



Bridging & Belonging

Forefront Annual Summit

DATE

September 25, 2024

PRESENTER

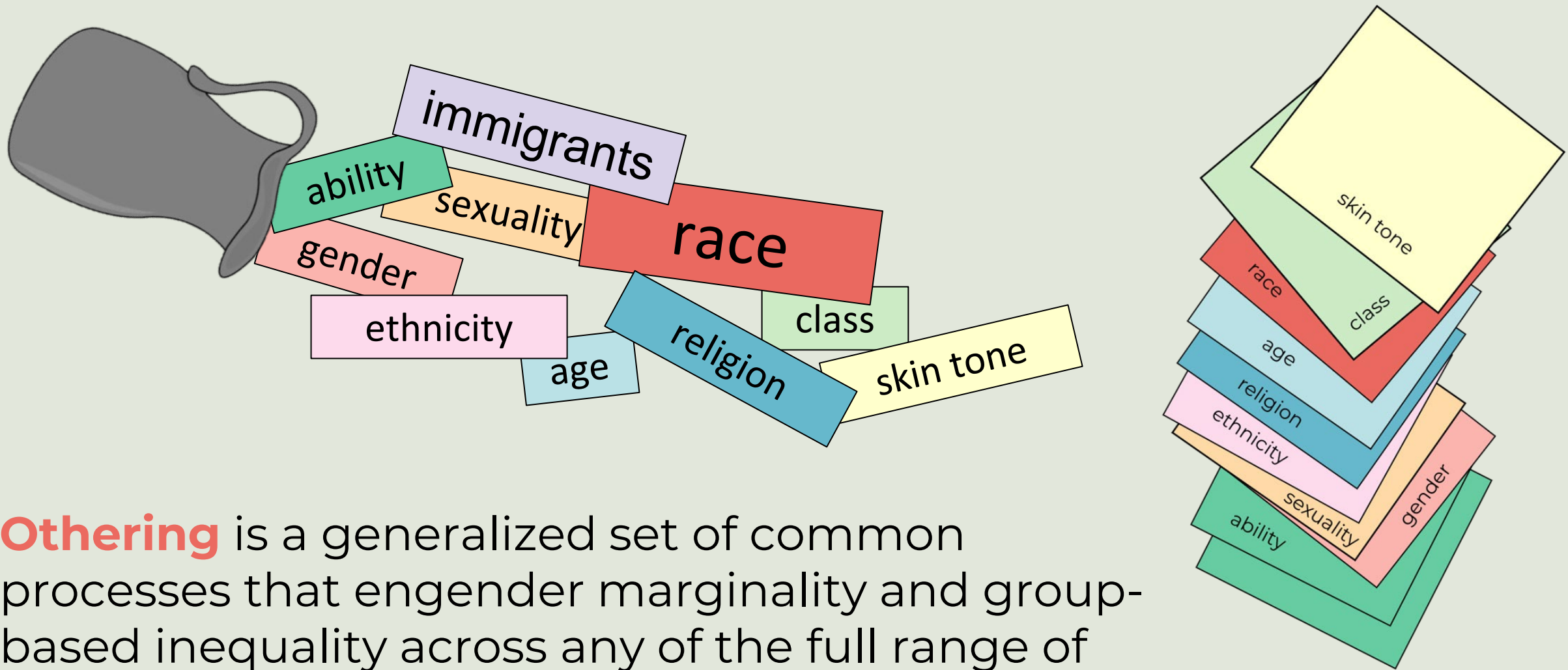
john a. powell, Director

AUTHORIAL SUPPORT

Lara Schiffrin-Sands
Shadrick Small

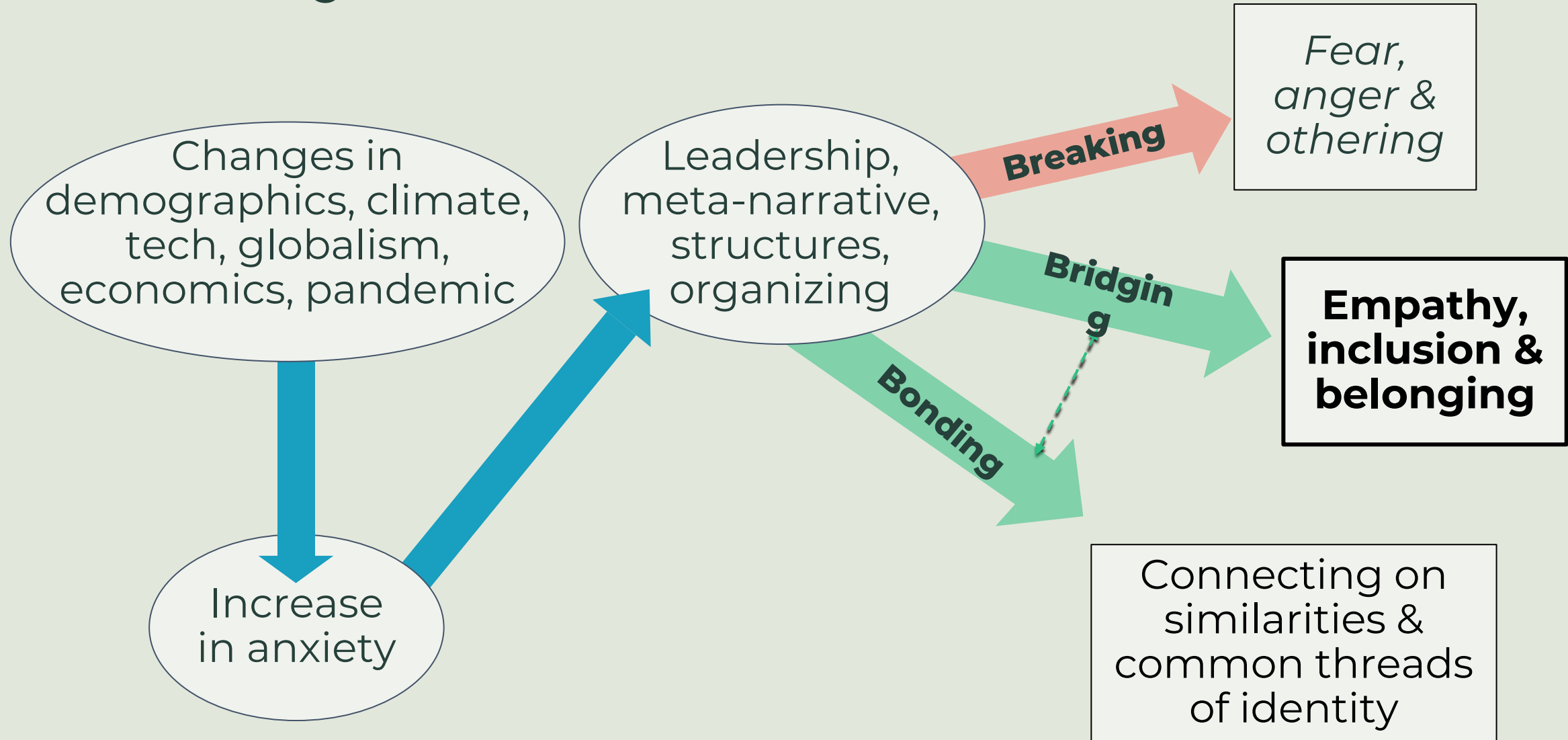
The problem of “othering” is
the problem of the 21st
century.





Othering is a generalized set of common processes that engender marginality and group-based inequality across any of the full range of human differences.

Rapid Change Produces Collective Anxiety



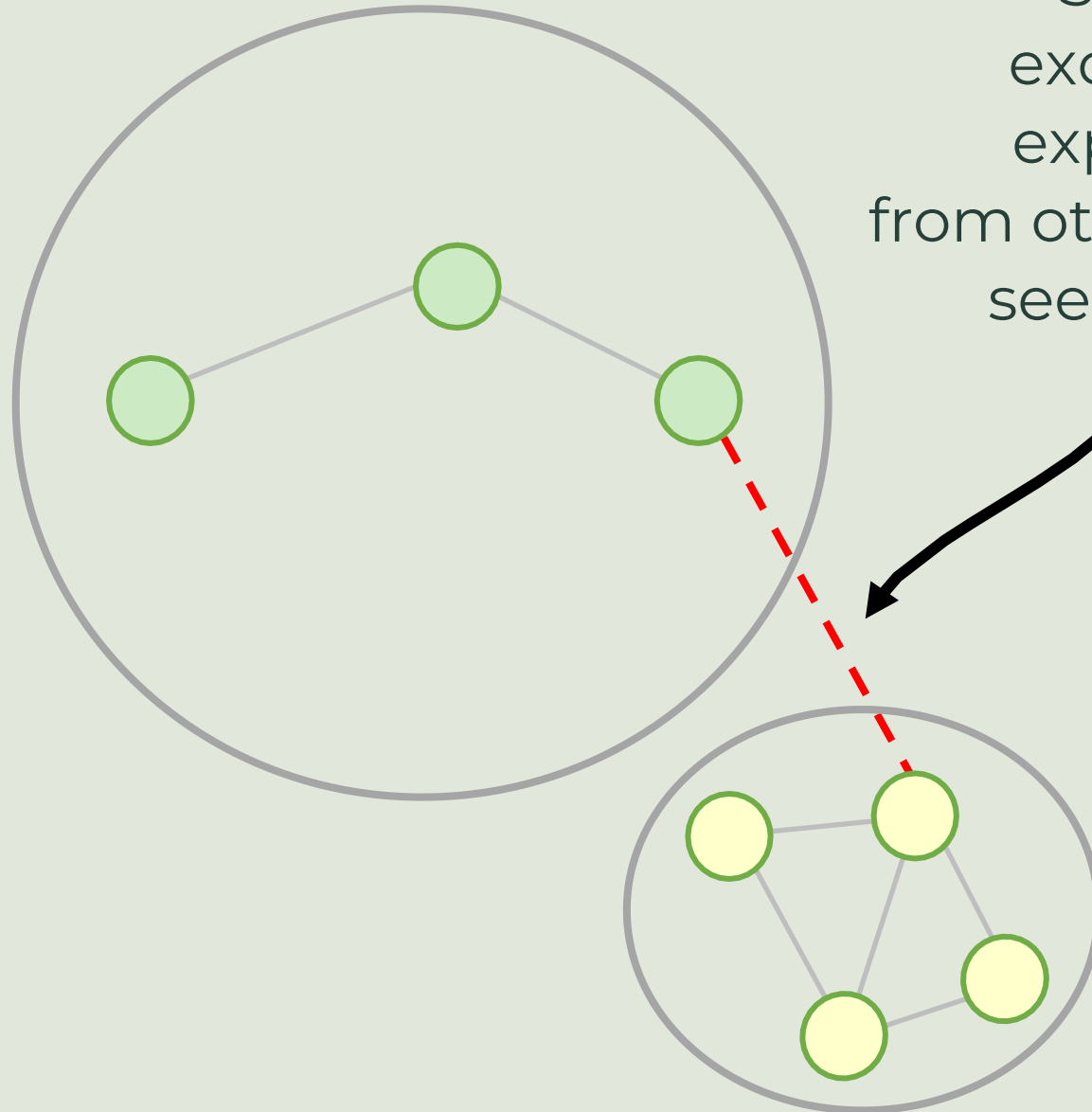
Examples of breaking

BREAKING:

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

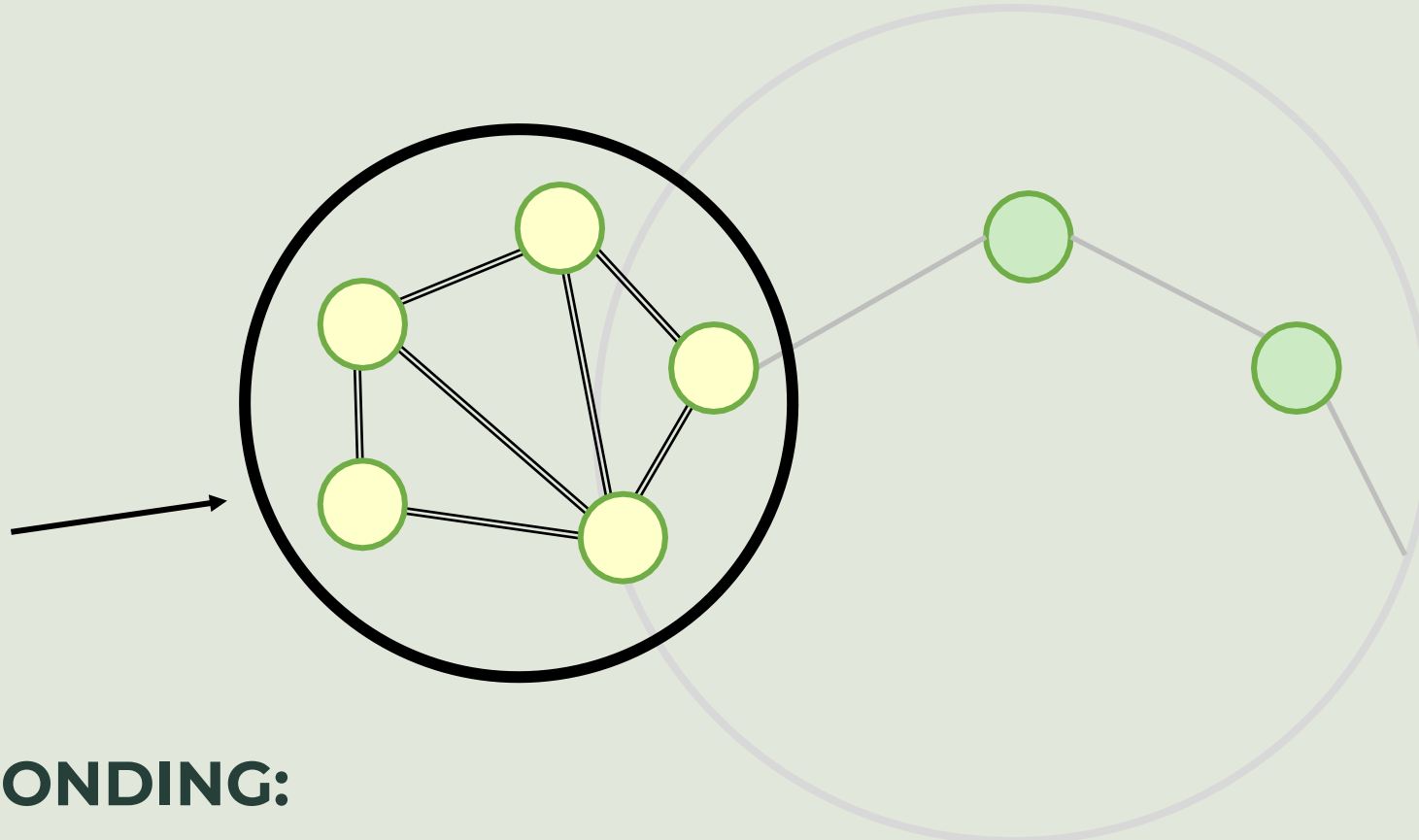


White Nationalism



Conflict Entrepreneurs

Examples of bonding

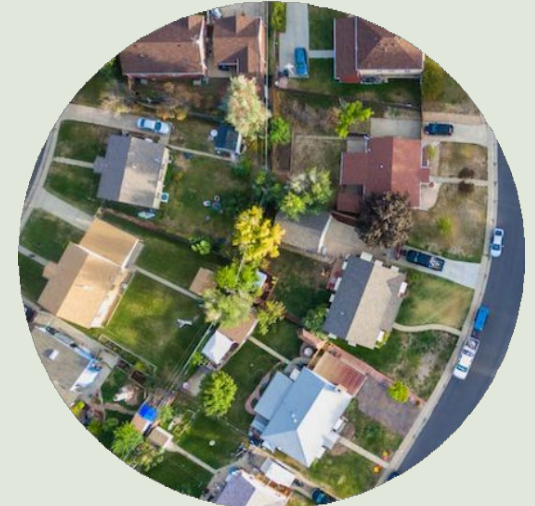


BONDING:

Social ties that link people together with others who are primarily like them along some key dimension. These are genuinely easier to build than bridging social capital.

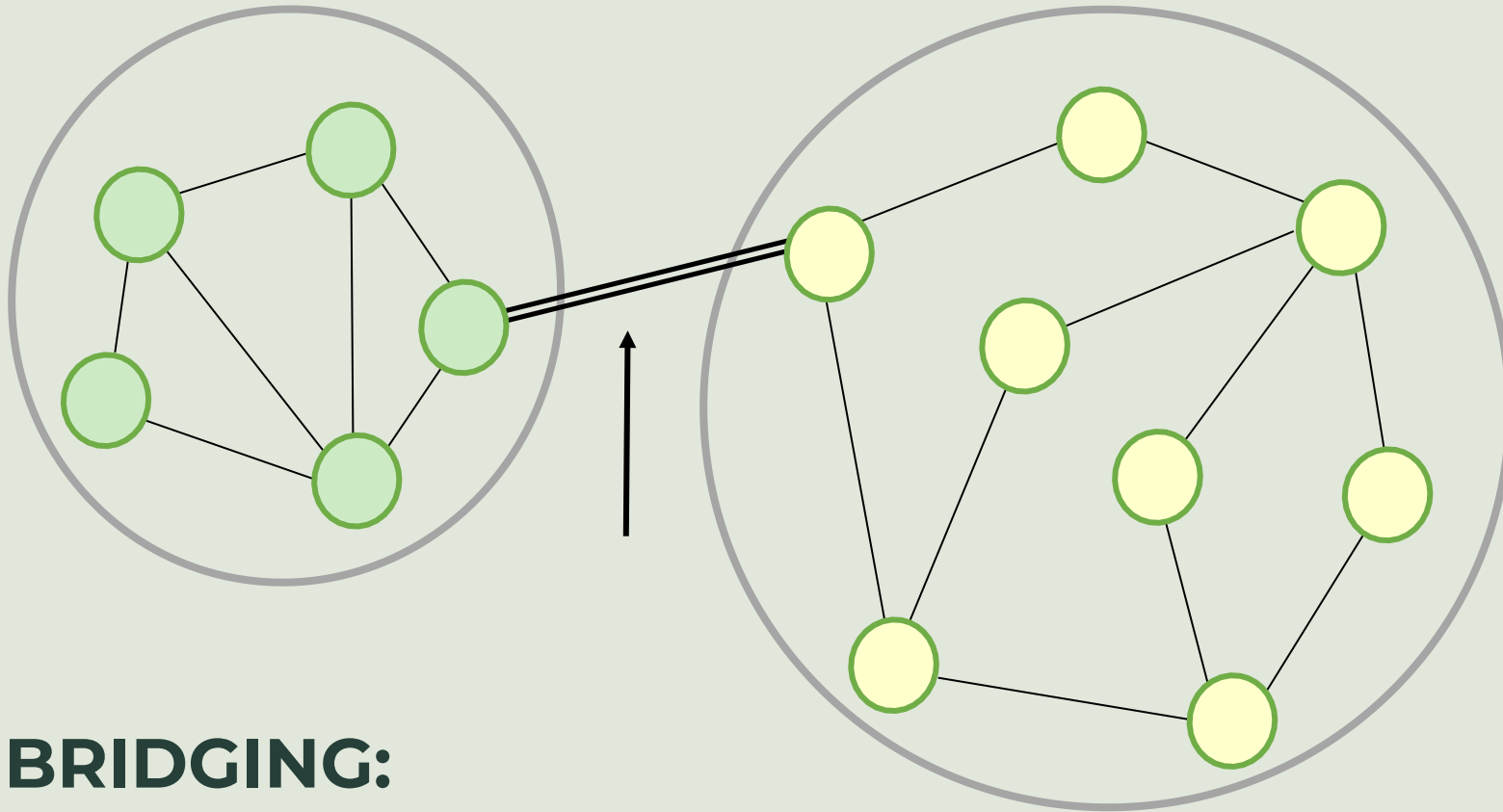


Family



Neighborhoods

Examples of bridging



BRIDGING:

Social ties that link people together with others across a cleavage that typically divides society; bridging expands the circle of human concern to build a more inclusive “we”



**LGBT
Movement**



**Community vigil in
New Zealand (2019)**



The opposite of othering is
not same-ing, but
belonging; sort of.

Elements of Belonging

Inclusion

- Equity
- Absence of exclusion
- Accommodation
- Access

Connection

- Emotional / affective ties to people & places
- Sense of attachment, fondness, safety, or warmth

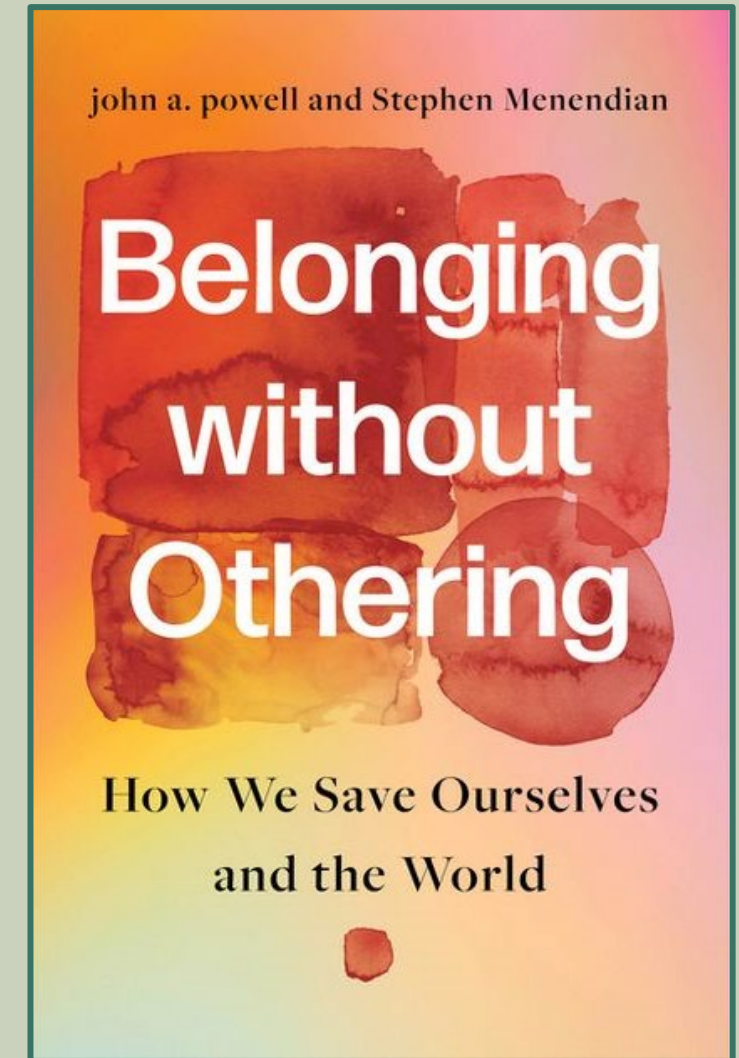
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Recognition

- Demonstration that community or institution sees, respects & values various social identities

Agency

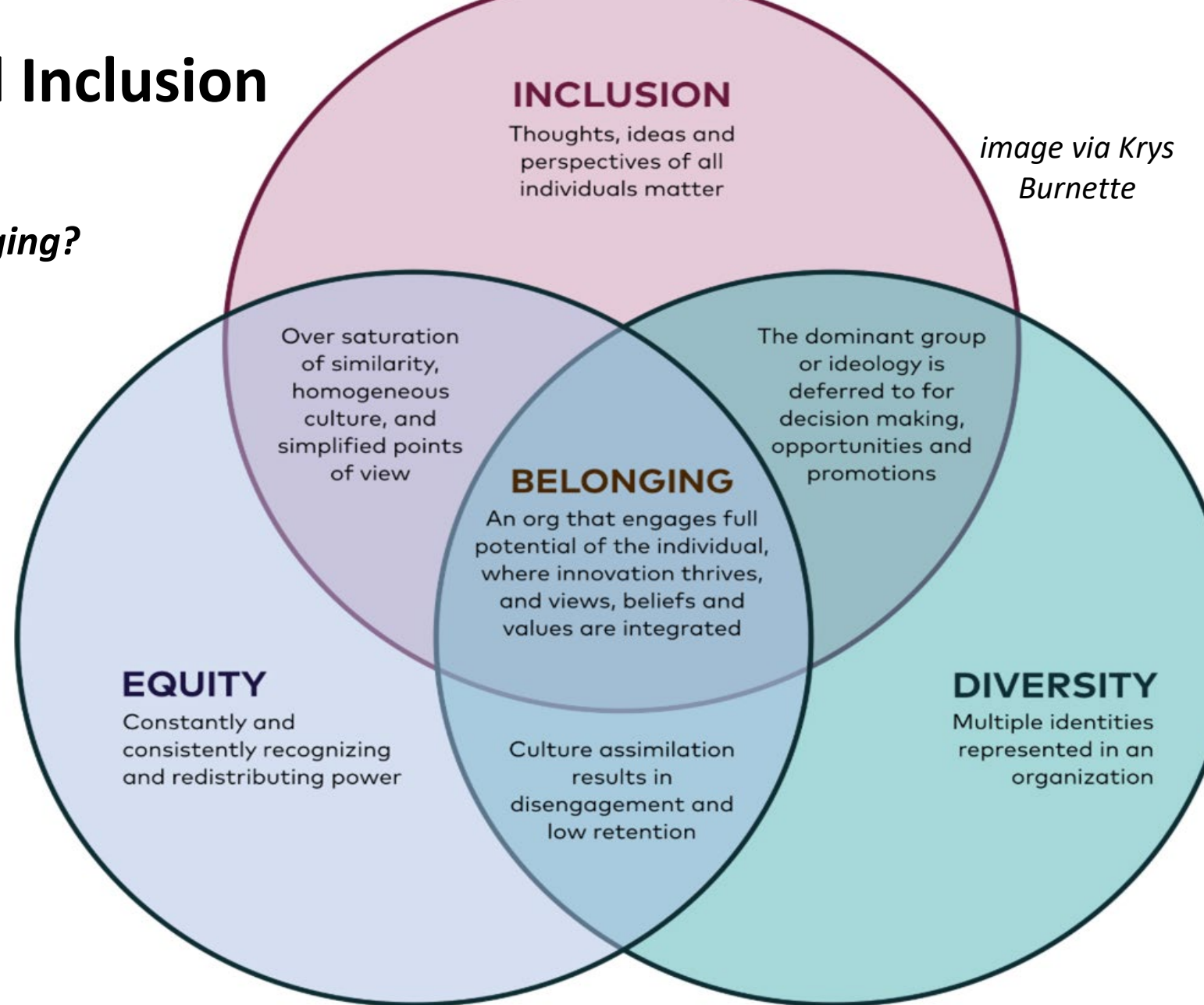
- Individual & collective capacity to co-create the environment and wield (shared) power

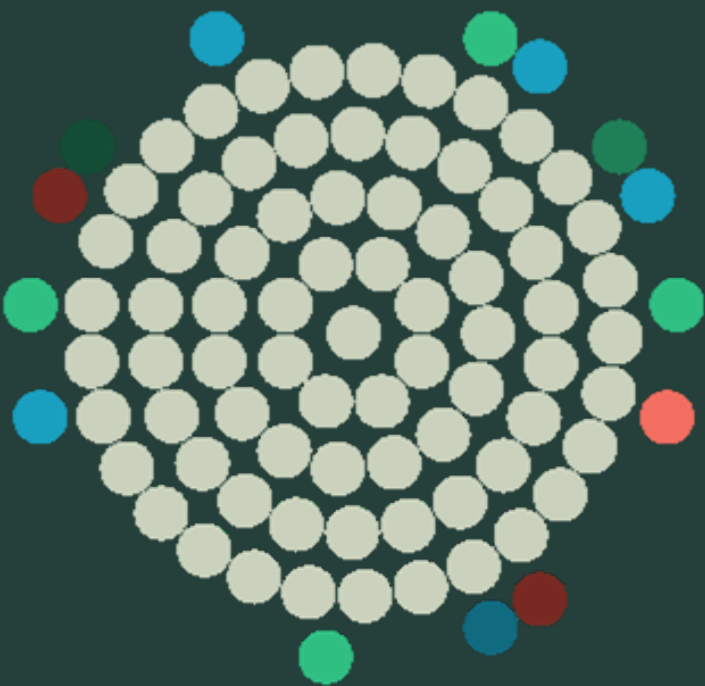


From Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion to Bridging and Belonging

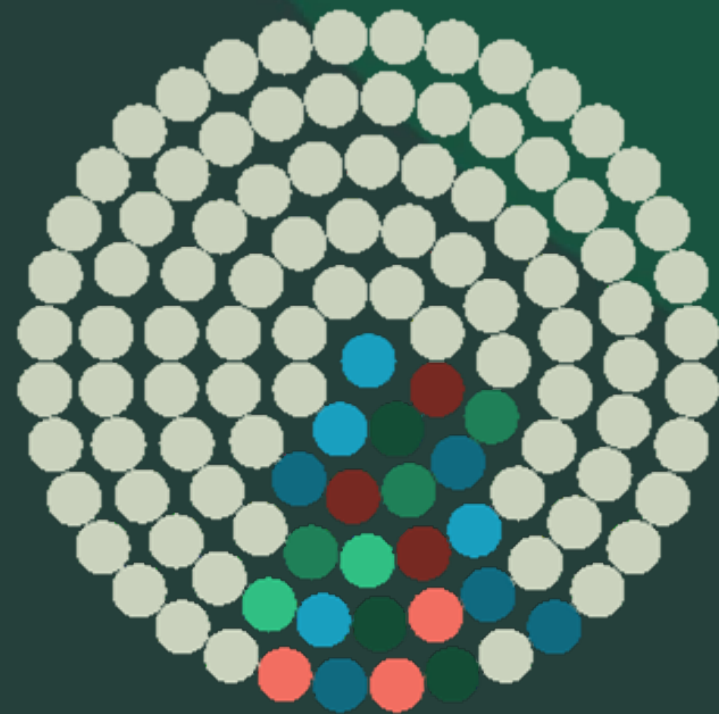
Why move from DEI to Bridging and Belonging?

- We don't want to just welcome people into existing structures
- We want people to co-create structures and institutions together
- We want to build systems that are welcoming to all and that everyone has a stake in, where everyone is represented and the work of bridging happens through co-creation

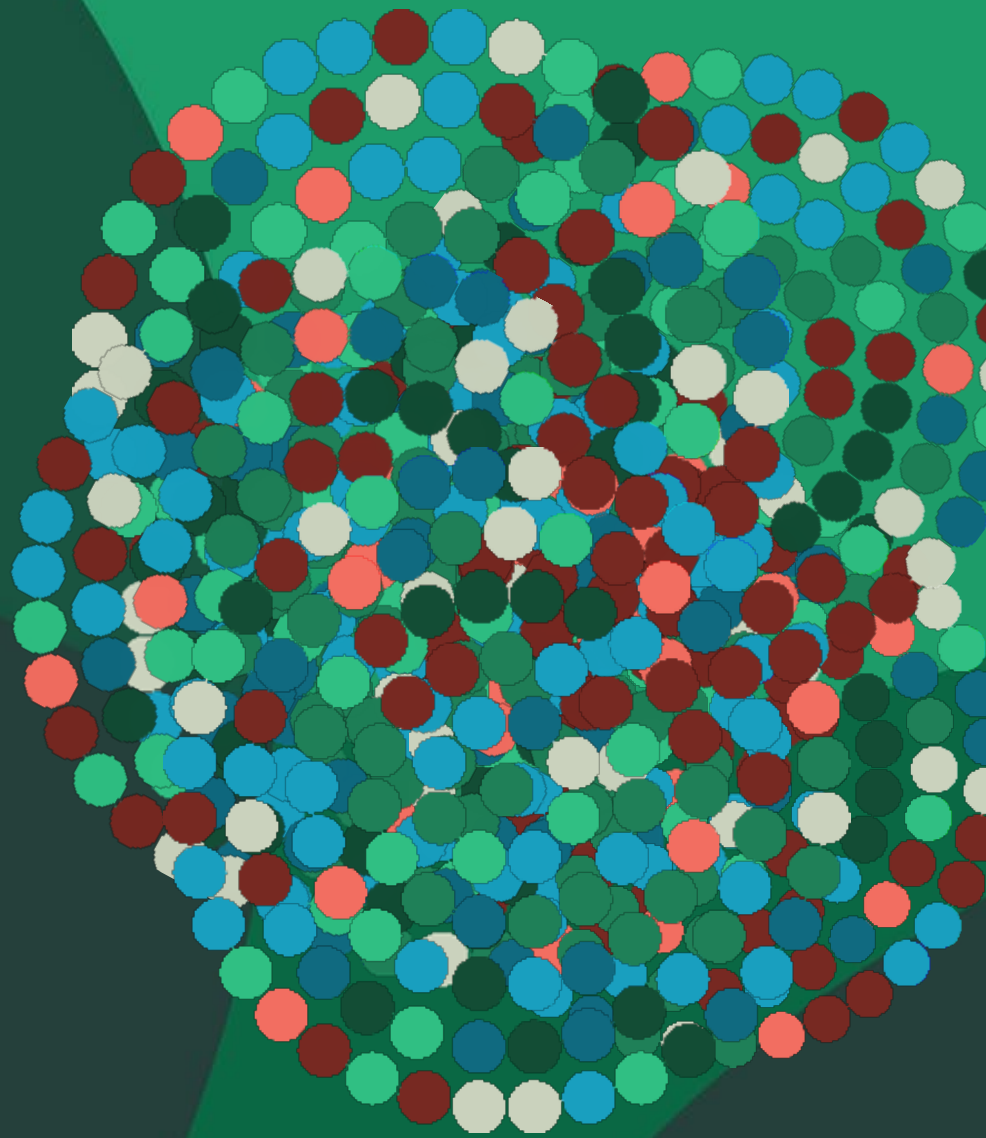




Exclusion



Inclusion



Belonging

How do we bridge in a fragmented environment?

The solution to othering is bridging, not more othering.

While many groups may view “breaking” as a way of protecting themselves from external forces who seek to blame, injure, or divide, this response harms movements’ ability to build power. As we know, there is power in diversity, numbers, and transformation—all of which require cross-group engagement, not merely in-group bonding.



Multiple Identities and Multiple Stories

We all have multiple identities.

- Identity is fluid. When we organize around rigid identity or professional categories, our capacity to bridge is weakened.
- Emancipation is a collective endeavor. This does not mean abandoning identity but linking it in circles of solidarity.
- Our positions inform us but do not trap us.

We all have multiple stories.

- Everyone has positive or negative stories.
- We often value the more negative story. While important, deciding which story to lead with will often set the tone for the rest of the discussion. Resist being stuck in a single story.



Our Multiple Identities Create More Opportunities for Bridging

(age group, gender, religion, socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, etc.)

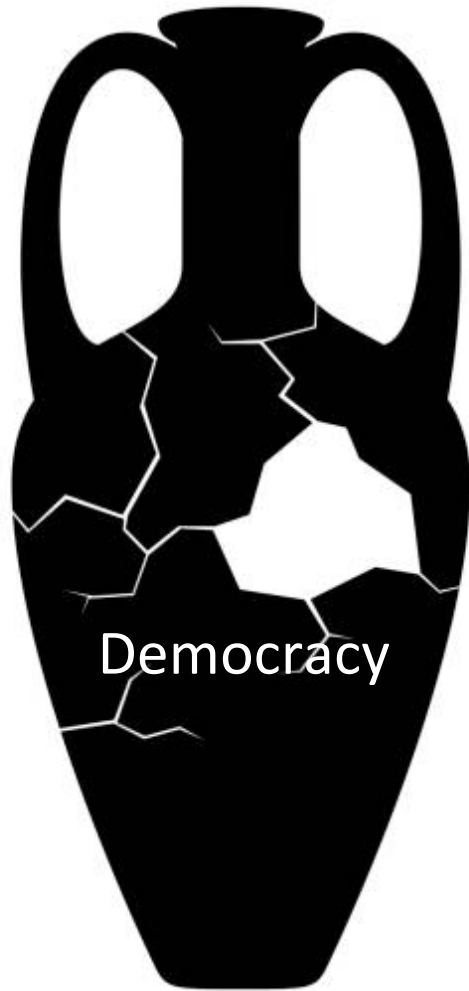
What is the problem you are trying to solve?

Don't define the problem by the nature of your skills

Can't do it allow

Why is collaboration so difficult?

A Crack in the Container



When there's a crack in the container, when the context in which we live is broken, everyone feels othered and our solutions need to be more radical.

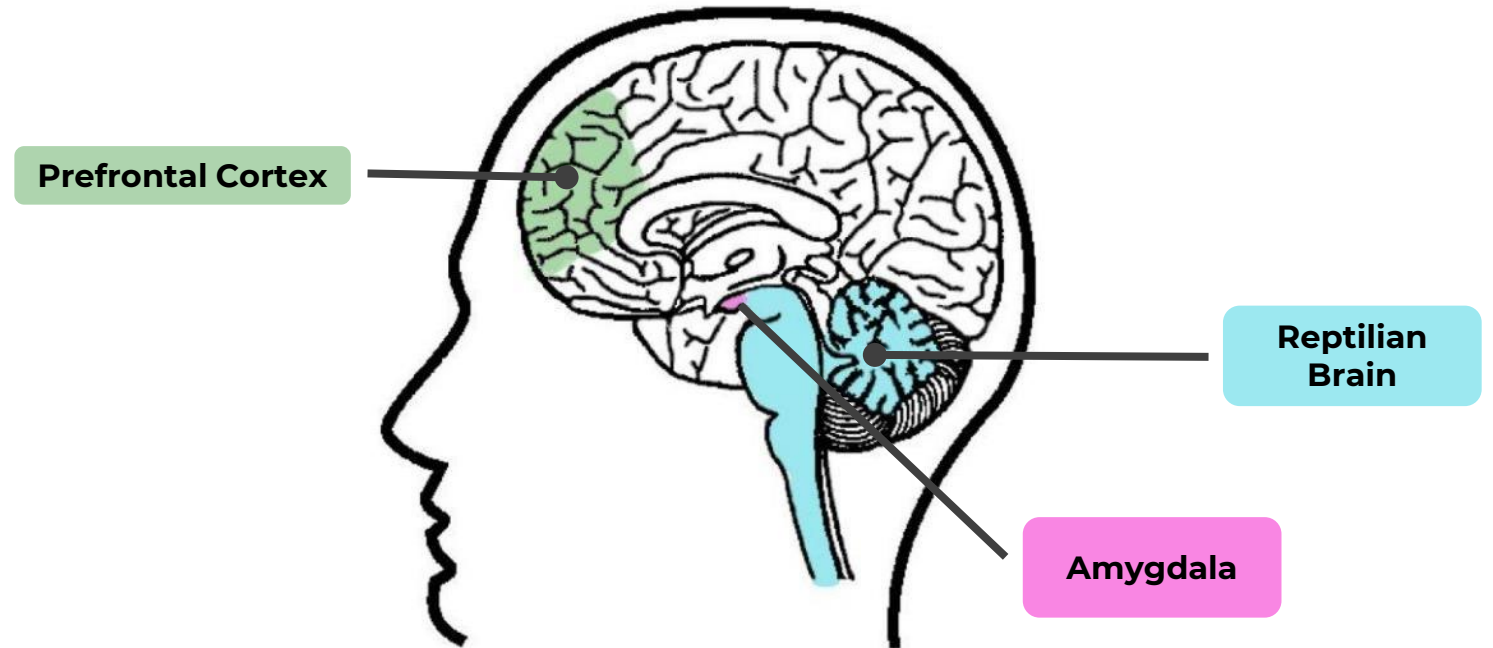
Stories and Narratives

Who's in our stories? Who is represented?
Who is left out?



How do we expand our circles to include everyone in our stories and narratives?

Can we bridge with the lizard?



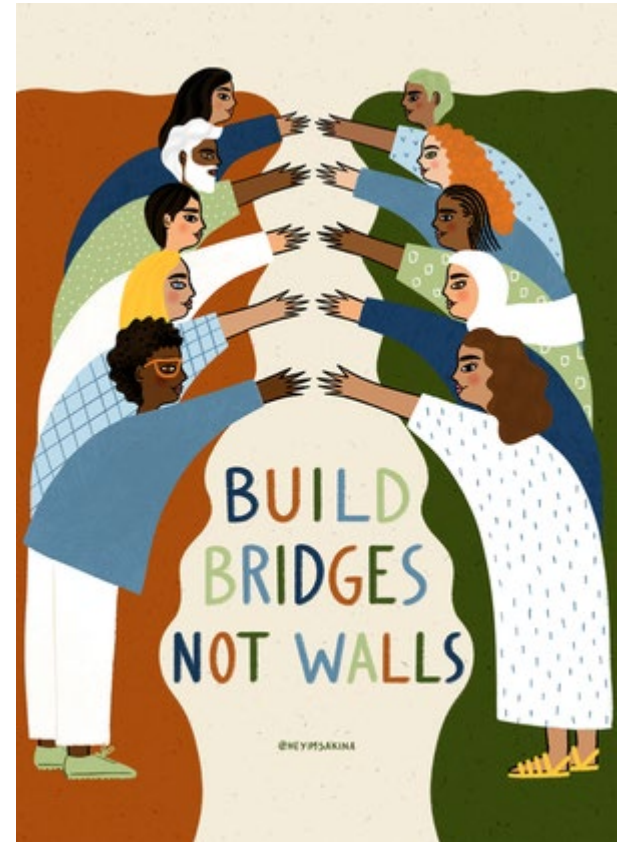
The “Lizard Brain,” Fear, and Othering



Belonging: How Can We Get There without Othering?

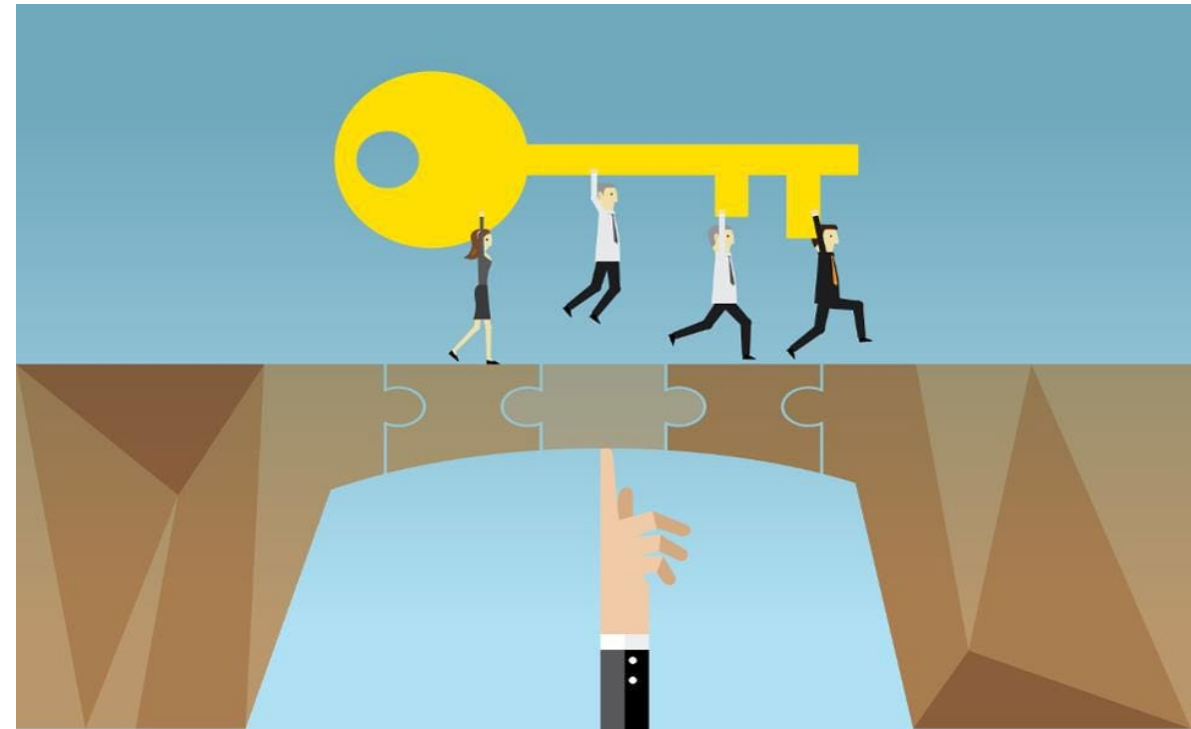
Bridging

Connections linking people across things that typically divide society (race, class, religion, etc.)



Power Impacts Bridging

- Bridging work must consider power differentials and can look very different depending on the structural conditions within which bridging happens
 - Remember: power is positional, structural, and hierarchal.
- People can gain power through *linking* social networks and creating social capital.
 - Individuals can build relationships with institutions and individuals who have relative power to access resources.
 - Those with more power should carry more of the weight of bridging
- Power also shifts.
 - For example: people of color may have more power than whites in certain settings. (e.g., an anti-racism convening)
- Leaders can help redistribute power to foster belonging





Targeted Universalism

(Equity 2.0)



We in the developed world are like homeowners who inherited a house on a piece of land that is beautiful on the outside, but whose soil is unstable loam and rock, heaving and contracting over generations ...



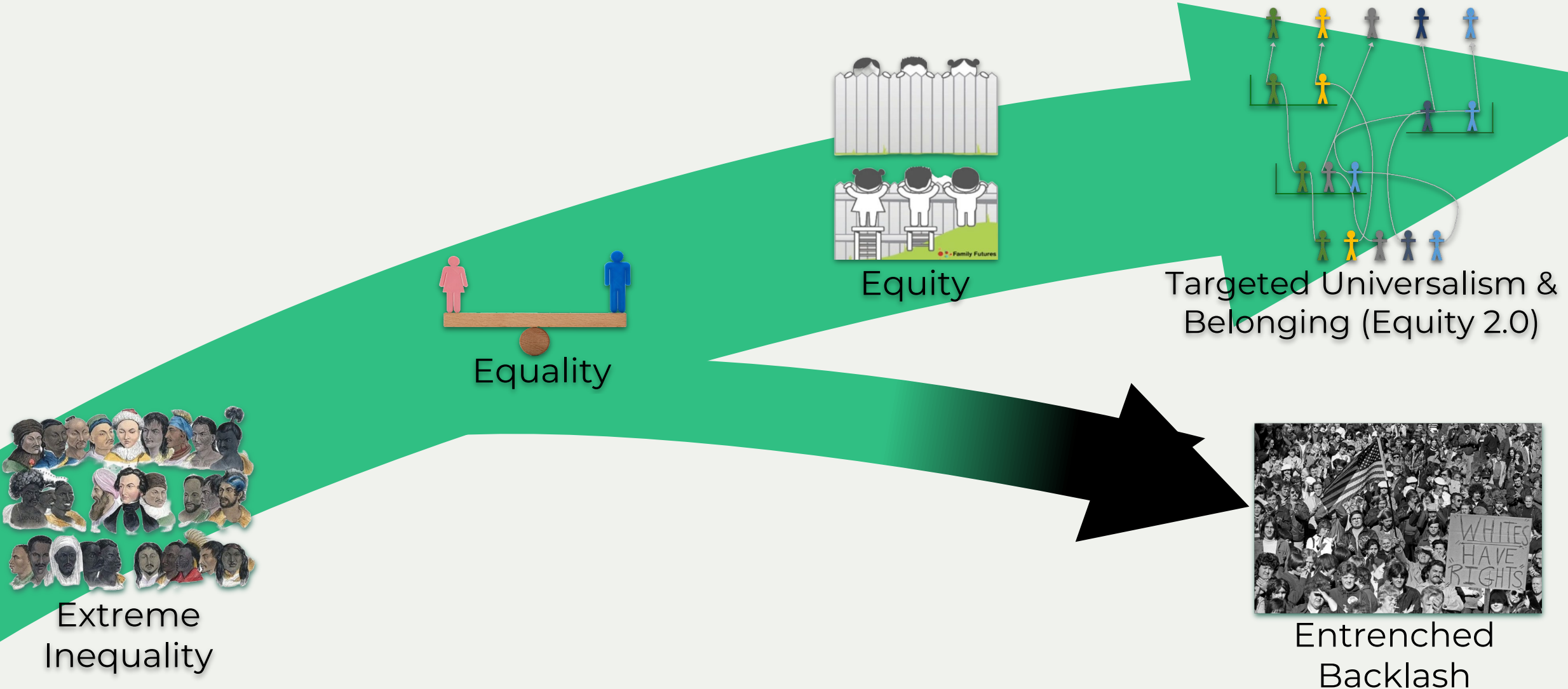
Not one of us was here when this house was built. Our immediate ancestors may have had nothing to do with it, but here we are, the current occupants of a property with stress cracks and bowed walls and fissures built into the foundation.

We are the heirs to whatever is right or wrong with it. We did not erect the uneven pillars or joists, but they are ours to deal with now.

Isabel Wilkerson, *Caste*

The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice (belonging)

—Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., “Remaining Awake Through a Great Revolution.” Speech given at the National Cathedral, March 31, 1968.



Disparities & equity can be a breaking framework

- **Can cause or deepen breaking**
 - Competition for resources, especially if exclusively focused on marginalized group, deepen cleavages that inhibit movement building and trigger backlash
- **Can obscure meaningful change**

Opinion: Ben Carson: Moving our focus from equality to equity won't defeat racism. It's another kind of racism.

OPINION | COMMENTARY

'Equity' Is a Mandate to Discriminate

The new buzzword tries to hide the aim of throwing out the American principle of equality under the law.

CULTURE

How Equity Will Destroy America

Equity and equal opportunity are fundamentally incompatible.

Headlines from the ongoing backlash against equity initiatives

Universal Approaches

Government 'not siding' with one group over another

- Examples: minimum wage, universal health care



President Obama high-fives children in a pre-kindergarten classroom at College Heights early childhood learning center in Decatur, Georgia, February 14, 2013. REUTERS/Jason Reed

Criticism of unwarranted government spending

- 2013 Pres. Obama universal pre-K program, projected \$12.3 billion each year

Exacerbate disparities and deepen inequality and injustice by pursuing a normative target

- Massachusetts' 2006 statewide universal health care law
 - 95% of residents obtained health care insurance (84% national average)
 - Health care insurance provision did not translate into access to health care

Targeted Approaches

Targeted policies are those that **extend benefits or protections to a targeted group, and not to individuals outside of that group.**

Examples:

- Social Security Old Age Benefits
- SNAP
- Affirmative Action
- Veterans Benefits (The GI Bill)
- Medicare/Medicaid



Advocates called for full Medicaid expansion in Mississippi at a rally at the State Capitol last month. Rogelio V. Solis/Associated Press



Demonstrators in favor of affirmative action in Washington on Thursday. Kenny Holton/The New York Times

Targeted policies may be less expensive (consider Medicare for all v. public option), but **by targeting a particular group, these approaches are often viewed as unfairly helping one group over another, seeding hostility and resentment.**

Targeted Universalism (TU)

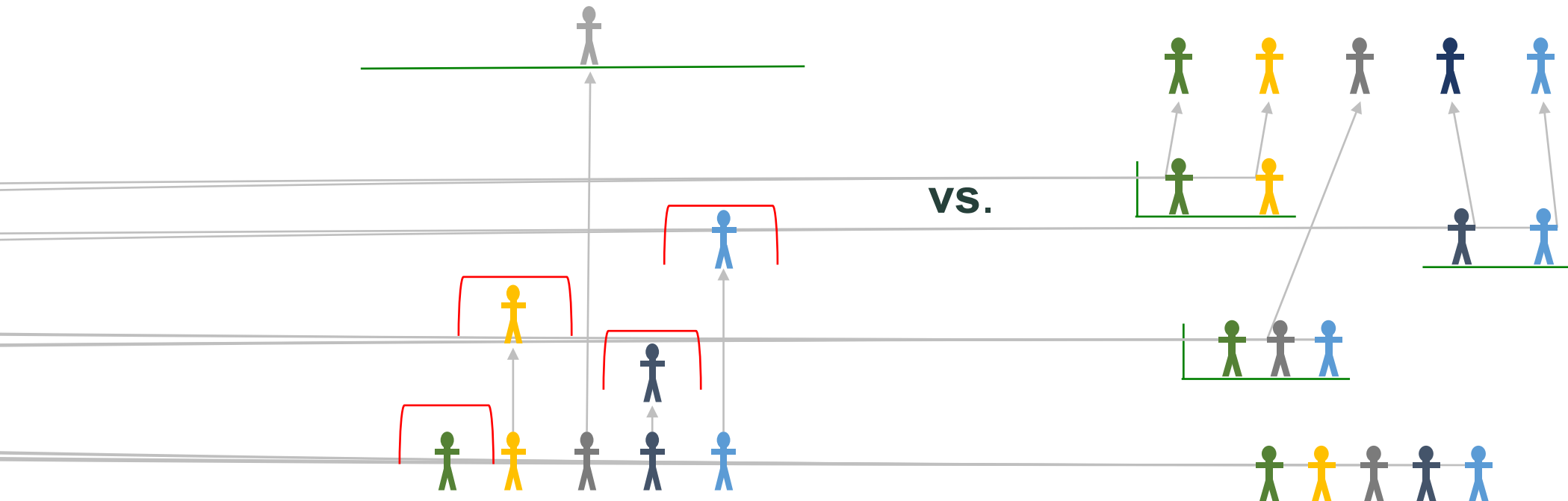
TU is focus on **structures** (situatedness) & **outcomes** (impacts of structural changes).

TU rejects a blanket universal, which is likely to be indifferent to the reality that different groups are situated differently relative to the institutions and resources of society. It also **rejects the claim of formal equality** that would treat all people the same as a way of denying difference.

The TU Framework

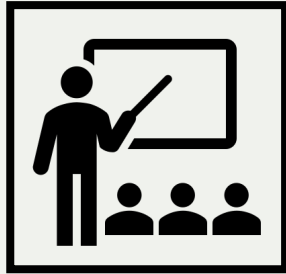
Structural inequity produces consistently different outcomes for different communities

Targeted universalism responds with universal goals and targeted solutions

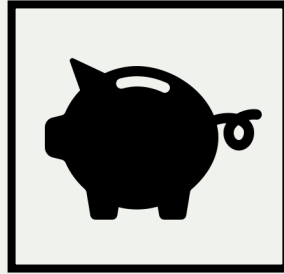


Structures limit and enhance opportunity

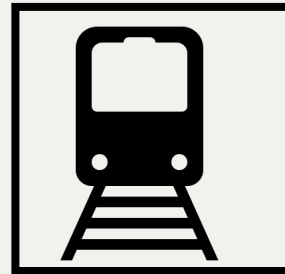
We can define opportunity through **access** to:



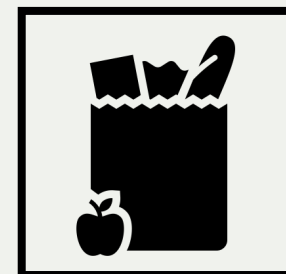
EDUCATION



ECONOMY



TRANSPORTATION



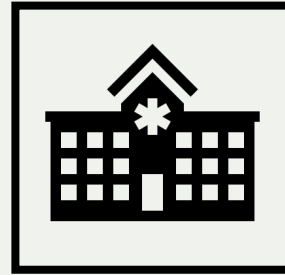
FOOD



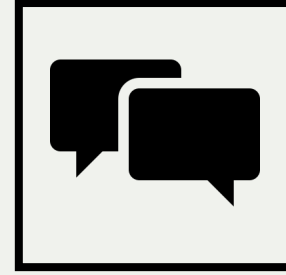
HOUSING



JUSTICE



HEALTHCARE



COMMUNICATION
S

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

Structures do work (1/2)

Structures are not neutral. They do work.

Think about the design of airplanes.

How might they be biased?

While most flight attendants and many passengers are female, the luggage bins are designed for tall people with plenty of upper body strength.

Airline seating is designed for smaller sized passenger bodies and bodies of average height.



The goal is not just to remove barriers



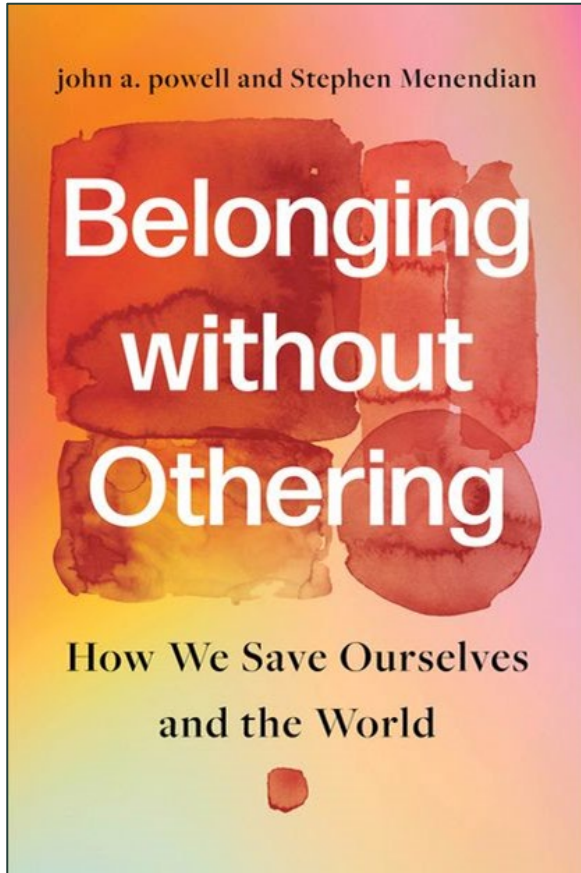
The goal is to co-create new structures for thriving



Frequently thought and sometimes asked questions

- Does T/U take the focus off of marginal communities such as blacks?
- Is T/U just a way to get around the SFFA case or to appease the right wing?
- Is T/U different from equity?
- What does co-creation mean?

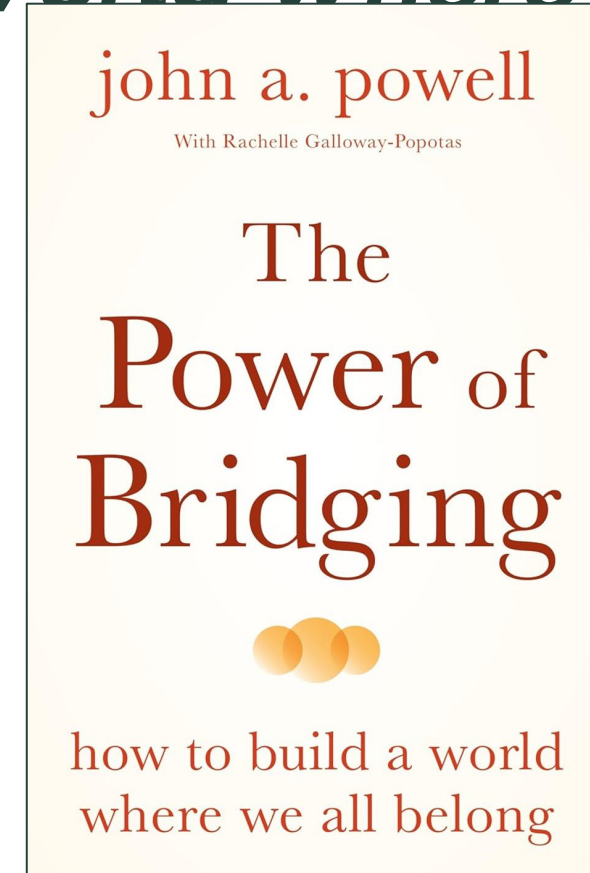
Available now
***Belonging without
Othering***



Available December 2024

***The Power of Bridging:
How to Build a World Where
We All Belong***

by john a. powell



Thinking About Illinois

Illinois Ranks 14th on OBI Inclusiveness Index

Top 15 States

1. Hawaii
2. Maryland
3. Vermont
4. California
5. Nevada
6. Delaware
7. Colorado
8. Rhode Island
9. Virginia
10. New Hampshire
11. Nebraska
12. Utah
13. Minnesota
- 14. Illinois**
15. Arizona

RACE

RANK/INDEX

13th of 50 **55.68**



GENDER

RANK/INDEX

13th of 50 **65.92**



DISABILITY

RANK/INDEX

46th of 50 **12.47**



LGBTQ+

RANK/INDEX

12th of 50 **66.45**



RELIGION

RANK/INDEX

7th of 50 **61.84**



GENERAL POPULATION

RANK/INDEX

10th of 50 **67.81**



Inclusiveness Index: Illinois

Race

State Legislators ⓘ

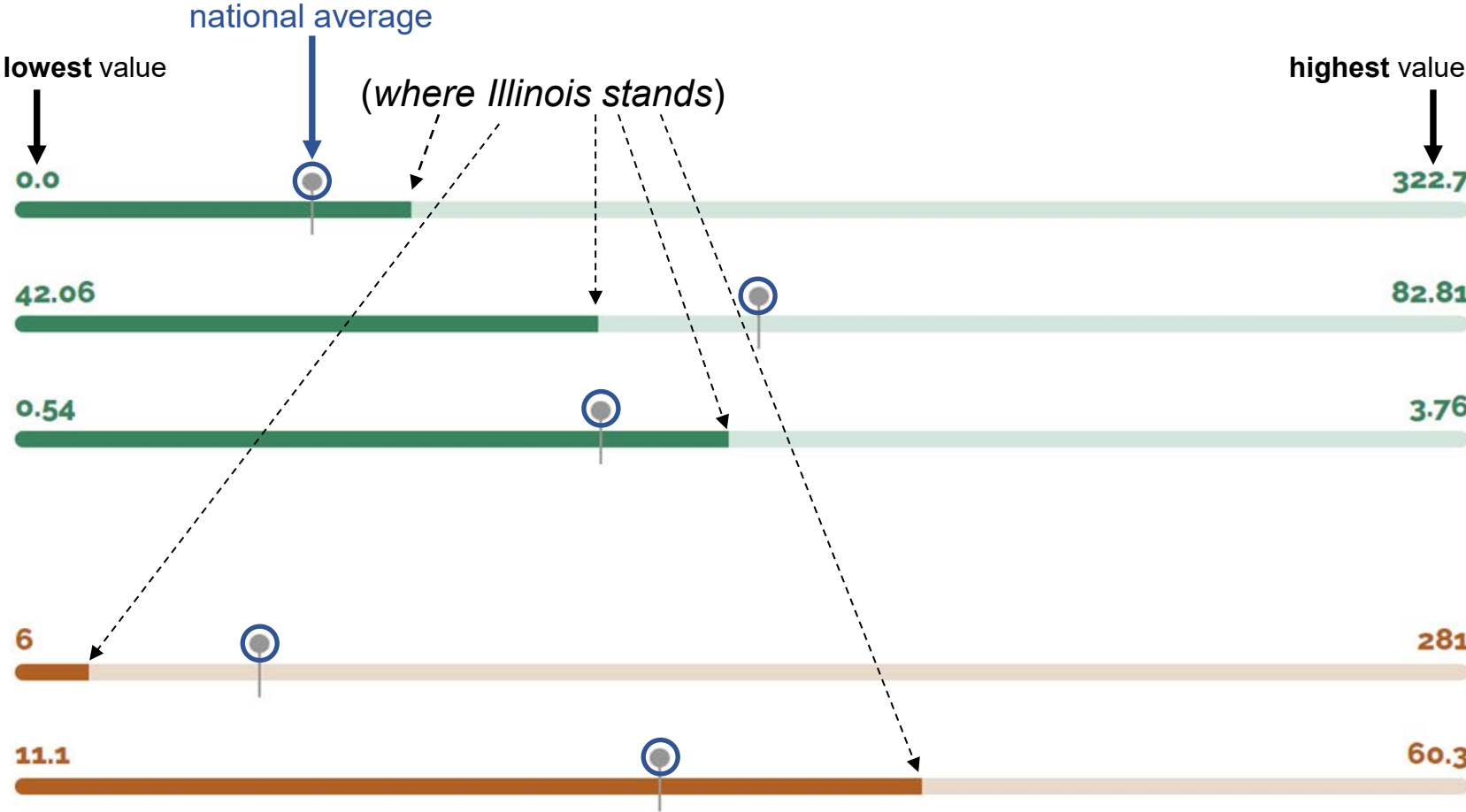
Income Ratio ⓘ

Incarceration by race ⓘ

Gender

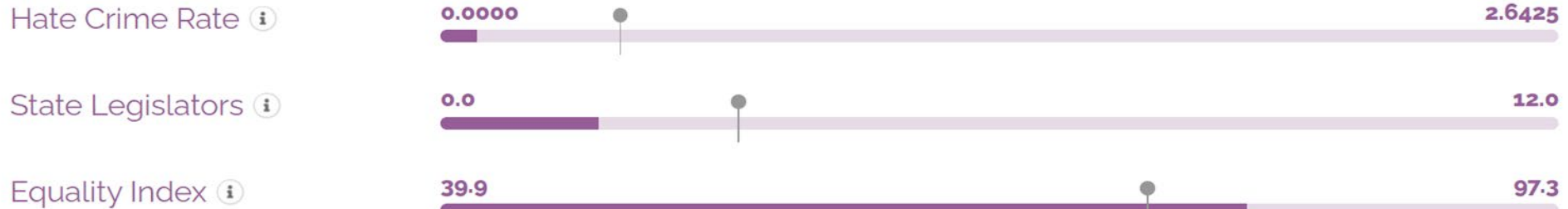
Incarceration rate ⓘ

State Legislators ⓘ



Inclusiveness Index: Illinois

LGBTQ+



Religion

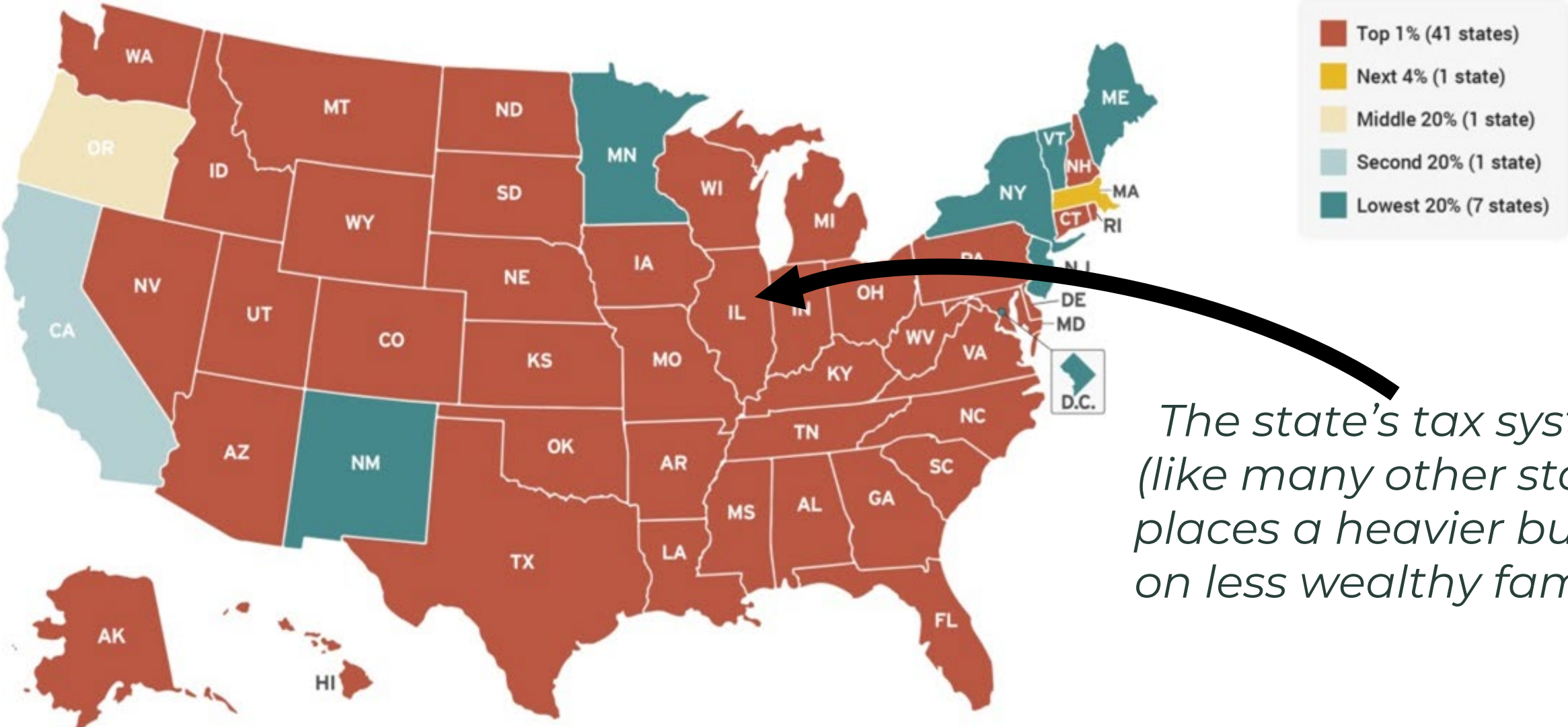


Disability



Lowest-Tax Group Within Each State

The income group for whom state and local taxes, as a share of family income, are lowest



The state's tax system (like many other states') places a heavier burden on less wealthy families.

The 10 Most Regressive State and Local Tax Systems

Taxes as a share of family income and tax features driving these outcomes

Rank	State	ITEP Inequality Index	Lowest 20%	Middle 60%	Top 1%	No Broad-Based Income Tax	Flat-Rate Income Tax	Absence of Refundable Credits	High Reliance on Sales & Excise Taxes	High Reliance on Property Taxes
1	Florida	-9.2%	13.2%	9.1%	2.7%	X		X	X	X
2	Washington	-8.5%	13.8%	10.2%	4.1%	X			X	
3	Tennessee	-8.0%	12.8%	9.4%	3.8%	X		X	X	
4	Pennsylvania	-7.8%	15.1%	11.0%	6.0%		X			
5	Nevada	-7.8%	11.9%	8.4%	2.8%	X		X	X	
6	South Dakota	-7.3%	11.4%	7.8%	2.6%	X		X	X	
7	Texas	-7.2%	12.8%	9.5%	4.6%	X		X	X	X
8	Illinois	-6.6%	14.8%	12.1%	7.3%		X			
9	Arkansas	-6.4%	13.1%	10.7%	5.8%			X	X	
10	Louisiana	-6.3%	13.1%	11.6%	6.5%				X	

States with low ITEP Inequality Index scores have tax systems that exacerbate income inequality

Tax features driving the data in Illinois

PROGRESSIVE



Personal exemption is targeted to low- and middle-income taxpayers

Levies a business franchise tax

Requires combined reporting for the corporate income tax but excludes profits booked overseas, including in tax haven countries

Non-refundable property tax credit

Refundable Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)

Levies a state estate tax



REGRESSIVE

Mismeasurement of home value in the property tax tilts in a regressive direction

State sales tax base includes groceries, though taxed at a lower rate

All retirement income is exempted from the personal income tax

Local sales tax bases include groceries

Real estate transfer tax does not include higher rate on high-value sales

No property tax "circuit breaker" credit for low-income taxpayers

Comparatively high reliance on property taxes

Personal income tax uses a flat rate




Comparatively high combined state and local sales tax rates

Comparatively low-income tax exemptions



No Child Tax Credit (CTC)

Illinois is more complex than regional narratives suggest

Broadband Access (December 2019)

-  Unserved (< 25 Mbps downstream & 3 Mbps upstream or no service available)
-  ≥ 25 Mbps downstream & 3 Mbps upstream
-  ≥ 100 Mbps downstream & 20 Mbps upstream

Poverty and Food Access (2019)

-  **Low income:** poverty rate ≥20% or median family income <80% state or metro area's median family income
-  Low-income, plus significant number of residents is >1 mi (*urban*) or >10 mi (*rural*) from nearest supermarket.

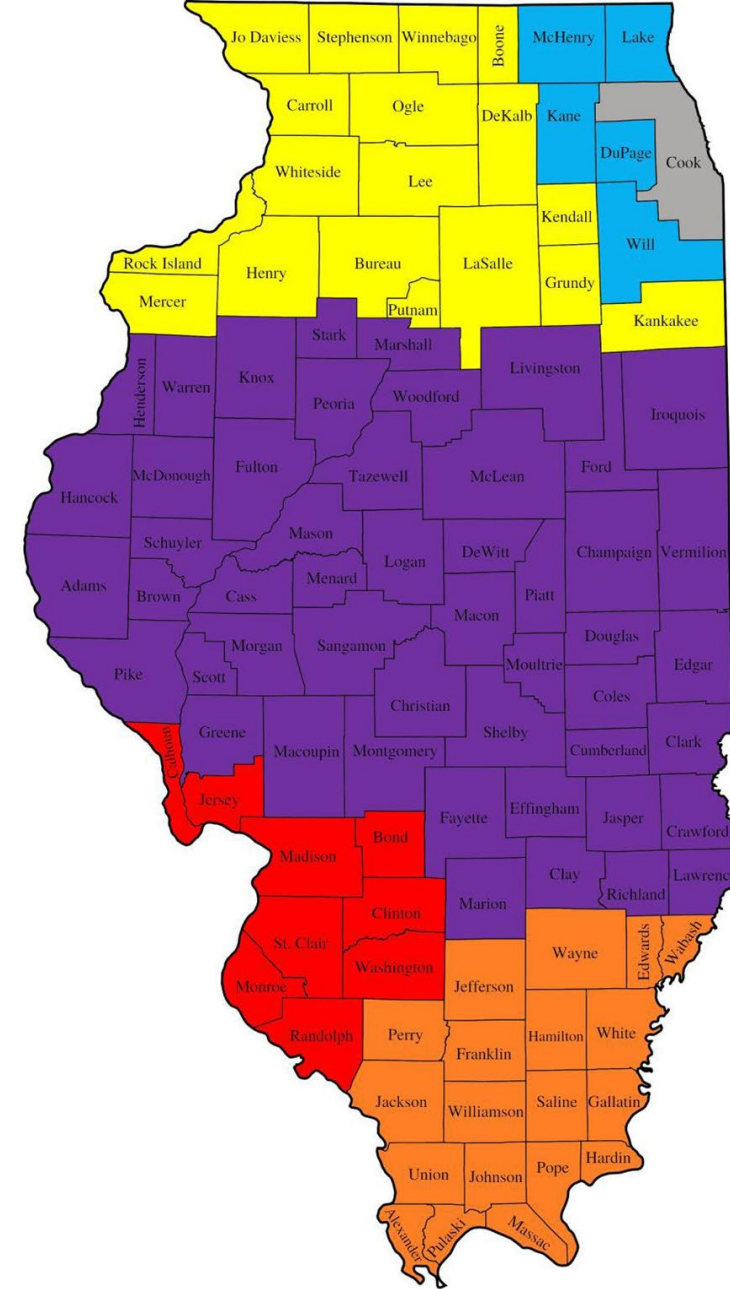
Identifying where to apply targeted strategies is a complex task.

Illinois is more complex than regional narratives suggest

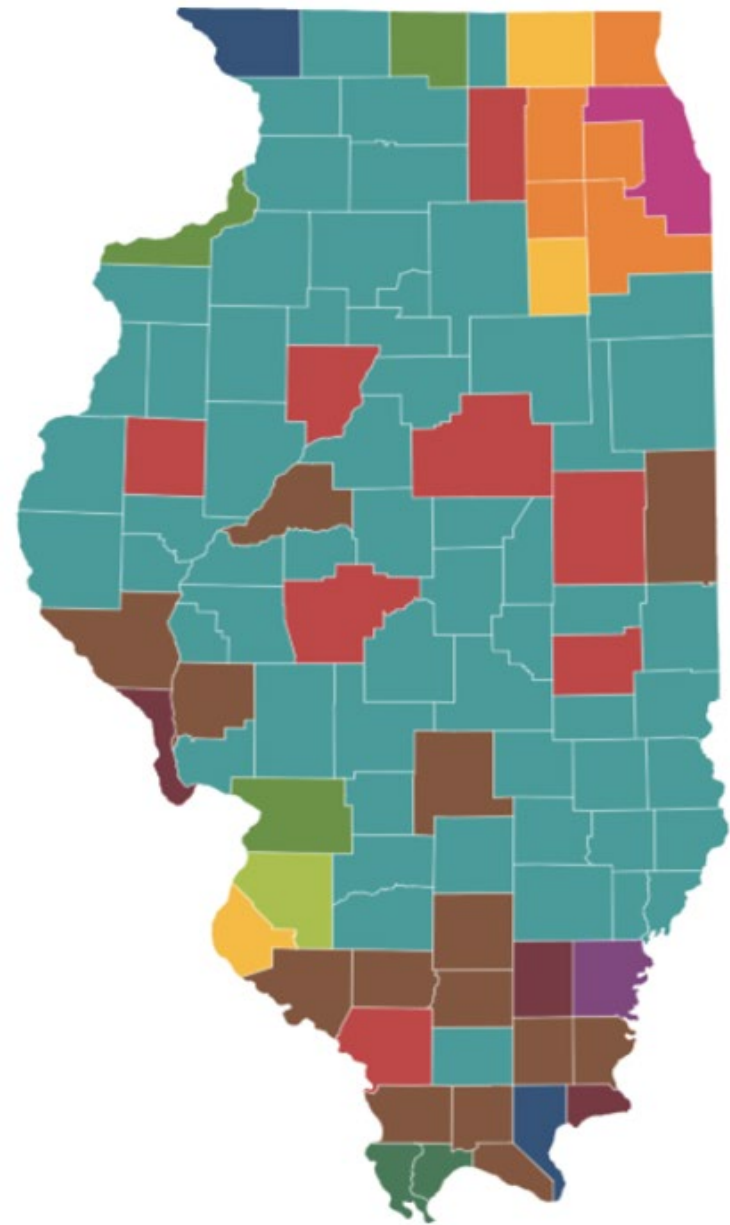
*“Those political leaders who divide Illinois into regions and appeal to regional identity and stir the sense of resentment against other regions have done their work effectively. . . . The counter argument of **‘we are all in this together,’** and **‘what helps Illinois as a whole helps all of us,’** and **‘politics does not have to be a zero-sum game,’** is not getting much traction in Illinois judging by our poll results.”*

State Funds Received vs. State Revenue Generated

	Region	Ratio FY 2014	Ratio FY 2016
	Cook	0.88	0.98
	Suburban	0.54	0.60
	North	1.30	1.38
	Central	2.02	1.80
	Southwest	1.45	1.42
	South	3.02	2.88



Illinois is more complex than regional narratives suggest



African American South: Places with large African American populations. Lower incomes and higher unemployment.

Aging Farmlands: Sparsely populated and overwhelmingly white. Low unemployment, agricultural economy.

Big Cities: Counties holding the nation's largest cities. Dense and diverse.

College Towns: Urban and rural communities that are home to campuses and college students.

Evangelical Hubs: Places with above-average numbers for evangelical adherents. Largely Southern with fewer college grads.

Exurbs: Wealthy communities usually on the edge of metro areas, Largely white with lower crime rates.

Graying America: Places with large senior communities. Generally rural and less diverse, middle-income.

Middle Suburbs: Middle-income, blue-collar communities mostly around metro areas.

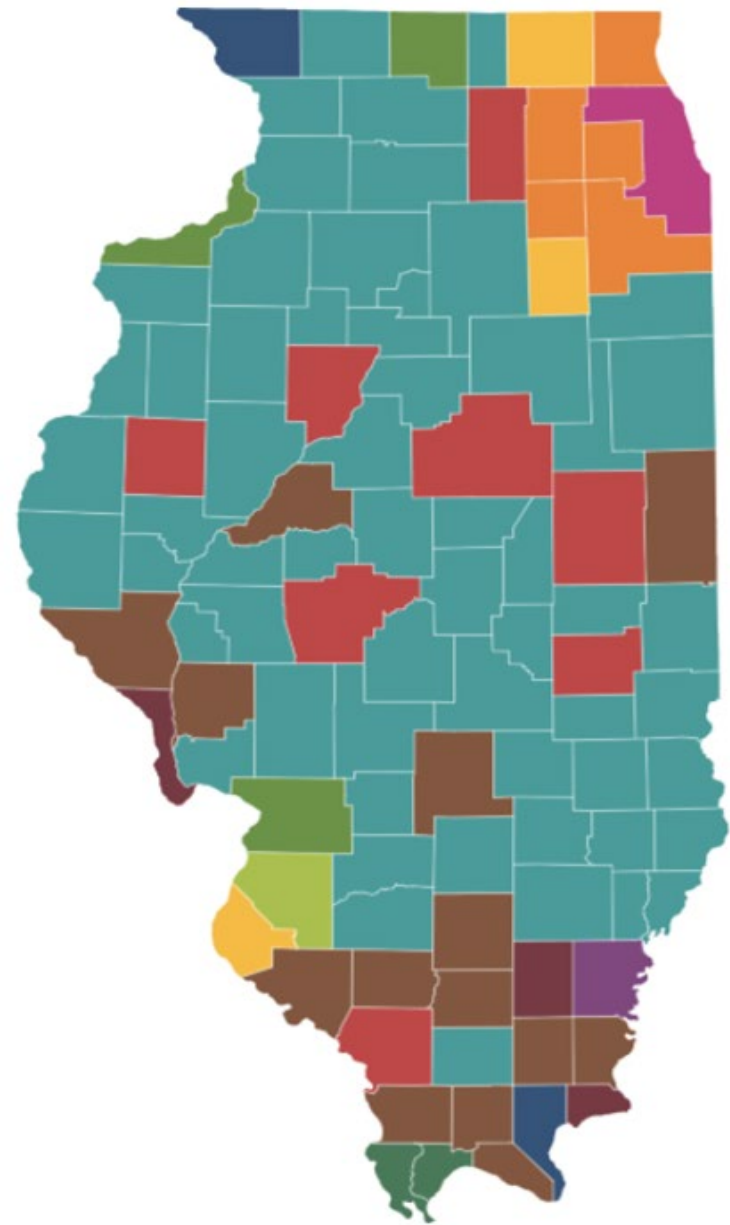
Military Posts: Located around military installations. Younger, middle-income, diverse communities.

Rural Middle America: Largely rural and white communities. Middle income and average educational attainment.

Urban Suburbs: Educated and densely populated communities around major metros. Racially and economically diverse.

Working Class Country: Rural, blue-collar communities. Low incomes and college graduation rates.

Illinois is more complex than regional narratives suggest



Americans have a lot more in common with each other than is generally believed.

% in the nation and in each community type who agree with the statement above.

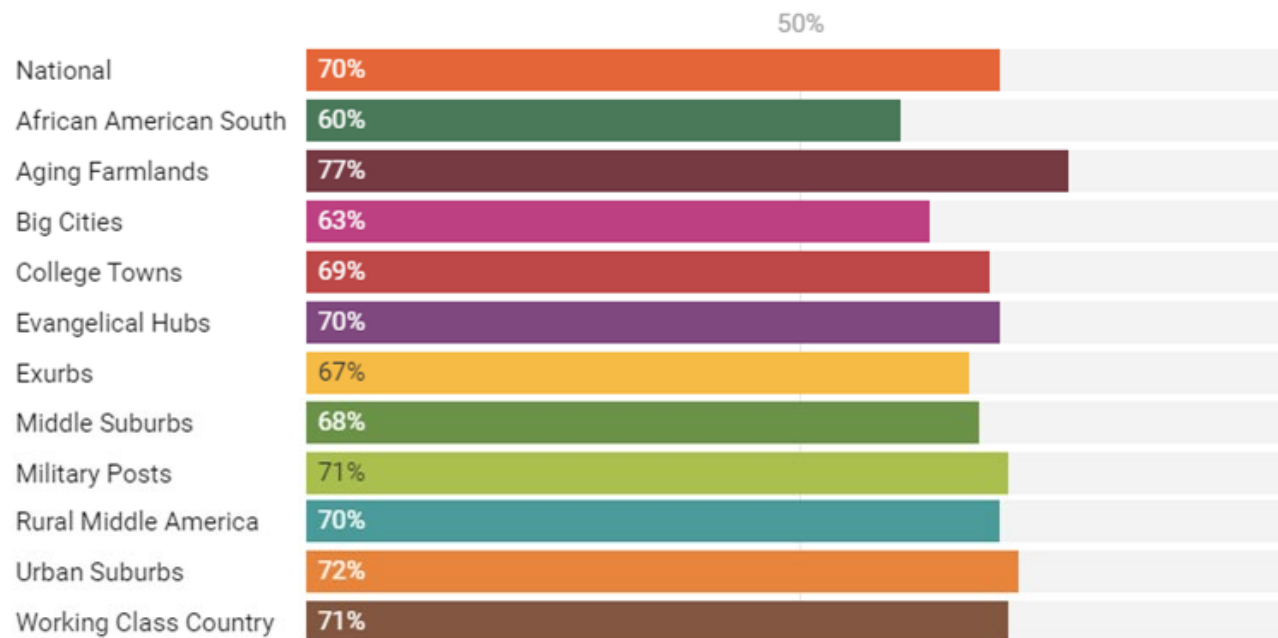


Chart: American Communities Project • Source: American Communities Project/Ipsos Fragmentation Study, June 7-23, 2023, using Ipsos' probability-based KnowledgePanel® and from June 12-23, 2023, and July 7-10, 2023, using RDD Telephone. The poll is based on a sample of 5,093 Americans aged 18 or older, with 4,493 interviews taking place online and 600 interviews via telephone. • [Get the data](#) • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

A Belonging City in Rockford Illinois

Belonging Task Force Structure



Artists, sponsors and other supporters of the Rockford Area Arts Council's Screw City Steel initiative pose for a photo Tuesday, Oct. 4, 2022, in front of Laura Gommel's mural in Davis Park. (Photo by Kevin Haas/Rock River Current)

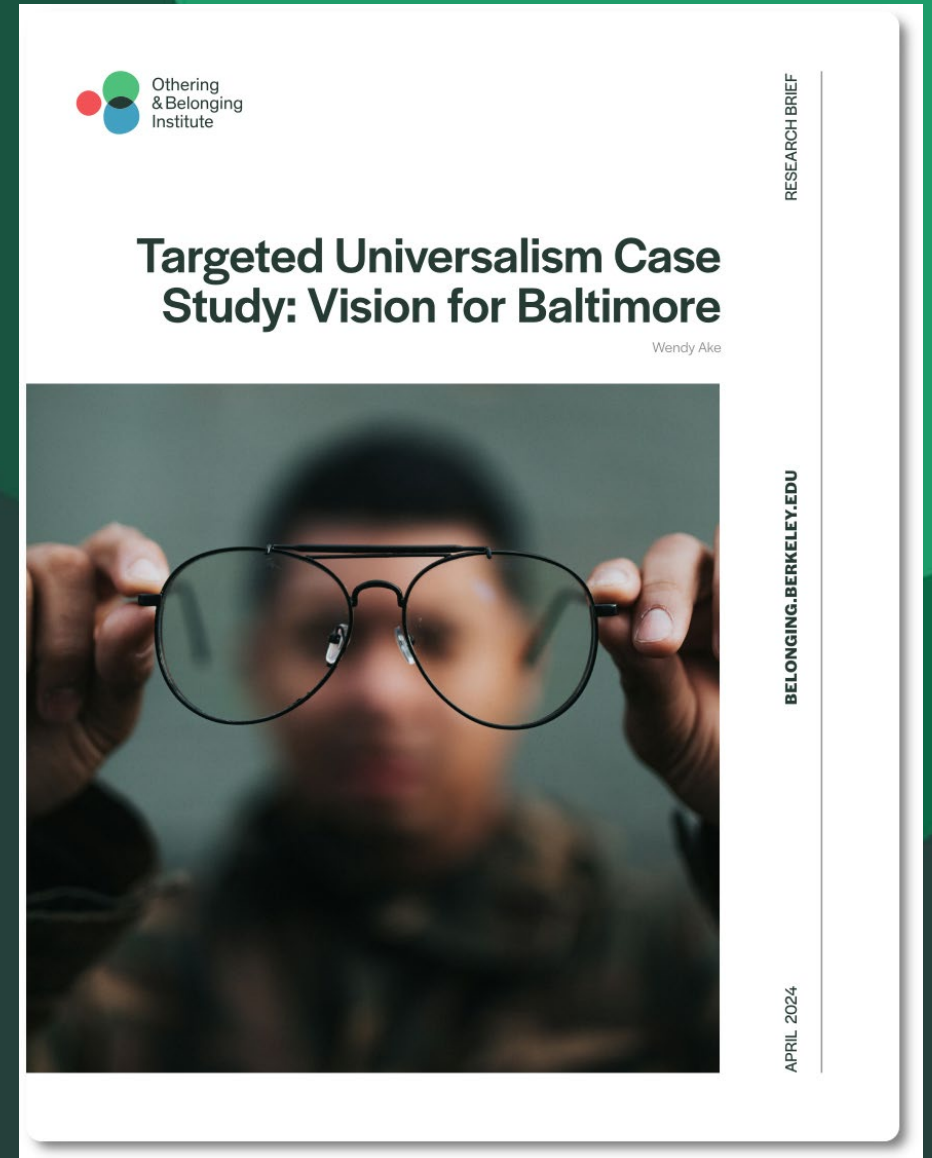
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Keep up with important news, updates on our work at OBI, and upcoming events.

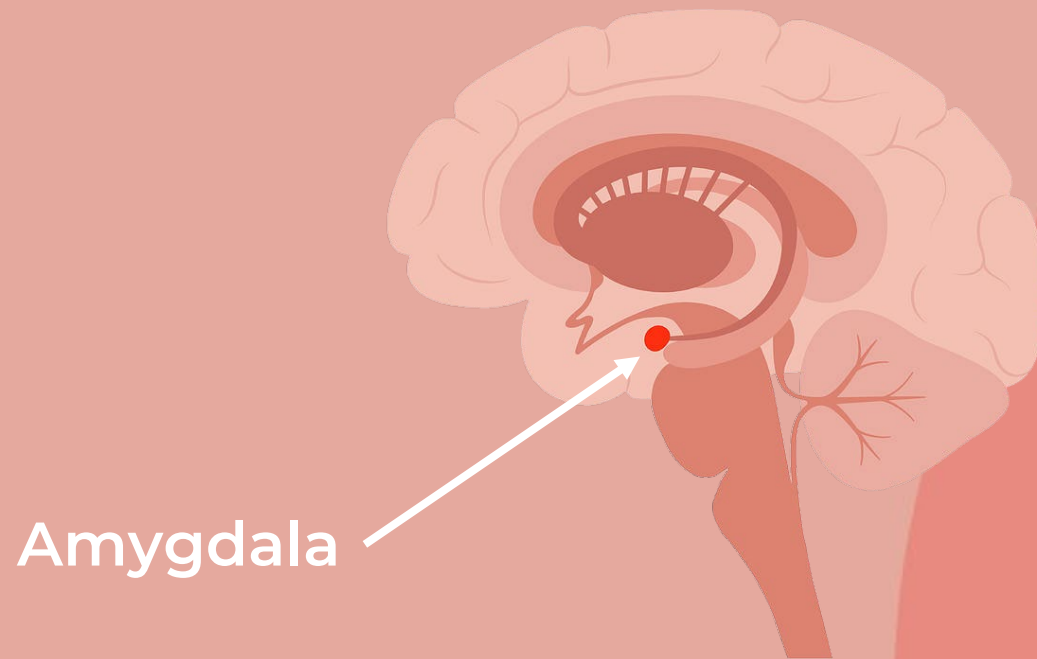


Scan to sign up!

<https://belonging.berkeley.edu/#email-signup-modal>



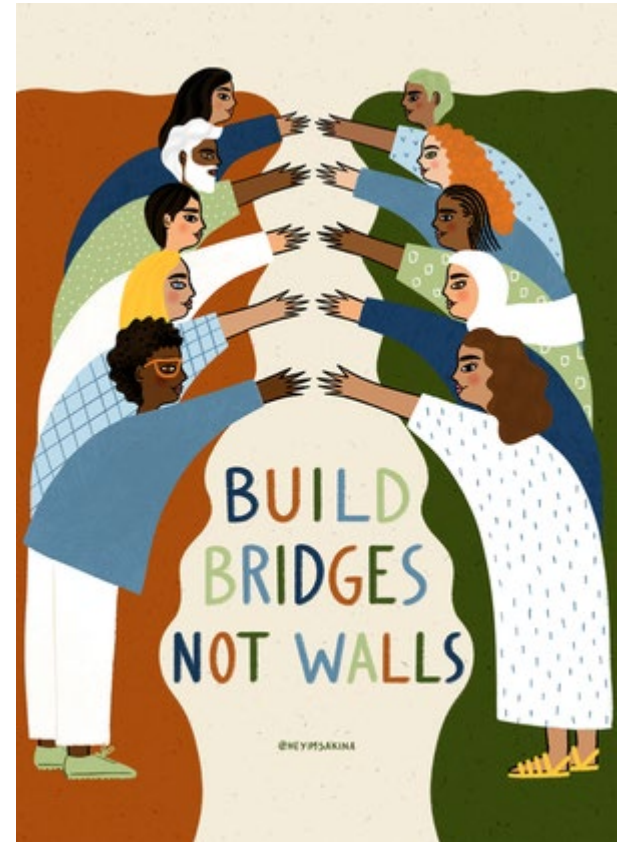
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Belonging: How Can We Get There without Othering?

Bridging

Connections linking people across things that typically divide society (race, class, religion, etc.)



Can we bridge with the lizard?

