GETTING TO EQUITY?
CHALLENGING STRUCTURAL RACIALIZATION AND IMPLICIT BIAS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD

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October 18, 2016

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO CONSIDER STRUCTURAL RACISM AND EQUITY IN DEVELOPING POLICIES, SERVICES AND PROGRAMS SERVING INFANTS AND TODDLERS?
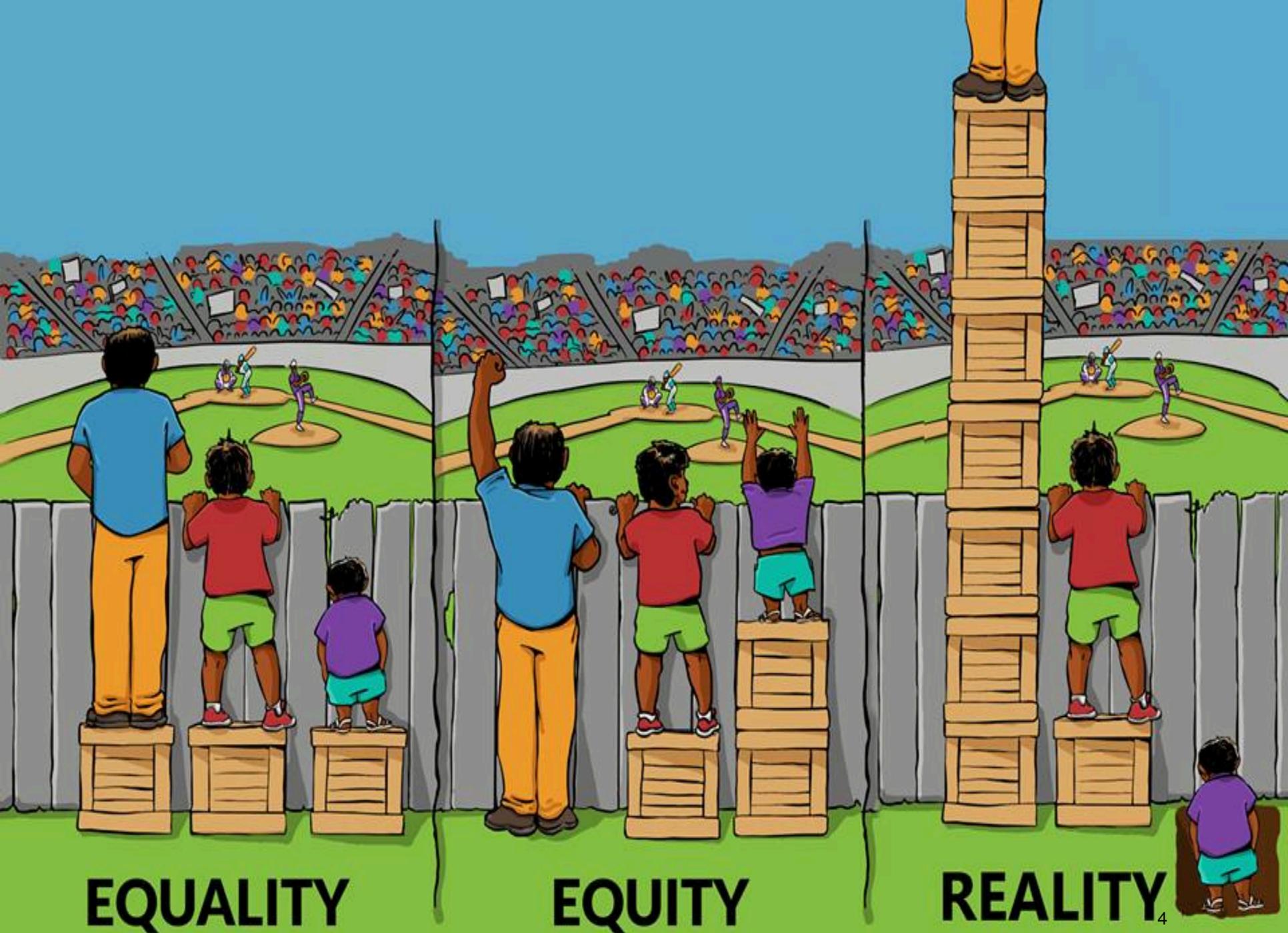

What is meant by equity?

What is structural racialization?

What is "color-blind racism" and implicit bias?

How can structural and systemic inequities be reduced to benefit infants and toddlers?

Equity and Structural Racialization

EQUALITY

EQUITY

REALITY

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EQUITY FOR INFANTS AND TODDLERS

- Every family and infant and toddler of color, in poverty, and regardless of "legal" status has <u>everything they need so that they develop optimally.</u>

- Resources, opportunities, rewards and burdens are fairly distributed across groups and communities so that <u>those with the greatest challenges are adequately supported and not further disadvantaged.</u>

- Policies designed to support families, infants and toddlers are fair and just (Falk et al., 1993).

- The "race rules" (e.g., interlocking structures, policies, practices, customs) that undergird inequality in early childhood are <u>identified, dismantled and rewritten</u> so that race, ethnicity, language, place, gender and national origin do not negatively influence child outcomes (Flynn et al., 2016).

CHILDREN OF COLOR AND THOSE IN POVERTY ARE SHAPED BY THREE UNIQUE SYSTEMIC AND STRUCTURAL FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO NEGATIVE OUTCOMES
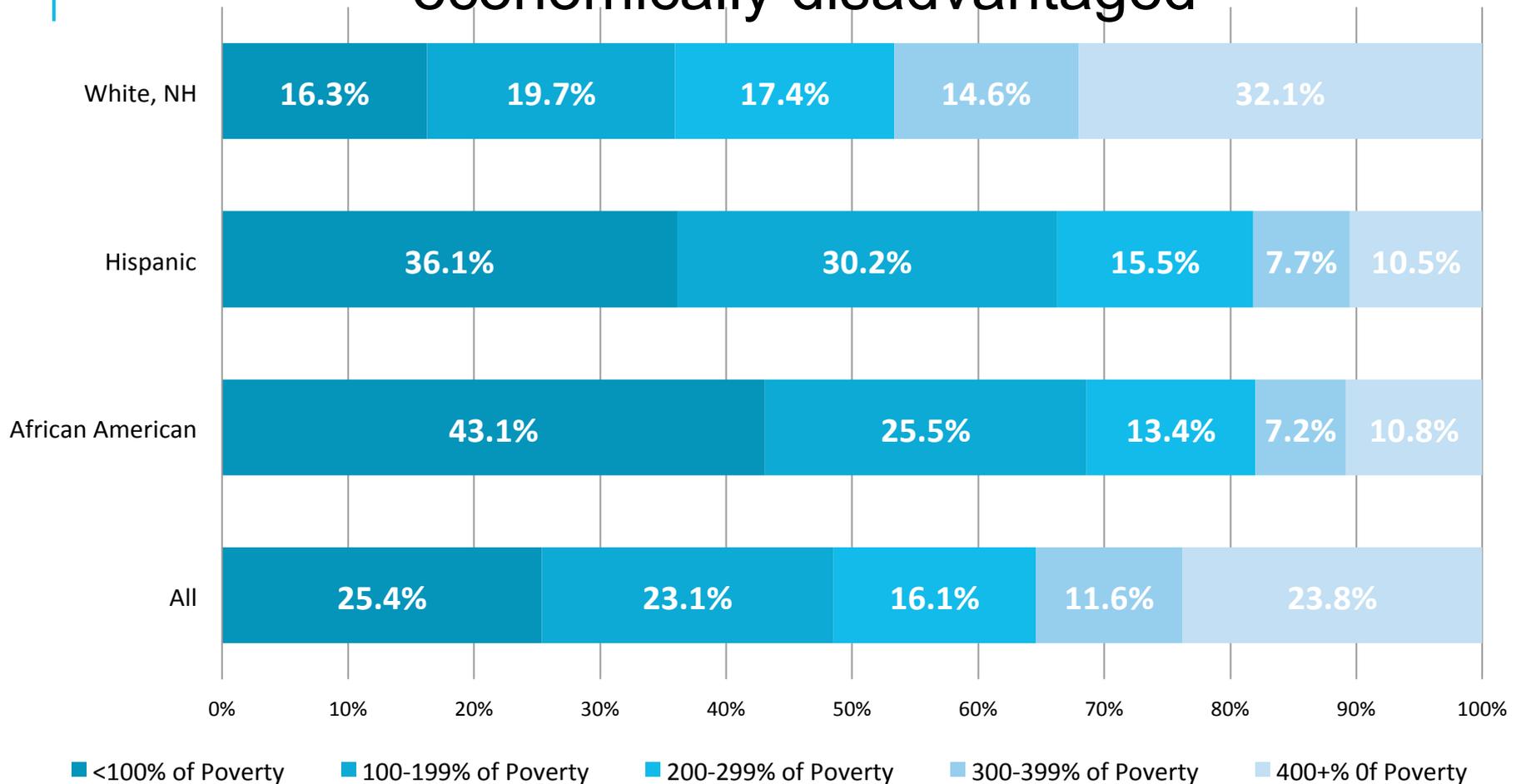
Social stratification by race, ethnicity, class, gender and other socially constructed factors

Ideologies, such as racism, xenophobia, misogyny, bias against those in poverty, that justify social stratification

Segregation so that resources (e.g., housing, good schools) are unevenly distributed and unavailable or less available to some compared to others

- *(Source: Garcia-Coll et al., 2001)*

Our most diverse youngest are (by far) the most economically disadvantaged

	<100% of Poverty	100-199% of Poverty	200-299% of Poverty	300-399% of Poverty	400+% of Poverty
White, NH	16.3%	19.7%	17.4%	14.6%	32.1%
Hispanic	36.1%	30.2%	15.5%	7.7%	10.5%
African American	43.1%	25.5%	13.4%	7.2%	10.8%
All	25.4%	23.1%	16.1%	11.6%	23.8%

Legend: ■ <100% of Poverty ■ 100-199% of Poverty ■ 200-299% of Poverty ■ 300-399% of Poverty ■ 400+% 0f Poverty

Source: United States Census, Public Use Microdata Sample 2012

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STRUCTURAL RACIALIZATION

"Racial conditions must be seen as not simply an outcome of certain attitudes or policies, but as dynamic interconnected processes that are part of a larger socioeconomic and political system that creates racial meaning and constrains or enhances well being for everyone."

J. A. Powell, 2010

INDIVIDUAL, INSTITUTIONAL AND STRUCTURAL FACTORS THAT REINFORCE AND PERPETUATE RACIAL/ETHNIC DISPARITIES IN EARLY CHILDHOOD

- Access and placement/location of high quality programs.

- Not all infants and toddlers who need services receive them.

- Professional development not available to all.

- Funding instability

- Policies: Expulsion and suspension

- Program quality: Under resourced and substandard programs may harm children.

- Absence of bilingual/bi-literate care and education for <u>all</u> children who need it.

- Insufficient tools and processes for assessment of young dual language learners in their home language.

- Implicit bias and low expectations of children and families of color and immigrants.

- Curriculum used with children in poverty and of color may not be sufficiently stimulating.

- Scarcity of caregivers, teachers and other staff who share children's culture, race, ethnicity and language.

- Wages and compensation of the workforce.

STRUCTURAL RACIALIZATION AND IMPLICIT BIAS: TARGET 3 LEVELS OF CHANGE

Personal and Interpersonal Change?

- Individuals understand the causes of racial/ethnic and economic disparities in early childhood.

- Individuals understand their own implicit biases and other factors related to unconscious racism.

- Individuals are more effective in relating to others not like themselves; interpersonal conflict is reduced.

Institutional Change?

- Individuals and groups work to fix institutions (e.g., biased practices in hiring and promotion); policies; institutional culture; and develop inclusive cultures that actively address racism, bias, and equity.

Structural Change?

- Individuals and groups work together to identify the processes and factors that contribute to inequities; they recognize that structural arrangements are interconnected and resist change; they develop approaches to advance equity that offer new or reconstituted structural arrangements; they intentionally disrupt processes that are inequitable; they build shared leadership and collective power that leads to change; and they look for the unintended consequences of policies and correct these.

Implicit Bias

EDUARDO BONILLA-SILVA: COLOR-BLIND RACISM

- Presently few Whites in the U.S., with the possible exception of White supremacists", claim to be racists.

- Many Whites insist they do not "see color, only people" and believe that others, especially non-White groups should do the same.

- A majority of Whites assert that racial 'minorities', especially Blacks, are the source of race problems in the U.S. and that Whites are the primary victims of anti-White racism (2014, p. 1-2)

COLOR-BLIND RACISM

- In the post-Jim Crow and Obama eras White Americans have adopted "color-blind racism" which has 4 frames:

  - Minimizing or denying the existence of on-going racial disparities;

  - Blaming the existence of disparities, when they are acknowledged, on pathologies in non-White groups and communities rather than on structural factors that privilege Whites;

  - Asserting that factors central to racial privilege and racism (e.g., segregation) are merely normal reflections of each groups' "natural" preference to be with "their own kind"; and

  - Supporting the ideals of equality and meritocracy, while refusing to recognize that the playing field is not level for all in the society (Bonilla-Silva, 2014).

How can structural and systemic inequities be reduced to benefit infants and toddlers?

INTENTIONAL APPROACH TO EQUITY AND RACIAL DISPARITIES

- Address racism and racial inequality explicitly, but not necessarily exclusively

- Recognize that impact and outcomes matter more than intentions

- Focus on structural racism and systemic inequality rather than only personal prejudice/implicit bias

- Make equity an ongoing priority

- Actively educator others about these issues

- Transparent assessment: Use data to assess progress/report findings

- Address workforce issues: diversity plus quality, competence, compensation and conditions

- Training and consultation from experienced consultants

WORK THAT NEEDS TO BE DONE FOR SYSTEMS CHANGE

- Systems thinking for racial equity: Understanding systems change and structural racism—within early childhood at all levels.

- Developing alliances between Black and immigrant communities.

- Significantly broadening the representation of those individuals and communities most affected by EC policies in planning and assessing EC policies and programs.

- Develop intentional strategies to create a highly qualified culturally, racially and linguistically diverse workforce.

- Address digital inequality and literacy.

- Address unconscious racism and other forms of bias at all levels.

- Drive resources toward those most affected by inequities that threaten early development.

- Data—use it to drive change

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QUESTIONS, RESPONSES, THOUGHTS?

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