



IMAGINING AND ENACTING ANTI-OPPRESSIVE STRATEGIES IN RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT

Presentation for the National Organization of Research Development Professionals Retreat
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ENTERING THE SPACE

- Black woman
- Scholar and researcher
- Academic leader

LANGUAGE MATTERS

- **MINORITIZED**: “minoritized” (Gillborn, 2010) instead of “minority” refers to the social construction of underrepresentation and subordination in US social institutions. Persons are not born into a minority status nor are they minoritized in every social context (e.g., their families, social fraternities, and churches). Instead, they are rendered minorities in particular situations and institutional environments that sustain an overrepresentation of whiteness (Patton et al., 2016)
- **CRITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS**: the ability to identify, critique, and transform social forces that produce inequity (Gay, 2000; Duncan-Andrade & Morrell, 2009; Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2000). “Social forces” are things that might be invisible, but still have the power to shape and affect lives (Ladson-Billings, 1995). It requires asking critical questions and critical self-reflection, as well as the generation of strategies for sustained action to reduce and dismantle inequities (Arizona Board of Regents, 2016)



EQUITY MINDEDNESS

Refers to the perspective or mode of thinking among individuals who call attention to patterns of inequity and subsequent outcomes and are willing to take personal and institutional responsibility for disrupting the patterns and their subsequent outcomes, as well as, critically reassess their own practices. It also requires race-consciousness and awareness of the social and historical context of exclusionary practices that disproportionately affect racially minoritized groups.

-USC Center for Urban Education



EQUITY MINDEDNESS

- Call attention to patterns of inequity and subsequent outcomes
- Take personal responsibility for disrupting these patterns and outcomes
- Assess one's own practices
- Be conscious and aware of social and historical practices



ACTIVITY

Think about your life, your work, your experiences. How frequently do you:

1. call attention?
2. take personal responsibility?
3. assess practices?
4. remain conscious?

If you've engaged in any of the four, type the # in the chat box and offer one example.



THE DANGER OF A SINGLE STORY

- Default position
- No expansion of possibilities
- The role of power
- Incomplete stories
- One story = The only story
- Single stories can both rob dignity and repair broken dignity

-Chimamanda Ngozi Adiche

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D9lhs241zeg>



MAPPING STORIES

- “They often **don't do the work** to find grants or RFPs for faculty that do research like yours. Contrary to what they think there **ARE** grants available for research on Black women but you have to do the work to search. They also are **not likely to know how to help faculty of color advocate for themselves with funders**. For example, by asking for different reporting deadlines that might conflict with busy times of the year for faculty, or by asking for **LESS** reporting. I've found that **white faculty just “know” what to ask for/do, where as with faculty of color I need to be more proactive in telling them what's possible** and how I can structure the grant to make things easier.
- “An issue I have faced is when **they overstep boundaries** (e.g. not every research has measurable outcomes to track) and I feel like **my male colleagues do not get questioned this way....**”
- The **use of oppressive language** in developing the narratives was a problem for me in working with them.... For example, “community service” or generally language that described communities in need rather than strength or asset based narratives...And **challenging of specific anti-racist language** used in grants etc, further perpetuating white centered language.”
- “**They don't read our research; They don't know what we write about; They focus on process, but not content; They tap people who are white, quantitative.**”

“IF WE DISPENSE WITH THE WORDS WE
MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE TO TALK ABOUT
WHAT'S REALLY GOING ON AND WHAT IT
HAS TO DO WITH US. AND IF WE CAN'T
DO THAT, THEN WE CAN'T SEE WHAT THE
PROBLEMS ARE OR HOW WE MIGHT
MAKE OURSELVES PART OF THE SOLUTION
TO THEM” (JOHNSON, 2001)





CONTEXT MATTERS

1. How do you think faculty experience you? Your office?
2. Who encompasses this field?
3. How do you operate in this field?
4. What are the demographics of this field?
5. What do your position descriptions reveal about equity, diversity, and antiracism?

“Context matters because RDPs have the power to value and devalue research and researchers.” -Lori Patton Davis



KNOWLEDGE MATTERS

1. Understanding the history of racism in the research process?
2. Understanding the implications of this history as it pertains to who conducts research?
3. Who funds research?
4. Who is the participant in research and the latent power dynamics?
5. How do historical inequities filter into the present context of your work?

“NORDP is the only professional organization solely dedicated to research development. You have a unique set of skills that can fundamentally shift the researcher landscape toward greater equity, but it requires action and accountability.” -Lori Patton Davis



TOWARD EQUITY-MINDED PRACTICE

- Personally

- Don't distance yourself from racism and racist people, speak up
- Gain knowledge by reading, engaging in developmental opportunities, courses
- Step outside of your comfort zone
- Don't expect rewards
- Believe minoritized groups
- Increase your consciousness and start noticing inequities



TOWARD EQUITY-MINDED PRACTICE

- Professionally

- Conduct an audit
- Create guides that illustrate step by step processes
- Engage with scholars and communities
- Collaborate with the campus diversity leaders and offices
- Build greater rapport with agencies
- Be mindful of single stories
- Diversify the field
- Commit to diversifying the profession
- Focus on being proactive, rather than reactive

“This can’t just be head work; it also has to be heart work.”

-Lori Patton Davis