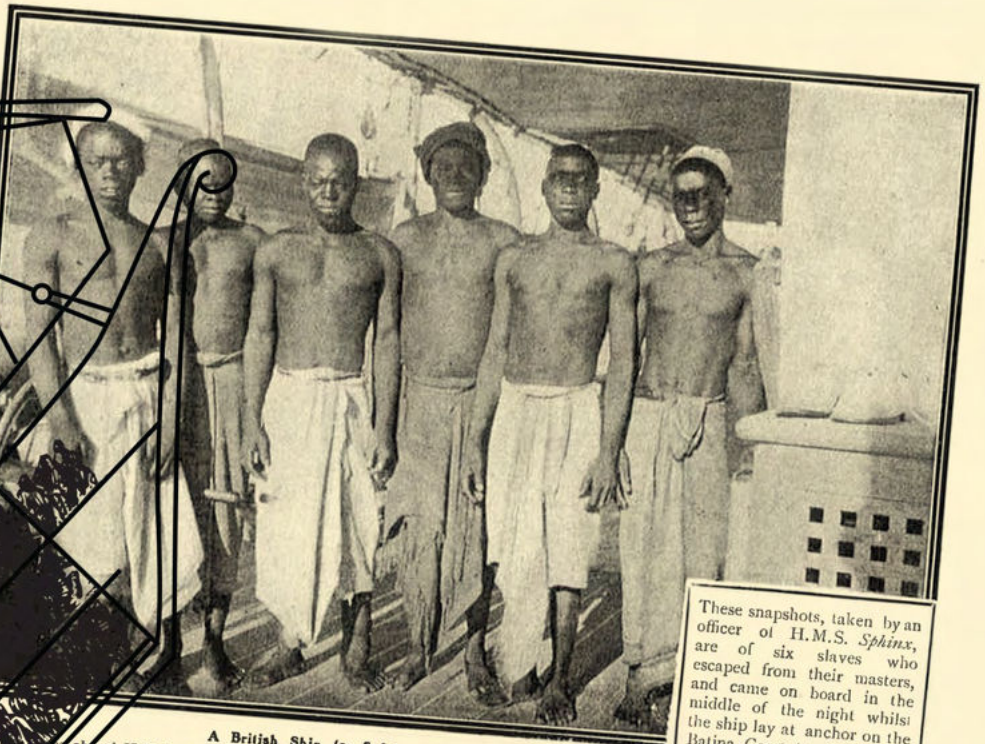
A British Ship for Safety

...aboard H.M.S. *Sphinx*, to which they had escaped. ...ave on the extreme left. The iron has been removed from his other foot. Note leg-iron on left foot

These snapshots, taken by an officer of H.M.S. *Sphinx*, are of six slaves who escaped from their masters, and came on board in the middle of the night whilst the ship lay at anchor on the Batina Coast (to the North-West of Muscat). Three came on board at one village and three at another. In the lower photograph they are reading, or rather studying, the pictures in THE BYSTANDER. You will notice they have been rigged up in odd garments by the men, who took a very great interest in them, as slaves are a very rare thing nowadays

"Black, Blonde, & Brunette Dates" 2021. Medjoul date from California, UV-printed wood

The Men Who Climb The Date Palm

At mating season, date palms sprout pollen into bright golden cones

Yellow like turmeric and fennel
mashed to make *ras el hanout*. The kind your aunt used to make
tagine, your favorite.

Have you ever seen anything as beautiful as a date's flowers?

Coiled and knotty
like Afro hair—
And loose, too
washed and conditioned,
lovingly combed, root to tip
like the mane of some African-creole
Sure you're Black but you gotta be mixed with *something*

Have you ever smelled a date oasis in blossom?

Sweet,
but not treacly
Not the perfume of a grandmother, but your memory of her

Have you ever climbed the palm to get the date?

Stills from "The Kite Has Come" 2021. 9-minute multi-channel film

Reparations: Paha Sapa, US v. Sioux Nation & Policy Today

Molly Crane

> The tribes of the Great Sioux Nation have steadfastly refused a money settlement for the illegal taking of the Black Hills, which they consider the sacred center place of their creation. The tribes have repeatedly stated that the Black Hills aren't for sale. No case more clearly illustrates the ongoing collision of worldviews between the First Peoples of this land and the settler colonists [than *US v. Sioux Nation*].[1]
> — Daniel R. Wildcat

Reparations involves repairing, healing, and restoring in response to both past and present wrongs.[2] Reparations necessitates a nexus between the harm and the remedy and requires that impacted people have a central voice in determining the path to healing.[3] *United States v. Sioux Nation* amplifies central concerns about the meaning of reparations and the role of people harmed in defining this healing. The experiences of the Sioux in seeking reparations also provide insights into current reparations efforts, such as the Housing Reparations Ordinance in Evanston, Illinois, and the necessity of centering impacted communities.

Land Relationship

"The seventh spirit brought the Black Hills as a whole--brought it to the Lakota forever, for all eternity, not only in this life, but in the life hereafter. The two are tied together. Our people that have passed on, their spirits are contained in the Black Hills. This is why it is the center of the universe, and this is why it is sacred to the Oglala Sioux. In this life and the life hereafter, the two are together."

Lakota oral history narrates that the Sioux are descendants of Pte Oyate (Buffalo People) who emerged from *Paha Sapa* (also known as *He Sapa)*; since this emergence from the Hills, the Sioux have inhabited the area and engaged with the Black Hills for physical, social, and spiritual reasons.[4] Oral history further articulates that the seven spirits endowed the Sioux with Paha Sapa for all eternity and the spirits of the Sioux, living and deceased, are within the Black Hills.[5] For generations, the Sioux depended on the Black Hills for sustenance, from buffalo, deer, and sheep to healing medicines; the Hills additionally provided materials for shelter and firewood.[6] The Sioux also related with the Black Hills spiritually, with religious ceremonies documented as early as 500 B.C.[7] In the multiplicity of connections weaving the Sioux and Paha Sapa together, the Black Hills are the "birthplace" of Sioux culture and are deeply intertwined with Sioux identity.[8] The dynamic between the Sioux and the Black Hills is a "lived-relationship."[9] Throughout history, the Sioux centered the importance of this lived relationship and the necessity of full access to the land to support this relationship.

Figure 1.
Black Hills, South Dakota. View from Black Elk Peak (previously Harney Peak)
Navin75, CC BY-SA 2.0 https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0. Wikimedia Commons

Attempts by the US to Sever the Relationship

"Our sacred Black Hills have also been damaged. Miners have made a big hole and no matter what, we cannot repair it or even replace it."[10]

The Sioux protected the Black Hills as a sacred space as the US attempted to make numerous incursions into the land cared for by the Sioux.[11] When the US continued to pursue expansion in the West through erasure of Indigenous tribes, the Sioux and other tribes resisted these invasions to preserve both their relationship with the Black Hills and their sovereignty.[12] Evidenced by the 1868 Treaty of Fort Laramie, maintaining this land relationship was of the utmost spiritual, tangible, and cultural importance for the Sioux. Though this 1868 Treaty required tribes to sacrifice other land that the US previously promised to recognize as Indigenous in earlier treaties, it also established critical provisions with respect to the Black Hills.[13] Article II delineates the Black Hills as "set apart for the *absolute and undisturbed use and occupation* of the Indians herein named."[14] The 1868 Treaty also established procedural protections with respect to future proposed changes in land:

> No treaty for the cession of any portion or part of the reservation
> herein described which may be held in common, shall be of any
> validity or force as against the said Indians unless *executed and signed
> by at least three-fourths* of all the adult male Indians occupying or
> interested in the same.[15]

Shortly thereafter, the US pursued numerous means to confiscate the land that the 1868 Treaty of Fort Laramie recognized as Sioux.

The US employed acts of tangible, spiritual, and cultural harm in seeking to sever the relationship between the Sioux and the Black Hills.[16] One such method was overt violence—the US Army attempted to invade the Black Hills in 1876, and the Sioux won a resounding victory led by Sitting Bull in the Battle of Little Bighorn.[17] After this defeat, the US tried a different but familiar method: attaching a rider to the Indian Appropriations Act of 1876, which required the Sioux to surrender the Black Hills promised to them in the 1868 Treaty, or else cease receiving subsistence appropriations from the United States.[18] The rider reads "hereafter, there shall be no appropriation made for the subsistence of said Indians, unless they shall first agree to relinquish all right and claim [to the Black Hills]."[19] This rider became known as the "Sell or Starve Act," as it forced the Sioux to choose between bodily survival and their continued stewardship of the Black Hills. In light of the US' systematic deprivations for over one hundred years, such rations became critical to the Sioux's survival.[20]

Premised upon lies by the US, government representatives presented a new treaty—drafted and solely in English—which provided that the Sioux would surrender the Black Hills and additional land to the West in "exchange" for the provision of subsistence goods.[21] Despite the 1868 Treaty of Fort Laramie's requirement that any abrogation of the treaty requires three-fourths of adult male Sioux to agree, only ten percent signed the agreement.[22] Those who signed stated they did so out of desperation, in an attempt to help their people survive.[23] Congress ratified this agreement under the title of the "1877 Act," severing the Sioux from Paha Sapa physically, culturally, socially, and spiritually.[24]

In violating these treaties, the US not only attempted to separate the Sioux from the Black Hills; the US tangibly harmed the sacred land. Once the US stole the Black Hills, miners "attacked the earth" for over 125 years, seizing its gold.[25] Further, an artist aligned with the Ku Klux Klan used jackhammers and dynamite to carve the faces of white oppressors into Stone Mountain.[26] The sculptor claimed to "assert white possession, not just over the Black Hills but over the entire continent," with figures like George Washington, another plunderer of Indigenous land.[27]

US v. Sioux Nations

"The Sioux have maintained ever since that the treaty ratified by the 1877 Act was invalid for several reasons, including the insufficient number of signatures, the coercive nature of the negotiations, and, crucially, because the Black Hills were never for sale...The Black Hills—The Heart of Everything That Is—are profoundly sacred to the Sioux, central to both their creation story and their identity as a people."[28]

The US caused "great erosions of religion, culture, and self-government" to the Sioux through harming their relationship with the Black Hills.[29] In resistance to the illegal 1877 Act, the Sioux organized to seek the return and healing of their relationship with Paha Sapa, which continue to this day and span protest, prayer circles, lobbying, and leveraging international law.[30] As early as the 1920s, legal avenues pursued by attorneys with monied interests, and the money-based legal remedies available, conflicted with the aims of the Sioux to seek return of the land.[31]

US v. Sioux Nation demonstrated how the US' exclusion of those harmed in decision-making about healing meant that forums for reparations neither recog-

nized the particular harms the Sioux experienced, nor the solutions they desired.[32] The US created the Indian Claims Commission (ICC) to "dispose of" and "extinguish" long-standing claims of tribes against the US government, with remedies limited to monetary compensation—*not* return of land.[33] The Sioux received special jurisdiction from ICC to bring a claim for violation of the 1868 Treaty; in 1979, the ICC held that the US seizure of the Black Hills violated the Fifth Amendment, writing "a more ripe and rank case of dishonorable dealings will never, in all probability, be found in our history."[34] The Supreme Court in 1980 upheld the ICC ruling: the US engaged in wrongful taking by "dishonorably" seizing the Black Hills from the Sioux, and the Sioux were due "just compensation."[35] Both decisions awarded monetary compensation, in opposition to the cultural, spiritual, communal harms named by the Sioux and the Sioux' sought remedy (return of the Black Hills). Even while surviving extreme poverty as a result of US policies, the Sioux tribal council voted unanimously in 1980 to refuse the financial award of $106 million: the healing they desired was full reunion with the Black Hills.[36] The funds now stand over $1 billion, as the Sioux continue to maintain that the only suitable reparations is return of the land.[37] As articulated by Matthew King, Fools Crow, and Kills Enemy, "there can only be one settlement for the Black Hills. The Black Hills must be immediately returned to the rightful owners, the Lakota people."[38]

This decision demonstrates the failure of hegemonic structures to recognize the multiplicity of harms named by the Sioux, and the resultant incongruence when these structures craft remedies without centering Sioux voices. The "*Sioux Nation* decision failed to deliver justice to the Great Sioux Nation," as return of the land is the "only course of action capable of escaping the dual evils of environmental colonialism and ethnocide."[39]

Reparations Today: Evanston Housing Reparations Ordinance

In November of 2019, the City Council in Evanston, Illinois passed a Housing Reparations Ordinance by a vote of 8-1.[40] Designed to address the decades of redlining in the city that discriminated against Black residents, the ordinance drew from taxes required of cannabis dispensaries to provide recipients with $25,000 for use solely in home ownership, home improvement, and mortgage assistance.[41] Although the politically blue city experienced little pushback about the idea of reparations, some Black residents resisted the program's processes and implementation limitations.[42]

During the legislative process, Black Evanstonians expressed concerns about the small amount of funds allocated and the inability of recipients to receive cash payments or other forms of relief.[43] Only 44% of Black people in Evanston currently own their homes and at least 16% live below the poverty level.[44] Despite these concerns, the City Council made no responsive changes to the ordinance as written. Alderwoman Cicely Fleming, who is Black, was the lone nay voter to the ordinance.[45] Though she vocalized support for reparations, she stated that the program that passed was not in fact reparations as it did not allow people harmed to dictate what healing should look like.[46]

Nearly three years after the implementation of the reparations ordinance, only 16 Black Evanstonians have since actually received funds.[47] Even beneficiaries of this program have been unable to afford their down payments, and 5 beneficiaries have died while waiting for their promised reparations packages to be dispersed.[48]

Conclusion

As demonstrated in both *US v. Sioux Nation* and the Evanston reparations ordinance, failure to center the voices of people harmed by systemic injustices does not heal and restore these wrongs as reparations requires. Both the Sioux and Black communities in Evanston have continued to rise up in pursuit of true reparations, including through land return, spiritual restoration, and policy changes. As entities seek to repair harm through reparations, impacted communities must be at the center of change.

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Harvard University Maps Archive

The Space Between Truth & Repair
A Conversation with Dr. Sara Bleich on the Harvard & the Legacy of Slavery Initiative

Courtney Howard

Sara Bleich, the inaugural Vice Provost for Special Projects at Harvard University, leads the implementation phase of the Harvard & the Legacy of Slavery (H&LS) Initiative. This role marks her return to Harvard after serving in key positions in the Biden Administration including Director of Nutrition Security and Health Equity at the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), as well as Senior Advisor for COVID-19 in the Office of the Secretary at USDA. When discussing similarities between Harvard and Washington, DC, Sara describes "Like Harvard, everything in DC turns on relationships. To get things done, you have to work through people, not around people, and you have to really generate buy-in." Using the recommendations included in the *Report of the Presidential Committee on Harvard & the Legacy of Slavery* as "a north star," Sara and her team are paving the path forward on University-wide reparative efforts.

Courtney Howard, Mid-Career Master in Public Administration '23, Co-Editor-in-Chief of ARPJ, and member of the H&LS Initiative, interviewed Sara about her work. In their discussion, Sara, a Harvard graduate (PhD, Health Policy), shared how the report has both impacted and motivated her.

This interview has been edited for brevity and clarity.

Courtney Howard: How did you feel when Harvard revealed its findings in the *Report of the Presidential Committee on Harvard & the Legacy of Slavery* last spring?

Sara Bleich: I think it was said best by a colleague here at Harvard, "for some people, they read the report, and they said, 'water is wet.' And for some people, it was a huge surprise." My reaction to the report was "water is wet" in the sense that, of course, Harvard has a legacy of slavery because this institution is almost 400 years old. But what was impressive to me was that Harvard wasn't just doing an intellectual exercise; instead, leadership was saying, let's take these very difficult truths and put our own resources behind reparative work. It makes me proud to call this my graduate home and to work on this initiative because it is not only an opportunity for Harvard to do good, but also a chance for Harvard to create an example of how to do this work well–and then hopefully inspire many other universities and colleges to do the same. That has the potential to create very positive ripple effects for communities that have been historically disadvantaged.

CH: What steps do you think are necessary to ensure the reparative process goes beyond symbolism and effectively builds trust?

SB: We have to be humble. We have to listen and take the time to hear concerns, be honest about what is possible, and not promise things that can't happen. We must also take the time to earn that trust, to let folks know we're serious, and to generally bring them along on the arc that this initiative is taking us. Establishing buy-in and trust will take time, but ultimately, it will accelerate our progress.

CH: Are there any key stakeholder communities that should have a more central role in the H&LS Initiative moving forward?

SB: Yes, engaging with the perspectives of communities directly or indirectly affected by slavery is crucial in this context as well as collaborating with Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and other minority-serving institutions. There is immense potential and unexplored opportunities in these areas.

Our success lies in prioritizing the individuals we aim to benefit, rather than centering Harvard in the work. While it is essential to engage with faculty, staff, students, leadership, and alumni, we must also dedicate time to connect with individuals beyond the Harvard community, including Cambridge and Boston. Within these groups, it is crucial to identify key individuals and generate their trust and willingness to collaborate. Building these relationships may be challenging, as some individuals might approach our initiative with a healthy amount of cynicism due to past experiences or doubts about our intentions and genuine commitment. I am confident that by earning people's trust, we can unleash creativity and achieve meaningful progress.

> ## Our success lies in prioritizing the individuals we aim to benefit, rather than centering Harvard in the work.

CH: Has the lack of diversity among the student body, faculty, and leadership at Harvard influenced your experience at the institution?

SB: When it comes to diversity, Harvard has excelled in some areas but less so in others. The selection of Dean Gay to become the 30th President of Harvard is historic. There is also increasing diversity among senior leadership around the University. However, there is still significant work to be done in diversifying faculty. For example, I know some departments have no tenured Black faculty members and I believe that may also be the case for some schools. Consequently, our student body is more diverse than our faculty, leading to tensions related to language, culture, teaching, and pedagogy.

In terms of how this has influenced my experience, it has made me deliberate about making space and time for Black and Brown faculty and students who want to connect. I am fortunate to have had a very positive experience here at Harvard, but that is not the case for everyone. So, I try to do my small part to build community and hopefully enrich the experiences of others.

CH: After the report was published last spring, classmates from all over the world shared articles in different languages. Do you feel the pressure of being in the spot-

light as Harvard sets the standard for this type of reparative work?

SB: Doing this work at an elite institution like Harvard naturally attracts attention, and when we act, people observe us closely. It certainly creates pressure, but it's good pressure. There are over 60 colleges and universities around the United States and beyond that are engaging in similar inquiries and examining their historical connections to slavery. Here at Harvard, we are fortunate to have both committed financial resources to do this reparative work (which is not common) and strong support from top leadership. This will help us chart a path forward that can hopefully serve as an example to others.

CH: Speaking of resources, you've mentioned this is an outward-facing initiative in a lot of ways. What, then, are you doing for the Harvard community?

SB: That's correct. The vast majority of the $100 million endowed investment from the University is not meant to benefit Harvard. That said, this legacy of slavery belongs to everyone at Harvard, so we are investing time in educating folks across the University about where we've been, where we're going, what we're trying to achieve, and how they can get involved. We hope that arming our faculty, staff, students, and alumni with this knowledge encourages them to integrate social justice into their future work.

CH: Any last words for our readers?

SB: My core message to readers is that often the most important things to do are not the easiest. But they often matter most. And this work matters. I encourage readers to consider both small and large actions they can take to help address the needs of historically underserved individuals. Think comprehensively about how you can contribute, even in small ways, to promote progress in this area. We will all reap the benefits of a stronger, healthier, and more empowered community.

And to current students, I want to emphasize that having a degree from this institution is a significant privilege, regardless of wealth or connections. A Harvard degree brings great opportunities for success. I have every confidence that you will do well but also hope that you try to do good knowing the legacy of slavery at Harvard. And remember that you can make a difference through small actions, whether in the private or public sector, since they all add up to something bigger. So, please lean in!
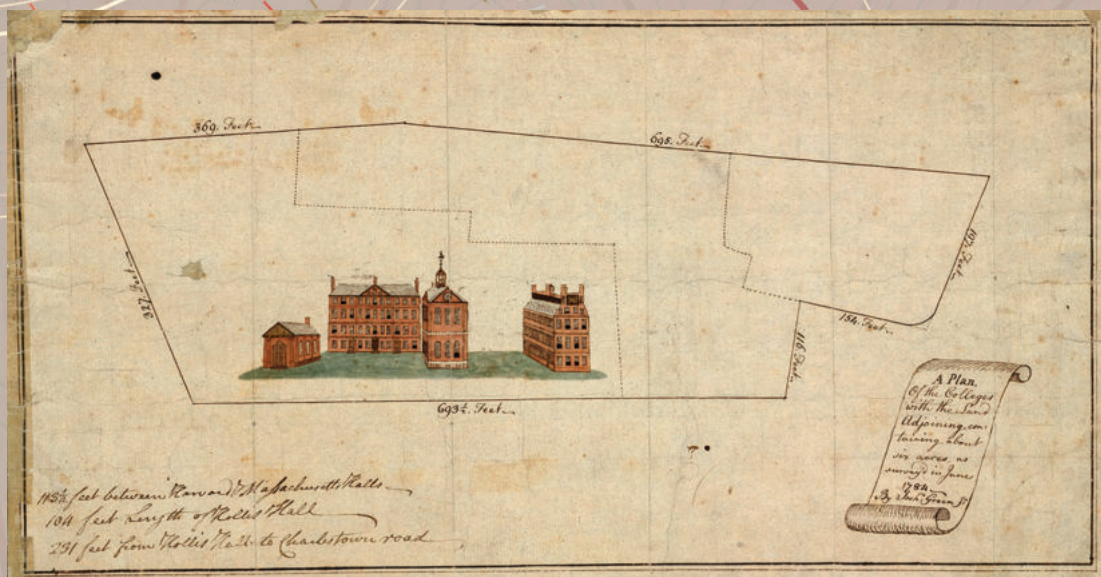
Plan of Harvard College, drawn in 1784 by the student Joshua Green, shows the main student buildings on campus—Holden Chapel, Hollis Hall, Harvard Hall (III), and Massachusetts Hall—all of which were built in the era when enslaved people worked on the campus and still stand today. HUV 2181 Folder 4, Harvard University Archives

Embracing Uncertainty
A Paradigm Shift for Anti-Racist Technology Policy Design

Dr. Anandana Kapur

> I can land on the moon
> But can't sing a tune
> I have no need for sleep
> I have no dreams to keep
> — Rachel Wahlert

I have a simple motto—when in doubt turn to poetry. Wahlert's poem *To Be Understood* is a reminder that we may have lost sight of what really matters. It's refrain— "Open me up, see what's inside...All my makings are tested and tried"—is ironic because it is precisely that kind of scrutiny which policymakers are unable to pursue.[1] Despite dazzling technological advancements, we may be overlooking important values and considerations because of the narrowness of the decision-making matrix we currently rely on. In this piece, I argue that to ensure ethical and equitable technology policy, we need to address the intersection between the techno-social and issues of race, gender, and power. We must also strive to actively identify and discard proxies for which prevent policy design from safeguarding the throughlines of inclusion, equity, and justice.[2] This would require adopting a decolonial framework that deconstructs worldviews and power structures that are normalized in computational algorithms. Assumptions and values that underpin techno-capitalism often ignore the lived experiences and perspectives of Indigenous peoples, people of color, and historically marginalized groups. By acknowledging that colonial legacies of imperialism, racism, and exploitation continue to impact regulatory oversight of technology policy, we may be able to create space for more equitable and ethical transformation of the status quo.

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Algorithmic Flaws & Human Lives

A recent investigative piece *This Algorithm Could Ruin Your Life,* exposes how an AI-powered welfare fraud detection program in Rotterdam, Netherlands unfairly identifies underserved and vulnerable individuals as 'high risk'.[3] The plotline is predictable: Inputs such as gender, marital status, and neighborhoods are used to determine an individual's risk level in the algorithm. However, these machine interpretations of social workers' notes can unfairly flag underserved and vulnerable individuals as 'high risk'. The absence of empathy and failure to account for and research the socio-cultural, racial, and economic complexities is the perfect recipe for wrongful denial of access to critical welfare benefits such as subsidized housing, healthcare, food, and employment to historically underserved communities.

Exposés such as Drage, & Mackereth, Human Rights Watch, and Buolomwini & Gebru demonstrate the high cost of relying solely on technology for decision-making. If we prioritize technical efficiency and productivity over addressing

structural biases, future generations will suffer from their compounded effects.[4] Tech and policy decisions are intertwined with power structures, making it crucial for creators and policymakers to consider the effects and affordances for communities while planning product policy and governance standards.

Replacing iterative stakeholder mapping with automation tools that promise efficiency can be risky. If these tools are too simplistic or reductionist, they can lead to implicit biases and failed civic engagement. When extrapolated to other aspects of state influence, such as law and order, literacy, transportation, and consensus-building, the implications of being a victim of technologically amplified biases are devastating. This situation can be compared to watching wildfires from space—the damage may not be immediately apparent, but it is still widespread and interconnected.

Collapsing the Oppression vs. Optimism Binary

While it is clear that the social and individual costs of inaction (even delayed action) in policy circles will likely be staggering, who absorbs the burden of making explicit how technology and social biases intersect? Traditionally, it has been artists, social scientists, philosophers, and political activists (Yup, those non-STEM folks) whose domain it has been to articulate and push for decolonization as a methodology for expressing care and initiating co-creative policy design. Today, we must create cross-disciplinary, formal bodies like commissions, regulatory bodies, and oversight boards to enable a 360-degree view of the pitfalls and potential of contemporary technology – technology that is beguilingly pervasive, and distractingly immersive. Depending on levels of ownership and spheres of influence, this same technology can both encourage and endanger alternate expressions, subcultures, and minority voices.

We tend to approach the problems and promises of technology through two mindsets—*oppression* and *optimism*. "Oppression refers to the vast and deep injustices some groups suffer as a consequence of often unconscious assumptions and reactions of well-meaning people in ordinary interactions, media and cultural stereotypes, and structural features of bureaucratic hierarchies and market mechanisms—in short, the normal processes of everyday life."[5] The oppression framework acknowledges historical and systemic inequalities in culture, technology, and policy systems. While this lens is valuable for decolonizing digital spaces, critics may argue that focusing solely on fissures in the system may shift valuable attention away from the positive aspects of community building and organizing that marginalized individuals and groups experience in existing techno-social spaces. An optimistic framework, on the other hand, requires us to invest in the idea that, "...we have the power to create the right institutions for generating, selecting, and creating material technologies, and acting on that belief in a cautious and sensible manner can make it more likely that the good will prevail over the bad."[6] Collapsing these binaries of oppression and optimism by initiating dialogue with diverse stakeholders, cross-pollinating best practices, and connecting abstractions to the nuts and bolts of technological processes and artifacts allows elbow room within technological totality.

I believe, the Chomskian prescription—optimism as an opportunity for direct action to shape futures that inspire us—offers a bridge to a future with increased autonomy for the people who need it the most.[7]

Taming the Beast—Immersive, Intelligent & Allegedly Neutral

The digital spaces we create and communicate in are vulnerable to discrimination, racism and dismissal of marginalized groups' experiences.[8] Events such as photos of Black individuals being tagged as gorillas in facial recognition software relay the lack of diversity-exposure that creators of intelligent ecosystems i.e. devices and software have.[9] When biases are not explicitly pointed out, we normalize them and make the task of addressing consequent harms more difficult. Accidents, bot-melt-downs, and hallucinations (output that is coherent and seems plausible but is factu-ally incorrect) are often the result of a lack of thoughtful moderation at the design and conceptualization stages.

In the case of immersive technology (augmented/virtual/mixed/extended), the deployment and perpetuation of racial and cultural stereotypes is even more insid-ious.[10] Awareness of the detrimental impact of Eurocentric virtual worlds demands bringing nuance to the historical, ideological, and cartographic aspects of colonial and post-colonial technological apparatus. A solution for humanizing existing vir-tual worlds and experiences could be writing in all the obvious, missed opportuni-ties. For instance, immersive experiences can also be used to overcome bystander impassivity by allowing for users to access content and experiences from diverse cultures, images, soundscapes, and experiences. According to makers of the VR game *On the Plane*, which seeks to dismantle xenophobia by asking users to assume culturally diverse ava-tars and make decisions from an emplaced point of view, "[c]omputationally supported roleplaying games have the potential to promote success-ful perspective taking."[11] Such examples suggest that tech-

Racial equity in tech policies also govern anti-racist artistic expressions by influencing how content is produced, distributed, and consumed via digital platforms and applications.

nology can be deployed ethically with the appropriate research and iterations. Immersive technology can also enable knowledge-making institutions like uni-versities and museums to visualize data points and present narratives that "en-gage with difficult topics" like race and exclusion in physical spaces that are traditionally dominated by mostly white and hetero-normative narratives.[12]

Policymakers, I'm sure, are cognizant of the fact that access to hardware, soft-ware, and literacy needs to be democratized sooner than later to facilitate mass dig-ital literacy. Digital environments can both be anathema and panacea for anti-rac-ism unless we actively secure conditions for it to remain the latter. Racial equity in tech policies also govern anti-racist artistic expressions by influencing how content is produced, distributed, and consumed via digital platforms and applications. In-tellectual property rights, censorship guidelines, and cultural representation are all socio-technical subject matters. How we engage with and represent myriad realities in a mire of digital echo chambers and mis/disinformation is as much an artist's, activist's, and technologists' concern. Digital-creative-destruction, i.e., the disman-tling of old processes with innovation in technology has led to, "...incessant mu-tation within the arts and culture sector as well as its outward impacts in politics,

business, and society at large."[13] Technology is a space for phenomenal exploration, energy, and commonality; it is also mired by contradictions, power brokering, manipulation, and engineering. Digital platforms' complicity in amplifying fake news, hate speech, and conspiracy theories signals their susceptibility as tools for oppressive ideologies. To mediate, we need to ensure that 'diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice' are more than just specious jargon.

Embracing Uncertainty in Policy Design

We need a pragmatic shift in the way policymakers, regulators, and businesses strive to deliver the benefits of technology to communities. Technology policy should draw upon data and insights from other policy areas to be anti-racist and reflect the needs of diverse communities. "Regulatory sandboxes that recognize that a framework of certainty may not be the best" are a potential way forward.[14] By enabling real-time testing of innovations with regulatory oversight, policymakers can assess if technologies being proposed by the marketplace have the potential to strike the requisite balance between innovation and inclusion. Such real-time assessments could be immediately and practically applied to the smart city tech that relies on sensors and digital platforms to collect data on quality-of-life indicators to inform decision-making. Further, such sandboxes can facilitate buy-in from businesses in securing solutions to the socio-cultural challenges posed by technology.

Increased communication across policy domains, on insights from technology, can reduce friction in evolving technology policy to be sensitive to the realities of discrimination and unequal access in peoples' lives. To achieve accountability, it's important to have clear protocols and non-compliance with inclusivity standards through mediation, compensation, fines, and public disclosure of redressal mechanisms. For example, New York Law 144 of 2021 mandates the auditing of Automated Employment Decision Tools (AEDT) to detect biases in hiring. This law emerged from a series of consultative dialogues and imposes civil penalties for non-compliance, including external auditing of software.[15] But the work is far from done as clarity on the nuts and bolts of oversight within companies and within the regulatory landscape will take many iterations and revisions. Auditing benchmarks and auditor skill-building mechanisms remain vague in the current version. Regular updates to tech policies and standards, alongside technology innovation, are therefore essential for good technological governance. Finally, diverse voices must be included in the development of anti-racist technology, exemplified in the accompanied visualization "Anti-Racist Tech Policy Design" (Fig. 1).

- *Temporal outlook*: The policy focus can be refined based on a temporal perspective that bridges past needs, secures current benefits, and frames future investments and priorities. Location and context may require different permutations of these temporal perspectives.
- *Decision forensics*: Map who was consulted at each stage of automation and the determine the processes for assigning ownership of reviews, assessments, and subsequent redesign. This helps to ensure accountability and transparency in decision-making.
- *Digital equity*: Facilitate sustainable community authorship of digital reform through public literacy programs across policy domains. This will help promote digital equity and ensure that communities are substantively empowered to participate in shaping technology policies.
- *Urban redesign*: Code-transparency in data generation for decision-making and resource-allocation for cities and non-urban spaces in terms of surveil-
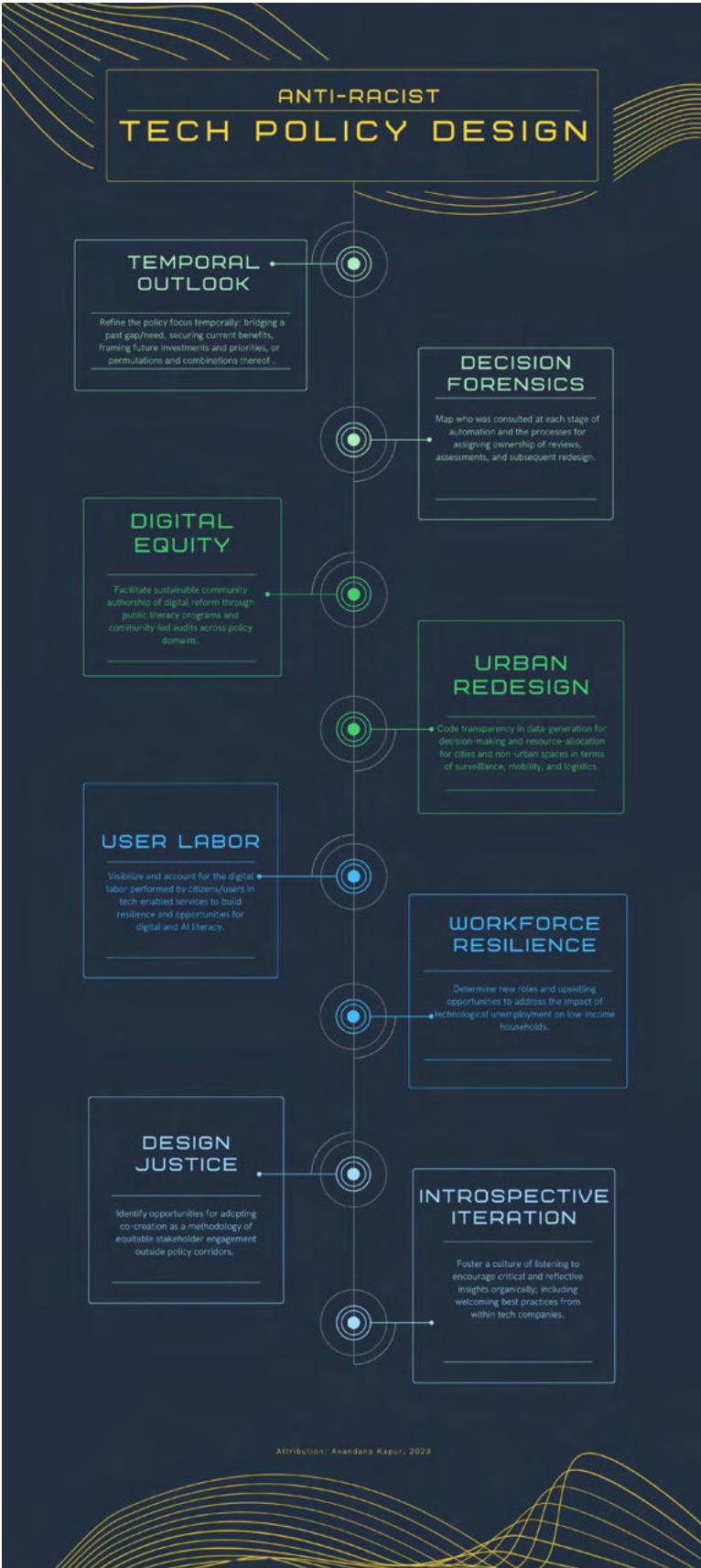
Figure 1
Empowering communities through anti-racist technology policies: key principles for action. 2023. Anandana Kapur

lance, mobility, and logistics. This, can help ensure that these spaces are designed in ways that are equitable and responsive to the needs of diverse communities.

- *User labor:* Visibilize and account for the digital labor performed by citizens and tech users. This can help build resilience in navigating the impact of digital access on their lives and ensure that users are recognized for their contributions to technology.
- *Workforce resilience*: Determine new roles and upskilling opportunities to address the impact of technological unemployment on low-income households. This can help promote workforce resilience and ensure that individuals have access to the skills and resources they need to adapt to changing labor markets.
- *Design justice*: Identify opportunities for adopting co-creation as a methodology of equitable stakeholder engagement—outside policy corridors. This can help ensure that technology policies are designed in ways that are just, while reflective of the perspectives and needs of diverse stakeholders.
- *Introspective iteration*: Foster a culture of listening for critical and reflective insights, especially with regards to best practices from within tech companies. This can help promote continuous learning and improvement in technology policies and ensure that these policies are responsive to changing needs and contexts.

Being the Change: A Final Exhortation

The discussion above emphasizes the importance of a thematic framework for proactive and progressive policy innovation that moves beyond 'oughts' and 'imperatives.' Policymakers must engage with community members, non-profits, and creators of technology to facilitate deliberative dialogue on policy innovation in techno-social spaces. Additionally, a lens of decolonization can help to make explicit the intersectionality that technology mimics and perpetuates. For example, the New York Local Law 144 of 2021,[16] discussed above, draws attention to the lack of hiring diversity and codification of biases in AEDT, demonstrating the need for a non-negotiable commitment to sound technology policy that considers the impacts on communities from the stages of inception and design. Unsurprisingly, systemic inequities translate to poor recruitment and retention of minority and underrepresented communities in the tech sector and industries reliant on technology as well.[17]

Community-led audits are necessary to prevent the silencing and ghettoization of non-mainstream experiences. *Turkopticon,* a browser extension that enables low-wage digital workers to assess employers and employer-employee relations in Amazon's Mechanical Turk ecosystem, is an example of a practice that promotes digital equity in traditionally top-down enterprises.[18] This approach can be applied to new systems of governance, making accountability participatory and inclusive through citizen-led, crowd-sourced audits and reviews of civic applications and websites. Approaches such as these can also help anticipate and mitigate the harms of digital 'redlining' wherein access to services and welfare are already unequal and further exacerbated by biased technology.

My final exhortation to policymakers is to challenge and re-imagine dominant ideologies by looking at the self as a site for change. What can you do to make space for non-mainstream and non-Western practices? It is crucial to engage in self-critique and self-reflection to dismantle discriminatory beliefs and attitudes that we may have internalized. By removing our blinders and considering diverse ways of knowing and knowledge-making, we can create a technology policy that is inclusive of anti-racist perspectives. Using technology to invite perspectives that dismantle ongoing legacies of colonialist bias is the kind of cyber-utopia dream policymakers should strive to keep.

1. *Author's note*: I haven't been to the moon, I too can't sing a tune, but I do value my sleep and so the title was generated with a little help from Chat GPT.
2. I would like to thank Brian Sanders, David McCaleb, Sasha Goldberg, and the ARPJ team for their valuable feedback on early drafts.

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19th Century Map of East Boston 1838
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East Boston: Place-Based Racial Challenges & Opportunities in the City's Most Geographically Isolated Neighborhood

Aubrey Harnett-Haynes

East Boston, one of the City of Boston's 23 neighborhoods[1], is separated from the rest of the city by water on most sides. Given its isolation from the rest of Boston, access to services and necessities *within* the neighborhood is essential. This paper explores East Boston's origins, geography, and demographics to set the stage for a racial justice analysis of the neighborhood. It highlights parts of East Boston that make it unique (including its history and mix of identities, as well as its ecological vulnerability), and identifies the challenges and opportunities within this vibrant neighborhood. This topic is close to my heart as a longtime renting resident in the neighborhood. While this makes my anecdotal experience rich, I have enjoyed learning more about East Boston's history and present in order to create a robust analysis.

East Boston's History

East Boston is a neighborhood of continuous change–of land and of peoples and has deep ties to colonial history. The land that now forms East Boston was originally five Boston Harbor islands that were developed and combined through landfilling in the 19th century. European-American settlement of these islands dated back to the 17th century with Samuel Maverick, a slave-owning settler to Noddle Island. From its initial development as one of the only neighborhoods that were formally planned, it has been an industrial and working-class neighborhood. This effort was spearheaded by General William H. Sumner in 1833, and his East Boston Company deeply influenced the neighborhood well into the 20th century.[2]

By the 1840s, Donald McKay, a Canadian immigrant to East Boston and designer of clipper ships, helped establish East Boston as a shipbuilding center. The early skilled shipbuilding residents largely came from Canada during the second half of the 19th century. Irish Catholics also came to East Boston in large numbers, working on building the infrastructure that would eventually connect East Boston by rail and streetcar to mainland Boston. East Boston became both a major port of entry for immigrants, similar to Ellis Island, with Portuguese, Jewish and Russian immigrants also arriving in the late 1800s and early 1900s.[3] Later, Italian Americans arrived in such numbers as to shift the dominant demographic identity of the neighborhood to its current form today.[4]

These days, East Boston is considered an Italian-American neighborhood experiencing rapid change yet again, which will be explored in the "Demographics" section. It continues to be a neighborhood with a majority of its residents born outside the United States, and with shifting working-class populations. Perhaps the most significant part of contemporary history to include here is proof of modern gentrification—East Boston's explosion in development, particularly in luxury real estate—shifting the population in a new direction.[5]

Significant to our understanding of East Boston is not only its coastal qualities, but also its relationship to international, national, and local transportation systems. East Boston is the site of Boston Logan International Airport and also serves as an international port of entry for sea travel. While this positions Boston for easy international and regional travel, East Boston's land-travel options are more limited. As indicated by the map (Fig. 1) there are three (two of which are one-way travel) major tunnels, two land-connected highways, and a few bridges. While residents are allowed discounted rates on the tunnels and tolls in the area, this is an additional cost and consideration for East Bostonians.

While the majority of East Boston households do have access to or own at least one vehicle, many families do rely on public transit. Therefore, it is essential to understand the public transportation infrastructure to evaluate the needs and opportunities for East Bostonians. The only branch of the MBTA train system to reach East Boston is the Blue Line, and internal neighborhood public transit is largely served by city buses. Additionally, there are newly reestablished ferry options (which can be covered by certain MBTA fare schedules), as well as water taxi services, from East Boston to Downtown Boston for much of the year.

Understanding East Boston's geography shows how vulnerable it is as a neighborhood to any disruptions in access. Whether due to accidents, flooding from storms worsening due to climate change, security threats, or work repairing aging infrastructure, closures massively impact the neighborhood. Additionally, most
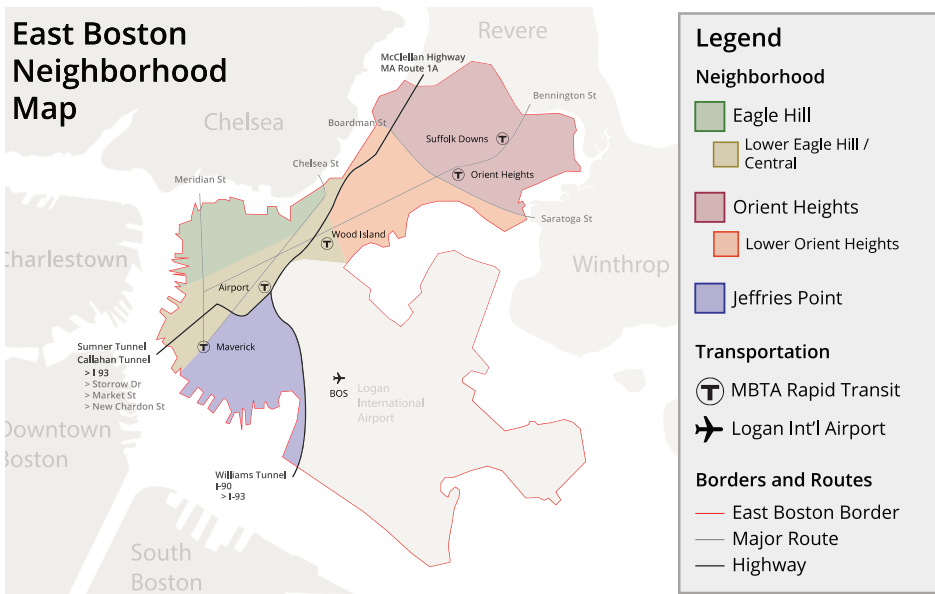
Figure 1
Neighborhood map of East Boston, Massachusetts.
Photo: Mr. JARichard, CC BY 4.0 https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0, Wikimedia Commons

residents work outside of the neighborhood and East Boston only has one major grocery store. Therefore, access to surrounding neighborhoods and downtown is crucial for most residents' daily life.
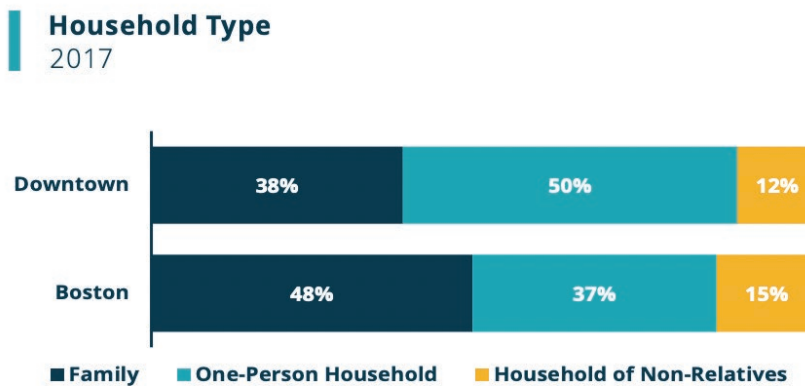
Another essential part of East Boston's geography relates to its origins. As it is not a natural landform, but instead five islands combined by landfill–and the neighborhood of Boston with more coastline than any other–its ecological vulnerabilities are tied into its identity. Already, certain areas are subject to flooding during major

storms, and structures and transportation are impacted. The climate crisis will likely have mounting impacts, particularly in the parts of East Boston constructed out of landfill.[6]

Demographics

As mentioned above, East Boston's demographic identity has shifted dramatically over the years. Its significant immigrant population decreased during the middle of the 20th century as the Italian-American community became established over generations. Currently, over 50% of East Boston's nearly 47,000[7] residents were born outside of the US. It is estimated that more than 35% of the total East Boston population is undocumented (and this is presumed to be an undercount).[8]

In comparison to the general Boston population, there are several differences of interest. The population of East Boston increased at a greater rate (17%) than the city average (10%) during the 2000-2015 period. The age distribution of the neighborhood includes a higher rate of children (21%) than the city's average (16%).[9] Most of the immigrant population is from Latin America, with major waves of immigration dating back to 1989-1990. The share of Latino residents has grown dramatically since 2000, with the US Census Bureau reporting 26,063 East Bostonians of Hispanic or Latino origin in 2015. Almost half arrived from El Salvador, with Colombia, Mexico, Guatemala, and the Dominican Republic.[10] As shown in the bar chart (Fig. 2), the total proportion of the Latino population in East Boston (58%) compared to the city's average of (19%) means the rest of the racial makeup of East Boston is different, too. The white population of East Boston accounts for

Household Type
2017

	Family	One-Person Household	Household of Non-Relatives
Downtown	38%	50%	12%
Boston	48%	37%	15%

Figure 2
Produced by the Boston Planning & Development Agency Research Division, April 2019.

32% (Boston, 45%); the Black/African American population accounts for 2% (Boston, 23%); Asian and Pacific Islanders account for 4% (Boston, 9%); and "Other" accounts for 4% in both East Boston and the neighborhood. North Africans have immigrated and settled in East Boston in growing numbers, which adds to the religious and cultural diversity of the neighborhood.

East Boston also differs from the city average in work and income. While new luxury construction projects threaten to shift this reality, East Boston remains a

working-class neighborhood. The percentage of East Bostonians ages 16 and above who are in the workforce is higher than the city average.[11] However, the average East Bostonian household's income remains lower than the city average, with most residents employed in the food and other service sectors. Of jobs within the neighborhood, 46% are in transportation and warehousing.[12] During the COVID-19 pandemic, many East Boston residents continued to work outside of the home as essential workers, in addition to supporting their household needs through grocery shopping or going to food banks in-person rather than through delivery services (of note, many area delivery services charge extra for East Boston given the isolation and toll roads). Also, while average rents decreased in other Boston neighborhoods, they generally held steady and then began to rise in 2021 in East Boston, further pricing out long-time and lower-income residents.[13]

Notably, levels of education differ greatly compared to the rest of the city. In 2015, only 6% of East Boston residents were enrolled in college or university degree programs, and only about 21% of residents aged 25 and older had a bachelor's degree or higher.[14] Many immigrants experience a disruption in schooling when they travel to the U.S. or their training from countries of origin does not transfer to existing workforce opportunities. With the additional challenges of language and cultural differences, it is unsurprising that East Boston's reported levels of education are lower than the city average.

Place-based segregation persists in Boston. The Massachusetts Port Authority controls the majority of East Boston's land, and much of the direct waterfront-leasing projects have been for large luxury condominiums. White and affluent populations are becoming more concentrated and their residency complicates issues of public access to waterfront. In response to what long-time residents perceive as rampant development that has largely left out the interests and voices of the working-class local population, there are deep concerns about further development, including for climate-resilient projects, that may have unintended consequences of further privatization, limited access, and division between the various populations within East Boston.[15] Residents sense the change and destabilization in East Boston. Concerns of housing and livelihoods often outweigh all other issues.

Putting Data Into a Racial Justice Context

As discussed above, East Boston's enviable real estate market with waterfront luxury properties mixed with its vulnerability to climate change has meant that it has received no shortage of public attention. However, these data points need to also be put in the context of racial justice to ensure that growing inequities are not further exacerbated.

Childcare, Education & Livelihoods

First, in terms of basic services like childcare and education, East Boston's isolation from the rest of Boston is significant. As the mother of two small children who are in school and care in the neighborhood, I have experienced this first-hand before the pandemic up to today. The discrepancy of available spots to children is a more significant problem in East Boston than in other Boston neighborhoods (this is not to say it is not also an issue elsewhere!) There are 3,109 children under the age of five, with only 1,676 formally licensed available spots. This discrepancy is even more stark for children under the age of two. While data is lacking for the full dis-

tribution of childcare access across racial and ethnic lines, one of the most significant barriers to these limited spots is cost. Non-white residents of East Boston are more likely to be lower-income, and families with undocumented members face additional vulnerabilities. The voucher system has a long waitlist, meaning licensed childcare options are out of reach. Significantly, in the City of Boston's latest childcare census, only 9.2% of parents said their ideal care arrangement was as primary caregivers, but 28.2% stated that as their current arrangement.[16] This means the most vulnerable and lowest earners are likeliest to have their livelihoods and earning opportunities limited - and this is especially true of single-parent households.

Another significant trend is in the makeup of the East Boston High School (EBHS) population. Whereas the racial/ethnic breakdown of the neighborhood as a whole is 58% Latino, over 80% of EBHS students are Latino. The vast majority do not speak English as a first language (77.7%), are from low-income households (76.1%), and are classified as high needs (91.4%).[17] The only other high school option within East Boston is an Excel Academy charter school. Wealthier, white students are more likely to access exam schools in the Boston Public School system, as well as private school options.[18]

The gap between white and non-white students in East Boston schools may stem from numerous causes. One may be the awareness of options and how to navigate them. More affluent,white families are more likely to know the full range of public and private options available, as well as the systems for accessing them. While a neighborhood with so few residents pursuing two- or four-year degrees might show a preference for vocational and technical school programs, the only option is far from East Boston and appears to have attracted more white students than students of other racial backgrounds.[19] EBHS does provide some job training and vocational skills options for students[20], and there are other local organizations such as Maverick Landing Community Services that provide leadership and skills trainings for East Boston teenagers.[21] Another concern, in regards to EBHS, is the presumption that charter schools provide better education and opportunities and outcomes for students.[22]

Students with younger siblings and/or with after-school jobs may not feel the same opportunity to explore a range of educational options within East Boston and beyond. If families rely on older children to provide or facilitate care and employment, that may limit their ability to leave the neighborhood, highlighting the need for robust networks of care and support within East Boston.

While EBHS has a lower drop-out and higher graduation rate than the Boston Public School average, the neighborhood does not send as many of its teenagers to two- or four-year colleges and universities.[23] Though there are no higher education institutions within East Boston, there are many options in and around the city, often easier to access than the other Boston high schools available to residents. In a neighborhood with lower-than-average incomes, the cost of higher education is the most common limiting factor.[24]

Jobs & Transportation

Adult residents of East Boston may experience difficulty finding a job because of the limited transportation options and their immigration status. Many residents travel into other neighborhoods of Boston for restaurant and other blue-collar work, relying on public transportation. The challenges of unreliable infrastructure and the increasingly frequent impacts of climate change through flooding leaves

History of East Boston Immigration Marker. Erected in 1998 by Chris Tauson, muralist
Photo by the Author

workers vulnerable if these failures make them late to work, especially as many
lower-wage workers do not have jobs that allow them to work from home.

Community Organizations

East Boston has a robust network of social services and community organizations.
The siloed nature of many organizations presents challenges to coordinated action.
Communities have created networks of support for themselves through culturally
specific organizing. One of the challenges this creates is in the ability of any given
family to find services that meet their needs, and any given organization to have
the resources necessary. Especially during the period of the pandemic marked by
lockdowns and school closures, city-based services, such as those provided through
Boston Centers for Youth and Families (BCYF) were completely halted. The
neighborhood is still rebuilding these programs and necessary resources, including
culturally competent staff.

Conclusion

East Boston is unique in many ways due to its geographic isolation and climate vul-
nerability. Its residents have these challenges amplified through a lack of attention
and access and resources. Given East Boston's particular vulnerabilities, the City of
Boston should support it more robustly by implementing policy with an anti-racist
intent. The neighborhood would also benefit from the coordination of cultural-

ly-responsive resources to allow families to care for their children and elderly, allow their school-aged members to access quality education, and for their working-aged members to access good jobs and other livelihood opportunities. By using a racial justice lens to examine what makes East Boston different from other parts of Boston, it is possible to see these challenges and better services, improve infrastructure and provide additional support.

Notes

1. https://www.boston.gov/departments/neighborhood-services

2. Exploring Boston's Neighborhoods: East Boston and Global Boston Project

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

5. Opportunity in the Complexity: Recommendations for Equitable Climate Resilience in East Boston

6. Opportunity in the Complexity

7. Per 2013-2018 American Community Survey (Neighborhood Profile - see Appendix)

8. Opportunity in the Complexity (28), Hispanics in the Neighborhood RIT Report

9. Neighborhood Profile and East Boston Trends, See Appendix Figures 1-4

10. Hispanics in East Boston, RIT Report (10)

11. East Boston Trends (See Appendix Figure 4)

12. (https://www.bostonplans.org/getattachment/f719d8d1-9422-4ffa-8d11-d042dd3eb37b) Additionally, for every resident worker only 0.81 jobs within East Boston. Same source

13. https://bostonpads.com/blog/boston-rental-market/2022-east-boston-apartment-rental-market-report/ + https://www.wbur.org/news/2021/09/17/greater-boston-rental-housing-allston-covid

14. East Boston Trends (See Appendix Figure 4)

15. Opportunity in the Complexity

16. Ashley White, Adam Jones and Samiya Khalid, "Making Child Care Work: Results From the 2021 Child Care Census Survey," City of Boston, 2021, 6.

17. https://profiles.doe.mass.edu/profiles/student.aspx?orgcode=00350530&orgtypecode=6, https://reportcards.doe.mass.edu/2021/00350530

18. https://www.bostonglobe.com/2023/04/28/metro/bps-exam-school-admissions-errors/

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21. https://mlcsboston.org/youths

22. Opportunity in the Complexity

23. https://www.bostonglobe.com/2022/12/01/metro/once-underperforming-east-boston-high-school-made-gains-through-pandemic-can-bps-replicate-success/

24. Resilience report

"Look at us as family & not just numbers"
Community Members Refute Dehumanizing Mathematical Discourse During Potential School-Closure Discussions

Carlos Nicolas Gómez Marchant, Carolynn Campbell Reed, Emma C. Gargroetzi, & Alexandra R. Aguilar

Abstract

We examine the civic engagement of three individuals from the Brass Bell Elementary School community who are facing the potential closure of their school by the district. In a community meeting with district personnel, a teacher, student, and Spanish-speaking parent challenge the district's dehumanizing use of mathematics in their presentation. The community members are actively resisting the school's closure and their opposition to the district's mathematical model of equality (Tate et al., 1993) highlights the strategies they use to contest the erasure of their humanity. Their actions also challenge the myth that mathematics is purely objective and neutral. This paper explores the contestation strategies employed by these community members in response to the district's presentation.

Sunny Field Independent School District & School Closures

On December 15, 2022, the Sunny Field Independent School District[1] (SF ISD) administration announced and presented to the school board eight proposals for redrawing SF ISD elementary school attendance zones. Seven of the eight proposals included the closure of at least two schools (60-to-70% of the student population is Latinx[2]). To gather feedback, SF ISD personnel organized community meetings at each of the six schools listed for possible closures. At these meetings, the administration personnel presented their rationale for school closure and their plans' details. We focus on the community meeting held at Brass Bell Elementary as an instance of community member resistance and contestation, demanding (re)humanization after being numerically represented in a way antithetical to the humanity they see in their community.

Johnson[3] characterizes school closures as auguring both a civic and social death. In the United States, school closures historically and contemporarily impact communities of color in contrast to white communities.[4] In the public political sphere, quantitative measures have long been used to provide a mirage of logic and objectivity to mathematical models and characterizations of phenomena.[5][6][7] Mathematics, therefore, plays a significant role in policy discourses. Policy decision-making uses the power of the myth of mathematics as neutral and objective to provide a language of legitimacy to laws, policies, and regulations. Tate et al. spoke about this concept in relation to *Brown v Board of Education,* as a "mathematical solution for a sociocultural problem".[8] Regarding Brown v Board, Tate et al. argue the courts constructed a solution of equality where desegregation was flattened to a numbers game of moving Black students into white schools. As if all those movements are the same (equality). If it was a model of equity, then further considerations of the

social aspects of Black children's well-being, for example, would have been considered. But the mathematical model of equality applied after Brown v Board dehumanized Black children and only thought of them as numbers. In general, these constructed mathematical models of equality dehumanize by flattening minoritized populations to solely mathematical terms.[9] For example, Gómez Marchant et al. demonstrated how a group of white parents leveraged the myth of mathematics as neutral and objective to bolster their arguments for new attendance boundaries.[10] Through their public comments, the white parents flattened the issue of rezoning an apartment complex with a high number of South Asian students to be one of balancing school enrollments. As white parent Joy commented, "That this [rezoning] has anything to do with race, ethnicity, or socio-economic status just simply isn't true. This is a logistical numbers problem".[11] Joy and the other white parents constructed a mathematical model of equality that excluded racial and linguistic variables in considering rezoning. The use of mathematical discourses in these dehumanizing ways has become normalized. Community contestation and disruption of these dehumanizing discourses are relevant to shaping policy conversations.

Accordingly, we seek a richer understanding of mathematics within the tapestry of political discourses. In this paper, we share a part of a larger research project focusing on analyzing mathematical discourses by community members, district personnel, and policymakers about potential school closures. Here we center the voices of three community members (a teacher, a student, and a Spanish-speaking parent) and how they refuted the dehumanizing mathematical model of equality as put forward by the district personnel. Each community member's act of resistance was specific to the quantification and measures (i.e., inclusion variables) selected by the district personnel. The guiding research question is: What mathematical and racial discourses are used by school district personnel and community members during discussions of possible school closures?

Theoretical Framework

Critical Race Spatial Analysis

We bring a *critical race spatial perspective*[12,13] to current research on policy as a practice of power.[14,15] Critical race theory forefronts the endemic racism in our everyday ways of being in the world. A critical race spatial perspective builds on the foundational tenets of critical race theory in education[16,17] to highlight how social spaces are racialized and provide "an explanatory framework and methodological approach that accounts for the role of race, racism, and white supremacy in examining geographic and social spaces".[18] Building on Du Bois'[19] conceptualization of the color-line, Solórzano and Vélez describe the importance of the color-line to understand the "way space comes to be defined and experienced as the conceived and constructed reality of a racist society".[20] For school districts, attendance zones are demarcated spaces constructed to control the racial make-up of a school's student population. A school board's power to change attendance zones through school closures and thereby the racial makeup of the student body means that community conversations about these demarcations are also *racialized discourses*.[21] Soja's[22] description of "thoughts about space" or "how materialized space is conceptualized, imagined, or represented in various ways" further drives home the equivalence between attendance zones and everyday racism. A critical race spatial perspective highlights how color-lines are maintained for the benefit of those with whiteness.[23]

When we refer to whiteness, we follow Orozco Marín's conceptualization:[24]

> Importante mencionar que cuando digo blanco no me refiero necesariamente a una cuestión exclusivamente fenotípica, sino que blanco es a que el sujeto no está racializado—a que pueda vivir una vida sin tener siendo persona antes de ser una persona racializada. Entonces sabemos muy bien que la niña, niño, el joven afrocolombiano, por ejemplo, siempre va a ser negro antes de un niño; para la escuela y para la sociedad.[25]

While Orzoco Marin's example is about racialization, the same ideas can be recontextualized for other oppressive systems and their intersections. Whiteness is about the privileges of being seen, acknowledged, recognized, and treated like a person—first (e.g., one is poor before a person; a wheelchair user before a person; bipolar before a person; immigrant before a person).

Policy as a Practice of Power

Levinson et al. argued, "the way to unpack policy is to see it as a kind of social practice, specifically, a practice of power". Policy constructs reality, determines what behaviors are appropriate, and constitutes conventions of resource allocations.[26] From a critical race theory perspective, these policy practices maintain white supremacy. Even those policies and laws meant to perform progressive ideas (e.g., *Brown v Board of Education*) are through time weakened by court cases because their original acceptance was to the benefit of white people.[27] Gillborn argued policy is an act of white supremacy. Being able to influence policymakers is an act of privilege and power. In other words, those with whiteness are more influential in policy decision-making. For our project, therefore, our perspective is that policy is an act of (white) power. Likewise, traditionally recognized forms of civic engagement are most often associated with participation in white-dominated spaces of power such as electoral politics or community forums like school board meetings,[28] leading to what some have called a "civic empowerment gap"[29] wherein civic engagement comes to be seen as a predominantly white activity.[30]

Mathematics plays an important role in policy decision-making processes because quantitative measures of sociocultural issues provide a sense of objectiveness to the phenomenon that policy, laws, and regulations look to resolve or in their distribution of resources. Espeland and Sauder argue the power of quantifying complex social issues is in the false sense of objectivity they provide.[VI]

> [Quantitative measures] have the patina of objectivity: stripped of rhetoric and emotion, they show what is 'really going on.' Even more, they can reduce vast amounts of information to a figure that is easy to understand, a simplicity that intimates that there is nothing to hide, and indeed that nothing can be hidden.[31]

Mathematics is leveraged to justify claims of legitimacy and scientific truth. As Woolf argued, "once a new discipline has developed a mathematical discourse, it has almost immediately laid claim, at least in the language of its most enthusiastic disciples, to the significant status—science!"[32] Therefore, in policy discourses, mathematics is a language of power. Mathematical ways of reasoning and knowing

become necessary for civic engagement. Particularly when the policy as a practice of (white) power dehumanizes through the construction of mathematical models of equality.

Methods

For the larger project, we follow Bejarano et al.'s critical ethnography "to understand and prioritize local conceptions of local realities".[33] Capturing the public comments made at the community meetings organized by SF ISD is one way to gather how the community members are interpreting the mathematical data provided by the district as a representation of their local reality.

Context

SF ISD is located in central Texas in the United States. Texas has a long history of discriminatory policies, regulations, and laws against Latiné populations, particularly using education for assimilation and erasure (see San Guadalupe, 1990). These historical storylines are ever present as the communities being targeted by the possible school closure are all Title I (at least 40% of students qualifying for free or reduced lunch) and a high percentage of Latiné student population.

Data Collected

For the larger project, at least one research team member attended and audio-recorded five of the six community meetings. We also worked with a group of parents representing the six schools proposed to close to organize against the district's proposed plans. For this paper, we selected the Brass Bell community meeting for analytic focus.

Data Analysis

Based on our field notes and transcripts, we identified three public comments at the Brass Bell community meeting specifically resisting the district's mathematical model of equality.[34] These came from a parent, a teacher, and a student who each contested the mathematics used to describe the community. We spotlight these discursive moves as acts of resistance to shed light on how they contested a mathematical model of equality that flattened their community. They demanded more than a mathematical solution to the sociocultural issue.

SF ISD Administration's Mathematical Model of Equality

At the beginning of the community meeting, the administration personnel shared their rationale for why the district needed to consider closing schools. The personnel presented a lack of growth in the area, the age of the facilities, and the efficiency of the building as the inclusion criteria for school closure (Fig. 1); establishing a mathematical model of equality for determining school closures. Each of these facets was shown as quantified data giving the patina of objectivity[35] in the administration's decision-making. The district personnel also began the construction of a crisis by emphasizing the consequences if no decision was made. The power of constructing and adopting limited mathematical models and the quantification

Figure 1: Slide shown at community meeting showing consequences of not closing school

of human phenomena maintains and perpetuates white dominance.[36] Mathematical models of equality flatten or describe the processes through which complex phenomena lived in a 3-dimensional world become a 2-dimensional mathematical model.[37] Here, the district personnel, through the selection of specific inclusion variables—growth, facilities, and efficiency—constructed a mathematical model of equality, flattening the complexity of the school and neighborhood to three variables while excluding others (e.g., race, class).

Growth was represented in two ways. The first was through a table from a third-party demographer's report (Fig. 2). The personnel pointed to the yellow,

District Housing Overview by Elementary Zone

Elementary	Annual Starts	Quarter Starts	Annual Closings	Quarter Closings	Under Construction	Inventory	Vacant Dev. Lots	Futures
BA	35	8	136	75	10	18	74	0
BR	0	0	67	25	0	0	16	383
C	7	0	29	6	4	11	0	0
CA	74	0	209	36	38	39	8	4,940
CO	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
D	20	6	3	2	28	30	50	154
DE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
DES	122	79	248	44	97	102	161	1,352
H	265	31	213	115	195	225	45	942
HI	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
M	189	14	384	140	128	111	373	840
MU	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	114
NO	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
PA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
P	37	37	0	0	37	37	287	1,290
R	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Brass Bell	2	0	19	4	2	2	0	121
RO	26	4	97	33	11	12	1	0
S	0	0	36	10	0	0	0	287
T	12	12	0	0	12	12	26	0
W	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
WI	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	52
GRAND TOTAL	789	191	1,441	490	562	599	1,041	10,475

*Does NOT include age-restricted communities

Highest activity in the category
Second highest activity in the category
Third highest activity in the category

Figure 3: Slide with Newcomers and Leavers of SF ISD by School Year

green, and red highlights as those having the first, second, and third highest level of "activity" (housing and land development and construction) by elementary zones. Neither how these numbers were determined nor the differences between them were explained. The presenter summarized the intended message for the audience, "Overall what this is showing you is that a lot of the activities are happening in the northeast side of the district." The presenter then showed another graph (Fig. 3) demonstrating the number of newcomers and leavers of SF ISD by year. This was to emphasize how charter schools and the pandemic diminished enrollment in the district. "We see for the last three years that this trend continues to increase where students are not coming to the district but they are actually leaving." These quantitative reports provide a warrant for action because of the need to avoid the consequences of not closing one or more schools: a) the need for another bond (financial measure) to expand schools; b) students displaced into portables (non-permanent structures disconnected from the main facility used as classrooms) or to other schools; c) overextended staff.

Continuing to justify the inclusion criteria used for their mathematical model of equality, the administration displayed a table (Fig. 4) with the name of the school (and schools the students would attend if Brass Bell closed) with the year opened and the academic rating received from the Texas Education Agency. Implicitly these were to represent the facilities variable. The presenters briefly described the columns: "All those campuses are rated B. And the year in which they were built is also in this chart. The age of these buildings range from 1982 to 2012. That is the years they are constructed." The administration personnel then moved on. They did not include any information about updates to the buildings.

The final set of tables emphasized the efficiency of each school—the last inclusion variable described by the district (Fig. 5). There was no explanation of how efficiency percentages were calculated. The efficiency rate was only described as "the percentage of students that could be in those buildings." The chart shows how closing Brass Bell would achieve the objective of increasing the efficiency of the other schools. Upon further investigation, we determined the efficiency percentage represents the number of students enrolled or predicted to be enrolled divided by

the architectural capacity of the school. The district's discourse of efficiency only reflected the efficiency of the building's physical use, not the learning environment or other social characteristics of the space. The excluded variables in the mathematical model of equality flattened the community to merely bodies taking space in a building.

Contestation of the Administration's Mathematical Model of Equality

Campus	Capacity	Year Built	Academic Rating
Brass Bell	750	1993	B
C	850	1998	B
N	600	1986	B
P	650	1982	B
R	850	2012	B

Figure 4: Table from Slide with Capacity, Year Built, and Academic Rating

Efficiency	CAP	22-23 %	23-24 %	24-25 %	25-26 %	26-27 %	27-28 %
Brass Bell	750	53	0	0	0	0	0
C	850	59	56	78	82	81	82
N	600	64	71	79	80	82	84
P	650	70	69	92	88	87	88
R	850	60	66	63	65	64	65

Figure 5: Efficency Rates for Brass Belle and Schools Accepting Students in Proposed Plan

Marissa, who read as white, was the ninth speaker during the public comment section of the meeting. She was the first to explicitly call out the district's mathematical model of equality as insufficient and dehumanizing, stating, "I know you provided us with money numbers, business statistics, but I don't think you humanized us."[38] Her strategy for contestation was to share alternative measures, describing Brass Bell through more humanizing chosen terms. In offering alternative quantifications of Brass Bell Elementary's community to be included in the district's mathematical model of equality, Marissa argued numbers with numbers.

> Hi my name is [Marissa] and I'm a 5th grade teacher here at [Brass Bell]....I know you provided us with money numbers, business statistics, but I don't think you humanized us... So I'm going to provide some more stats about our school that will show why we should stay open. Number one, we've had over the years many community partnerships with companies such as GM, Dell, National Instruments. We're the only campus in the district to have a campus food pantry, a clothing closet, and a school supply closet. [Audience applause].... Last year on our—a survey from teachers we had a 100% staff voting in support of our principal.... We have spent almost 7000 dollars on the garden outside to use as an outdoor learning space and to use for science learning and community events. We have also received five distinctions from STAAR scores....Very low staff turnover. That is not the case at other schools that are in the area.... These are things that you have not highlighted in this presentation that other communities will know why we should remain open. I think those should be included in the bigger picture as your job working for the district. (S9–Marissa, Brass Bell Community Meeting).

Marissa rebuts the mathematical model of equality by providing statistics and other data about the school to (re)humanize the community after the dehumanizing mathematical representation. She emphasized quantifiable but also qualitative aspects reflecting the humanity of Brass Bell such as partnerships developed, the community garden, and their food pantry. In these efforts, she highlights the outreach to the local, mostly minoritized community. Marissa argued that the mathematical model of equality required other inclusion criteria (e.g., investment into community, staff satisfaction).

The 16th speaker, Jarrett (read as Latinx), was the first student to provide a public comment. In his comment, Jarrett shared how the school had been a formative space for him, and to warrant the academic value of Brass Bell, he mentioned how he is currently taking all Pre-AP classes in middle school. This was interpreted as a rebuttal to the use of Brass Bell's "B" academic rating as part of the facility inclusion variable justifying Brass Bell's potential closure in the district's model. Jarrett effectively attaches his humanity to the academic rating, working to (re) humanize the measure.

> I have three siblings. And my older brother and me have already gone to this school....And when I came to this school, this school really helped me. And now in 6th grade, I am in Pre-AP, all classes. [audience applause]....And like all of y'all, I am really sad it is being considered to close down because there is going to be a lot of sad

moments. And they should really take into consideration and look at us as family and not just numbers. (S16–Jarrett, Brass Bell Community Meeting)

Jarrett's contestation strategy was to illustrate the civic and social death of closing the school. He emphasized his and the community's emotional stakes—absent in the district's mathematical model. Jarrett exhorts the district to consider the emotional consequences of dehumanizing discourse and (re)humanize through acknowledgment of familial relations.[39]

The 22nd speaker, Mikel, was a Spanish-speaking parent who read as Latinx. Mikel countered the district's mathematical model of equality by emphasizing the cold nature of the numbers shown. His form of contestation was to contrast the warmth and love Brass Bell has shown his family and son, in particular, to the cold numbers of the mathematical model of equality presented by the administration.

Buenas noches mi nombre es [Mikel]. Tengo un niño en quinto grado....llegamos a esta comunidad hace cinco años. Llegamos con miedos, con dudas, pero [Brass Bell] los tomó con una gran sorpresa y un gran amor por la—para nuestra comunidad. Y ahora con mi hijo grande amamos mucho más que nada [Brass Bell] porque hemos visto el cambio en su personalidad, en su estudios porque ha sido apoyado grandemente....Usted nos están enseñando números fríos en sus presentaciones, como eficiencias, como porcentajes, como capacidades, pero no los están enseñando el impacto emocional en nuestros hijos....Por favor no comuniquen números fríos. No cometan errores de los países donde venimos donde se deshumanicen a los niños. Llegamos a este país con ese—con esa promesa dónde los amamos y queremos que siga hace y no cometan los mismos errores. (S22–Mikel, Brass Bell Community Meeting)[40]

Mikel rejects the efficiency, percentages, and capacity inclusion variables used by the district. He does not argue numbers with numbers but instead stresses the support and love received from the school and variables absent from the district's presentation of their decision-making. He also, like Jarrett, stresses the stakes involved with students' emotional well-being. He pleads to those in power to do the right thing because it is the right thing to do, an action Bell[41] argued never worked for the civil rights movement—there must be a potential benefit to white people, an interest convergence, for civil rights laws, policies, and court cases to pass.[42] Finally, Mikel warns the district personnel how these actions were similar to those from his country, which dehumanizes children and begs the district not to make the same mistakes. Mikel attempts here to show the violence inherent in the district's mathematical modeling.

Conclusion

Mudry warned, "one particular result of numeration is its exploitation of numbers, statistics, and measurement to valorize and legitimate inferential and qualitative experiences". [43] Marissa, Jarrett, and Mikel recognized how the district's presentation of their community did not capture the humanity of their experience. In this paper, we reported on the contestation strategies of three community members

against their community being flattened down to mathematical terms by the district. Each of them rejected the mathematics used and offered other measures and considerations to (re)humanize their community during the school closure debate. The mathematics chosen by the district to render their decision-making processes to close the school failed to capture who they are, nor the emotional dimensions of the stakes involved. The mathematical model of equality shown by the district was insufficient and highlighted the erasure of key characteristics of the community the speakers wanted to be considered. The community demonstrated its own power against the acts of (white) power involved in policy making. They challenged mathematics as the language of legitimacy by refuting the mathematical model of equality proposed by the district. This contestation in civic engagement is relevant to how policy conversations are shaped within spaces requiring high degrees of privilege to participate. The three community members exemplified three forms of contestation that set a foundation for future explorations in disrupting whiteness in policy spaces.

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Notes

1. All names used are pseudonyms.

2. We recognize Latinx/é/a/o is not a universal nor static label. These are deeply personal political choices by individuals. We use Latinx to be more inclusive of nonbinary and gender fluid individuals who may identify with any or a combination of the 33 countries in Latin America.

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25.*ARPJ Editorial Team's translation:It is important to mention that when I say white I am not necessarily referring to an exclusively phenotypic matter, but white is because the subject is not racialized—that he can live a life without having to be a person before being a racialized person. So we know very well that the girl, the boy, the Afro-Colombian youth, for example, will always be black before a boy; for the school and for society.*

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40. *ARPJ Editorial Team's translation: Good evening my name is [Mikel]. I have a fifth grader...we came to this community five years ago. We came in with fears, with doubts, but [Brass Bell] took them with a great surprise and a great love for the—for our community. And now with my older son we love [Brass Bell] much more than anything because we have seen the change in his personality, in his studies because he has been greatly supported...You are teaching us cold numbers in your presentations, like efficiencies, like percentages, like abilities, but they are not teaching them the emotional impact on our children....Please do not communicate cold numbers. Do not commit the mistakes of the countries where we come from where children are dehumanized. We came to this country with that—with that promise where we love them and we want them to continue and not make the same mistakes. (S22–Mikel, Brass Bell Community Meeting)*

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Got DEI?
A Comic on Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Efforts in the Workplace

Written by Shamika A. Mitchell
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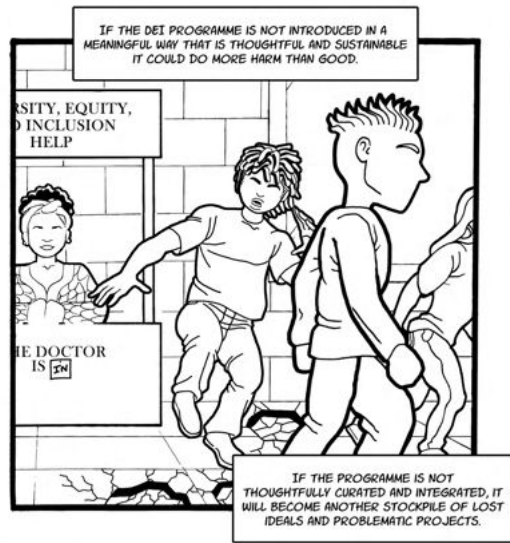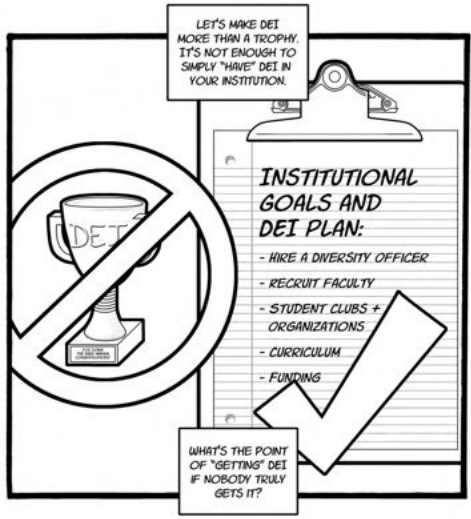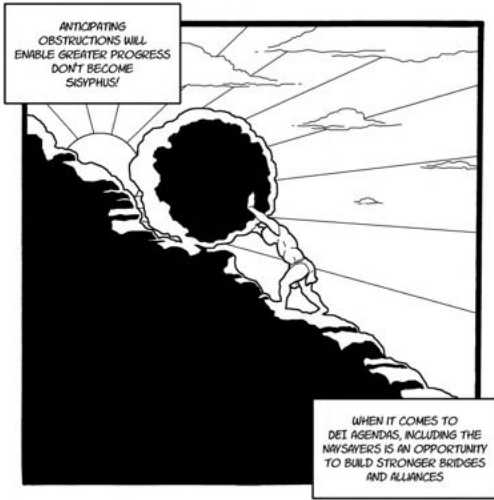
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Javier Cruz Winnik is an illustrator turned author. After 6 years of selling his art and commission's, he created a graphic novel series titled "A Reason to Smile!" about a little Puerto Rican girl from NYC who uses her creativity & imagination to help people find the bright side of life. There are 4 books in the series, with more on the way, and each book has been funded through Kickstarter.com. The series has sold over 3,600 copies & has allowed him the opportunity to write & illustrate stories for Puerto Rico Strong (LionForge) and Ricanstruction (Somos Arte & DC Comics).

Sean Zhuraw (Editor) has written poetry and translations that have appeared or are forthcoming in Boston Review, The Hopkins Review, Tin House, The Offing, Defunct, Denver Quarterly, and elsewhere. He earned degrees from Columbia and the Iowa Writers' Workshop where he won the John Logan poetry prize. He teaches English and Creative Writing at the Community College of Philadelphia and Widener University. He is currently translating The Starchild and The Starlit Path by Theodor Däubler. He works with the International Writing Program at the University of Iowa to provide free creative writing and cultural exchange workshops for Philadelphia Muslim and non-Muslim teens.

Follow Us

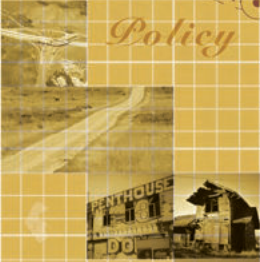@HARVARDARPJ

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80%
Black mortgage applicants in the United States were denied home loan approvals due to A.I. bias
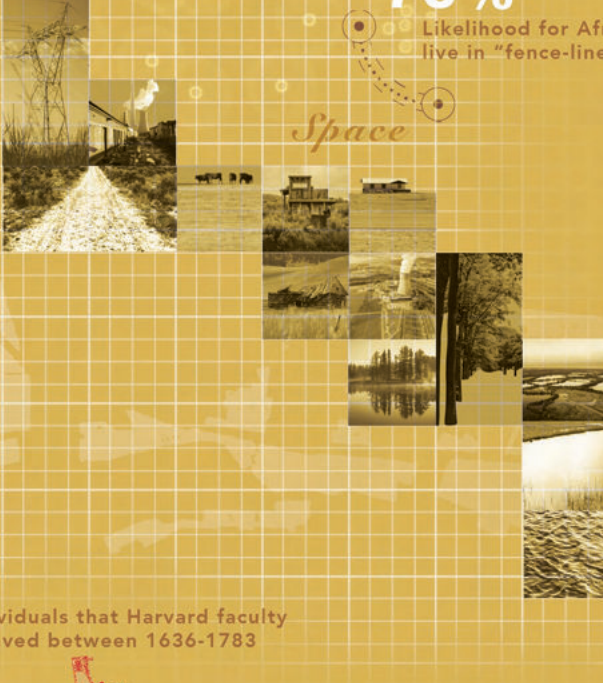
Policy

75%
Likelihood for African-Americans to live in "fence-line" communities

Space

70
Identified individuals that Harvard faculty and staff enslaved between 1636-1783

Race

99%
Indigenous land lost due to European colonization in the continental United States

Place

ARPJ